

# Iskandar Mirza

## Rise and Fall of a President

### Ahmad Salim



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Sani H. Panhwar (2022)

# ISKANDER MIRZA

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*Dedication  
To the People  
of Pakistan!*

Ahmad Salim (1997)

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## PREFACE

This book written by Mr. Ahmad Salim is based on the memoirs of my late father Maj. General Iskander Mirza, last Governor General and first President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan during his exile in London. He was exiled by Ayub Khan in November 1958 and stayed in London till his death in November 1969.

The Urdu version of this book has already been published. It has been read and liked and appreciated by a number of people. Some have criticized it as they cannot understand why it has been published after so many years. One reason is because it constitutes the history of Pakistan which the young generation of Pakistan must be made aware of. The other reason is that my family and I feel that my father has been maligned enough. He is accused of all the ills in Pakistan. This hurts us and it used to hurt him as well, because at the end of his life the country that was so important to him and for which he worked so hard – he was not allowed to return to it. That is why when Mr. Ahmad Salim, on his own initiative, approached my sisters and myself, and said that he wanted to write about our father, we told him that as long as it was the truth he wrote and not distorted facts we would help him. So, with the cooperation of my sisters -and other family members, friends, and myself, (unfortunately, my brother Humayun Mirza, who lives in the U.S.A, was not here to give his invaluable help) Mr. Salim with hard work, dedication and a great deal of research has completed this book in nearly four years.

After his exile I was not able to see my father for ten years due to various reasons. In 1968 I went to London to stay with him. I was shocked to see how old he had become after his two heart attacks. He was always a strong vigorous man, full of life surrounded by people wherever he went, because of his wit and charm. Now he was lonely, but on the few occasions that we did go out, I saw that he had not lost his charm. The part of the room where he was, was always resounding with laughter by the people surrounding him. I saw the change in him and was very unhappy. He was always very disciplined being properly dressed and shaved even if he had to go out in the middle of night. Now sometimes he remained in his dressing gown for the whole day without leaving his room. He had financial difficulties as his pension was not adequate. He never complained but I could see things were difficult. While I was in London staying with him in 1968 Ayub had come on a state visit to the U.K. I asked my father to allow me to go and meet Ayub to ask him to increase my father's pension. My father refused. He said he did not want favors from Ayub or anyone else.

My father was proud in not asking for favors and humble about his achievements which were many. I remember while staying with him, the Iranian Ambassador to the U.K. at that time, gave him a message from the Shah of Iran who was going on a state

visit to India, that he wanted my father to give him details of his ancestral lands in India which had been declared enemy property during the Pakistan-India war of 1965, as the Shah wanted to speak about it to the Indian Prime Minister. My father refused saying he did not want any favors from India. Except for the ancestral lands left behind in India he had nothing in his own name, because he was a thorough gentleman. He built two houses in Karachi one for my mother Begum Rifaat Iskander Mirza to which she moved in February 1956, and the other for Nahid Iskandar Mirza, which was started while he was President and completed by Mirza Abul Hassan Ispahani when my father was exiled. He bought a flat in London when he was exiled for Nahid and lived there with her till he died. He had some land in the Ghulam Muhammad Barrage, which he returned when he became Governor General. This land was then divided between two Generals who already had land there. Ayub Khan tried his best to make people believe that my father was dishonest and had made money, but he did not succeed because it was not true. My father was a true patriot and always put Pakistan first till his last breath. In fact, in 1968 when I was staying with him, he had just completed his memoirs. He knew that they were not in depth as they should be because he had not written all that he knew. I asked him why he had not written the whole truth, his reply was that if he had written all that he knew because it would harm Pakistan. His was the phrase "Controlled democracy" because he said that "Democracy without education is hypocrisy without limitation". He has been proven right now as over 28 years after his death we are still struggling to have real, democracy in this country, because 80% of the people are uneducated and are unable to vote for the right leaders. When in power most of our leaders think of themselves rather than the country. My father worked hard and unselfishly from the inception of Pakistan. He was the first Defence Secretary and made the Armed Forces of Pakistan fighting fit and the country proud of them. He made mistakes and paid for them, but he was never unpatriotic or dishonest.

I am grateful to Mr. Ahmad Salim for the great effort he has made in writing this book. He has travelled all over Pakistan interviewing various people gathering material from India, Bangladesh, U.K. and the United States. I thank him with all my heart. As long as the truth is known and my father's name is cleared the purpose of this book would be served.

Mrs. Shah Taj Imam

## CHAPTER ONE

### THE CADET

It was his 70th birthday when the last governor-general and the first president of Pakistan, Major General Iskander Mirza breathed his last in London on November 13, 1969.

Syed Iskander Ali Mirza was born in Bombay, the gateway of India and the natural outlet for India's trade with the West. He was the grandson of Nawab Mansoor Ali Mirza, the last Nawab Nazim of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, and the son of Nawab Fateh Ali Mirza. One of the largest cities in India, and the largest port on its Western coast, Bombay, even in those days, was an industrial and cultural centre and the administrative capital of Bombay province. It was the most southerly of a group of islands which engineering skill had transformed into a peninsula. In 1668, King Charles the second considering Bombay an unprofitable possession, had handed it over to the East India Company to be held by them on payment of the annual rent of pound 10 in gold. Bombay's name was derived from a local goddess, Mumba Devi, and in the vernacular was called Mumbai.

Belonging to a clan of the Tabatabayi Syeds, Iskander Ali's family had the honor of being the keeper of the keys, known as Kalid Bardars of the Mausoleum of Hazrat Ali (A.S.) at Najaf-i-Ashraf in Iraq. His ancestor Syed Zainul-Abedin Najafi came to India during the reign of the Mughal Emperors. The Mughal court welcomed him with great honor and made him Nawab Nazim of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. For generations his ancestors held that office, holding their court at Murshidabad.

There is a series of sad episodes regarding the said Nizamat. While the English were occupied in the south, they became involved in grave difficulties in Bengal where Nawab Nazim Siraj-ud-Daula had ascended to power. The headquarters of the English at Calcutta were threatened by that ruler who demanded that they should surrender a revenue defaulter who had taken refuge under them and should cease building fortifications. The British refused, and Siraj-ud-Daula marched against them with a large army and seized Fort William. Then followed the battle of Plassey. Robert Clive had hatched a conspiracy against Nawab Siraj-ud-Daula. Mir Jaffar, the Commander of his troops was bribed to revolt against his master by promises of being made the new Nawab. Clive marched towards Murshidabad with his army. The two armies met on the field of Plassey, where Clive won a decisive victory. The Nawab's throne was sold to Mir Jaffar for a fabulous sum.

Never before did the English nation at one time obtain such a prize in solid money as after the battle of Plassey; for it amounted (in the mint) to 8,00,000 pounds sterling.

Mir Jaffar was soon deposed as he could not satisfy the greed of the company, and Mir Kassim discharged all his pecuniary obligations to the English, But because he resisted further demands of the company, he too was dethroned in 1763 and Mir Jaffar was restored. Within two years Jaffar died and was succeeded by his son, Najeeb-ud-Daula. The new Nawab was forced to give nearly 20 lakh worth of presents to various officials of the company, and to resign the management of his government to the English who, as a compensation for this, paid him a pension of Rs. 45 lakh. The English also received Diwani i.e., full sovereignty of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa from Emperor Shah Alam II in exchange for an annuity of 26 lakh.

The first use which the East India Company made of the power acquired under this agreement was to prohibit the manufacture of silk goods by weavers, except those who would work in the company's own factories. Thirty million people were reduced to extreme wretchedness and penury under the company's orders. Famine broke out in 1770 and thousands of corpses rolled down the Hoogly River every day.

The pension of the Nawabs was also reduced by more than half, and as Iskander Mirza notes in his autobiographical account, "Towards the end of the nineteenth century, my grandfather was superseded by another branch of the family as head of the Nizamat, and we removed to Bombay."

Syed Iskander Ali was educated at St. Xavier's School in Bombay. This was an institution that had been patronized by the family of a national leader and social reformer, Justice Badruddin Tayabji, for the past couple of generations (Mr. Tayabji died in London in 1907 while officiating as Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court). After school Iskander Ali joined Elphinston College, one of the principal educational institutions in Bombay, from where he graduated in 1916. According to his own account, he was educated in part at Elphinston College, but mainly by a private tutor, Mr. Lee Wilson, who was a Quaker with an austere approach to life.

"He used to give me a boxing lesson every morning as soon as I got up," recounts Ali.

Iskander Ali's mother, Dilshad Begum (1879-1925) was an educated and enlightened lady married in about 1898 to Syed Fateh Ali Mirza. Her brother Kazim Mirza Jan (1876-1926), made an equally brilliant, if more modem, match about 1917 with the sister-in-law of Sir Mirza Ismail (1883-1959), the Diwan of Mysore State. The young and energetic Iskander was greatly influenced by his mother. "She brought me up entirely," he recalled as late as in 1967. She was quite advanced, according to the ideas of society in those days, playing tennis and riding regularly. She was one of the recipients of the Kaisar-i-Hind Medal for her social contribution.



It is worth mentioning that Dilshad Begum and Mohammad Ali Jinnah were very well-known to each other. Jinnah had worked with her in 1912 in organizing relief supplies to Turkey during the Balkan War. It was due to this relationship that young Iskander was very much impressed by Jinnah which, in a way led to his selection for a King's Commission in the Indian army.

It was in June 1918, when, at the Bombay Conference, Mr. Jinnah entered into an altercation with Lord Willingdon, then Governor of Bombay, on the issues raised by the Home Rule League of which Mr. Jinnah was then a member. These issues were Indianization of the civil services and establishment of responsible government in India. Jinnah said; "If you want us to raise an army, then make the people feel that they are citizens of the Empire... Do this by your deeds, not words.... if you wish to enable us to help you, to facilitate and stimulate the recruiting, you must make the people feel that they are the King's equal subjects. We want actions and deeds, immediate deeds. I will give one instance. At the Delhi (War) Conference we unanimously passed a resolution recommending that a substantial number of King's Commissions should be granted to the people of India; but nothing has been done yet".

The Governor's response was so insulting that it enraged the whole city. We have no record of Iskander Ali's reaction, but one may assume from what we know of him through his later official career, that he was not a man of agitation. A week later, on June 17 a meeting of the Home Rulers was called to protest against the action of Lord Willingdon and the alleged insult which he offered to the Home Rule Party. The meeting was enthusiastically attended by the people of Bombay. Mr. Gandhi presided over it and demanded that the Governor should apologize Editor B.G. Horniman, Bol Gaugaoher Talak and M.A. Jinnah also spoke.

According to Mr. Jinnah, "Lord Willingdon said the support of the Home Rule Party was half-hearted. My answer is this; that your policy is more than half-hearted to get the fullest man-power of India! You are playing with the people, and you are not in earnest.... They do not trust us and therefore are not prepared to allow us to take up arms for the defence of our own motherland and of the Empire. They want us to continue an organization which they call an army, which is a sepoy army and nothing else...."

As early as June 21, the British Government had agreed to grant King's Commission to selected Indians. It was as a result of this decision that ten vacancies were reserved for them at the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst. Indians aspiring to become King's Commissioned Officers lacked adequate educational background and were unable to join the Academy because of the very high expenses involved on training.

Iskander Ali applied for a commission and went to Simla for interview. Most of the new Indian cadets were being sent to a Cadet College at Indore; but a few were selected for Sandhurst. His mother had a big hand in getting the first batch of Indian Cadets nominated to enter Sandhurst. "Rather to my surprise, I was one of the first batch of five Indians chosen for Sandhurst," notes Iskander Mirza. They sailed for England in October 1918, but because of the ending of the war, and the sudden demobilization of thousands of men, they were held up at Port Said and Cairo, and only reached London in December.

Iskander entered Sandhurst in January 1919. "Life was very pleasant and I got into the cricket team of the Academy, being awarded my blue. It was most unfortunate that, of the other Indian cadets, two died and two were removed, so I was the only one to pass out."

On July 19, 1920 Syed Iskander Ali Mirza became the first Indian ever to be gazetted to the Army from that famous establishment.

## CHAPTER TWO

### FACE TO FACE WITH NEHRU

After being commissioned in July 1920, Syed Iskander Ali Mirza was attached to the 2nd Battalion of the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) for the year's secondment to a British regiment which was required of every officer in the Indian Army. "The Cameronians were then at Kohat, so I was introduced at once to the North-West Frontier, where I was to spend so much of my service...." notes Iskander Mirza in his autobiographical account.

A year before, The Government of India Act of 1919 had initiated certain reforms with the aim of associating Indians with every branch of Indian administration and the gradual development of self-governing institutions the so-called dyarchic experiment. These reforms were not extended to the North-West Frontier Province on the advice of George Roos-Keppel, who considered that the Pakhtuns were not yet ready for them. Even earlier in 1918, the British were very reluctant to introduce political reforms in the frontier due to their all-pervading concern for security. Thus the Montagu-Chelmsford report, while recommending constitutional reforms in other provinces, including Iskander Mirza's province, Bombay, contended that the Government of India could not loosen its grip on the Frontier and that representative government was therefore out of question in the NWFP. Instead, the report suggested that some kind of advisory council be set up.

This was the political state of affairs in the province, when Iskander entered its service. He took part in the Khudad Khel operations, and went on to Parachinar. After the third Afghan War of 1919, another war between the Afghans and the British seemed imminent. "I have a vivid memory of watching an Afghan battalion on parade from a fort at Kheraachi. The Commander was sitting on a *charpoy* (string cot) shouting commands. I also witnessed from the fort the killing of a murderer, as required by Islamic law, by a woman who was the mother of the murdered man."

One day, Iskander Mirza was sent out in charge of the piquet on a hill top. The retirement down from the piquet was invariably a tricky operation; the tribesmen invariably tried to seize the moment to fire on the party. When it was moving downhill while descending the mountain with his platoon, Iskander fell, and injured his back badly. This continued to give him much trouble, and he was compelled to go to Europe on medical leave.

In his memoirs, Iskander Mirza<sup>1</sup> says: "After failing to get any help in Vienna and Berlin, I came to London. None of the specialists could offer me any hope, so I was advised to see the famous osteopath, Herbert Baker. He told me that if I would submit myself to his special treatment which would be excruciating he could cure me. After one month of agony, I was able to walk normally again. My wound gave me no further trouble for over thirty years, until one day out shooting in 1954, I picked up an ammunition box and wrenched my back again. The necessity then to come to London again for treatment was to be a turning point for me, and for my country."

We will come to this episode later. After returning from London, when he was fit again, Iskandar Mirza joined the 17th Poona Horse (Queen Victoria's Own) at Jhansi. These were Khilafat and civil obedience days. But the young Indian army officer had nothing to do with these activities. Rather, he was interested in shooting and polo. There is only one event of significance during this period regarding the political movement. In an encounter, he came face to face with young Jawaharlal Nehru.

It was January 6, 1922. An outbreak of agrarian trouble in Rai Bareilly occurred, where 300 peasants of Forsatganj assembled in protest against the arrest of three of their leaders for organizing the movement against oppression by their landlord, and were fired upon by the police. Seven peasants were killed and many wounded. Disturbances continued for several days. Every day the police fired on the mob and hundreds of *kissans* were marched off to prison. The young leader of the Indian National Congress, Pandit Nehru, who went to settle the disputes was ordered by the Magistrate to leave the place.

According to the story narrated by Nehru himself, the trouble started in a peculiar way. The peasants of some villages went and looted the property of a *taluqadar*. It transpired subsequently that they had been incited to do so by the servants of another *zamindar* who had some kind of feud with the *taluqadar*. The poor ignorant peasants were actually told that it was the wish of Mahatma Gandhi that they should loot and they willingly agreed to carry out this behest, shouting "*Mahatma Gandhi Ki jai*" in the process.

Nehru was very angry when he heard of this and within a day or two of the occurrence he was on the spot. On arrival, he called a meeting for the same day and within a few hours five or six thousand persons had collected from numerous villages within a radius of ten miles. He spoke harshly to them for the shame they had brought on themselves and the national cause. Nehru stressed that guilty persons must confess publicly. He called upon those who had participated in the looting to raise their hands, and, strange to say, there, in the presence of numerous police officials, about two dozen hands were up. That meant certain trouble for them.

When he spoke to many of them privately later and heard their artless story of how they had been misled, he felt very sorry for them and he began to regret having exposed these foolish and simple folk to long terms of imprisonment. But the people who suffered were not just two or three dozens. The chance was too good to be lost and full advantage was taken of the occasion by the authorities to crush the agrarian movement in that district. Over a thousand arrests were made, and the district gaol was overcrowded, and the trial went on for the best part of a year.

Iskander Mirza has his own version of the story His squadron was sent to Allahabad to reinforce the security arrangements for the Kumbh Mela, the great gathering at the confluence of the Jumma and the Ganges. In order to control the thousands of pilgrims, the government had set up barriers to seal off certain approaches. The civil police were guarding the barriers and the Poona Horse were held in reserve. In the parlance of those days this was to provide a show of force. The Congress decided to defy the government. The leader was the young Jawaharlal Nehru, who was the first to climb over the barricade. "I could not help but admire his courage", writes Iskander Mirza, "in facing what might have been a volley from the police. Instead, the magistrate in charge of the police, and also my own troopers, made a heavy strategic retirement."

In 1922, Iskander Ali Mirza married Rifaat Begum. She was from an Iranian family settled in Bombay. Her mother came from the family of Karim Khan of Zand. In his obituary note, Sir Olaf Caroe notes that Iskander was married twice; to Rifaat Begum, who predeceased him, and to Nahid Begum who shared his years as head of state and in exile. Both sustained him through hard days, and both were able to reinforce the Persian principles for which he stood.

## CHAPTER THREE

### AN ORDINARY BEGINNING

In the early thirties, the NWFP was facing certain problems. Though they were frequently detached from each other and studied in isolation by writers on this subject, they were really inextricable.

They were :

1. The international problem of the relations between British India and free Afghanistan.
2. The problem of the military defence of the Frontier;
3. The political problem, i.e. the problem of the control of the border tribes by the Indian Government and the question of their relations with similar and kindred tribes in the adjoining parts of British India; and,
4. The problem of the administration of the North-West Frontier Province.

The solution to these problems was found. It was, briefly, to destroy the Frontier problem by civilizing the people, whose lack of education and advancement had hitherto provided the hardest part of the affair. The then Frontier policy was devoted to this great object, and, since 1921, the government had been working on this task on its most difficult side, namely, Waziristan.

Meanwhile, the Poona Horse moved up to Bannu. Iskander was a squadron officer with B squadron; all" Muslims, Kaim Khanis, a branch of the Rathore Rajputs. The young squadron officer thought that life was agreeable, but terribly monotonous; stables, parades, and nothing much else to do. He was, as he narrates, quartered at Khajuri, a fort on the road between Bannu and Miranshah, the headquarters of the political agent of North Waziristan.

The first attempt to subdue the Mahsuds had begun, in November 1919 with Major-General Skeen's operations against the Tochi Wazirs. These achieved success fairly rapidly but, when Skeen turned on the Mahsuds in early December, his troops, all Indian, save for some British gunners, found themselves pitted against implacable opponents who fought at Ahnai Tangi in great numbers, coupled with gallantry and skill. In the fighting at Ahnai Tangi the Mahsuds lost heavily and it was these casualties,

along with destruction of their villages a month later that there was peace for a while. As the Mahsuds licked their wounds, it was the turn of the Wana Wazirs. When attacked in November 1920, they appealed to the Mahsuds for help, but with none forthcoming, the Wazir opposition crumbled and on December 22, Wana itself was re-occupied.

Minor forays and raids continued throughout 1921, but a major change of policy was now in the offing. Henceforth, it was decided, if Waziristan was to be kept quiet, a permanent garrison of regular troops would have to be maintained there in much closer support than before to the reconstituted Militia. The place chosen was in the very heart of the territory, at Razmak. The decision to establish a permanent presence of regular troops in Waziristan from 1923 found little favor with the then chief commissioner of the North-West Frontier Province, Sir John Maffey.

He was not consulted on this point and he held the view that such garrisons would be a constant affront to the fanatical independence of the tribes, and that the extended, highly vulnerable lines of communication of the garrison would not only invite attack and ambush, but would diminish the ability of the troops to dominate the territory.

There were always two schools of thought on the question of the control of the Frontier tribes, suggests Iskander Mirza. One, on the analogy of the Sandeman policy in Balochistan, pressed for a forward policy, and integration of the tribal areas with the settled districts up to the international border with Afghanistan. The other favored the close border policy; which meant, broadly speaking, non-interference in inter-tribal affairs. It called for and restricting control to ensuring the safety of the settled areas and some forward highways, like the Khyber Pass road, and roads like the Tochi Valley and Wana roads, which led to the headquarters of the Tochi Scouts and the South Waziristan Scouts, at Miran Shah and Wana.

Iskander Mirza, who had moved up to Razmak from Khajuri, was of the opinion that just after the First World War, as a result of the success of Marshall Lyautey in Morocco, who brought about security and order by constructing a large number of roads, a school of thought gained predominance in the Government of India and in the NWFP; that a similar policy of road-building was the answer to tribal control on the Frontier.

Hence, an expensive circular road was constructed; Bannu-Razmak-Dera. Ismail Khan, where it joined up with the existing Dera Ismail Khan-Bannu road. From the British point of view too, it was a policy of progress. It was, as the Britishers thought, a big step forward on the long and laborious road towards the pacification through civilization of the most backward and inaccessible, and therefore the most truculent and aggressive tribes on the border.

Iskander Mirza stayed at Razmak Camp during 1924-26. Lying on a plateau of 6600 feet above sea level, the Camp was the largest of the garrisons in tribal territory during those days. It bristled with guns, Howitzers tanks, armored cars, and all the ponoply of war.

Iskander was in daily contact with the Tochi Scouts and the political officer. It is recorded that in 1924 the Razmak movable column, consisting of a strong brigade of all arms, with pack transport, made its first promenade. Although the Mahsuds as a whole had come to terms with the British rulers — raids in 1924-25 had dropped to twenty-five, compared with a hundred and twenty-nine in 1921-22 — there was a small pocket of resistance, some eight miles square, lying north of the Shahur Tangi, where the inhabitants continued to commit outrages in British territory. It was a particularly difficult area for the army to reach and at the end of February 1925 it was decided to attempt to bring the tribesmen to heel by air action alone.

As Major-General J.G. Elliot records, operations began on March 9, after the tribes had failed to comply with the terms announced, and were carried out by one squadron of Bristol Fighters and two of DH 9A aircraft, flying from airfields at Miranshah and Tank. Every variation of attack was made, both in timing and intensity, so as to keep the enemy in a state of uncertainty as to how and when they would next feel the blow. After a week there were signs of compliance with the terms and it was clear that the normal life of the tribesmen had been very upset by the air raids.

Passing through all these experiences, Iskander Mirza, in mid-1926, decided to get transferred to the Indian Political Service (IPS), which was drawn half from the Indian Civil Service and half from the Indian Army. There were already a few Indian officers in the IPS, including one of his contemporaries from the Cadet College at Indore. 'My transfer came through, and I was appointed to the political service from 2nd August, 1926, and set off to the United Provinces, to Aligarh District, to receive magisterial training," records Iskander Mirza.

From there he went to the Revenue School at Moradabad, and then back to the Frontier to his first appointment in the IPS: Supernumerary Assistant Commissioner, Hazara. An ordinary beginning, which led him finally to the presidency of Pakistan.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### IN INDIAN POLITICAL SERVICE

Before entering into the Indian Political Service, Iskander Mirza had to face a great loss in 1925. His mother (who had moved to Bangalore, to be near Sir Mirza Ismail, her cousin, who was then Dewan of Mysore) passed away. She had exercised great influence over Iskander. Her code of conduct, though simple, was strict. He loved her, but he went in awe of her. He had to get rid of the shock as early as possible immersed himself in his new career in the IPS.

From Hazara, he moved to Peshawar District to work at Revenue under Sir Francis Wyllie. As indicated earlier, George Roos-Keppel, whose ideas were more in tune with the tribal areas than the settled districts around Peshawar, had decided (to quote Sir Olaf Caroe) that there was to be no franchise for the Pathans, no elections, no legislature, no ministry, not even elections to local bodies. Roos-Keppel thought the whole system was so much flummery. If challenged, his answer would have been that the Pathans had their own methods of democracy, much more to their taste. What Roos-Keppel could never understand was that once higher education was extended to the Pakhtuns in the settled districts, things would not stand still; that young men like Dr. Khan Saheb would never be satisfied with the primitive ways of life of their fathers and forefathers. Iskander Mirza, who was going to enter into a long association with Dr. Khan Saheb, however, was compelled to stand on the side of Roosevelt and his ideas. It was Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, who understood the situation perfectly, and preached that the Pakhtuns were being insulted by discrimination over the dyarchy experiment.

These were the days, in 1927, when Iskander Mirza for the first time came to know Dr. Khan Saheb and Abdul Ghaffar Khan (of the Mohammadzai tribe of Charsadda). It is a well-established fact that though Dr. Khan and Iskander Mirza went their opposite ways a friendship developed between them, which was bound to live till the sad assassination of the former in June 1958. Even after Dr. Khan Saheb's death, Iskander Mirza continued to regard him as a man of complete honesty and sterling character.

In 1927, Dr. Khan had retired from the Indian Medical Service and had a very good private practice in Peshawar. Iskander Mirza notes that he was married to an Englishwoman and was very friendly with the British; even allowing himself to be made a paying honorary member of the Peshawar Club. For reasons best known to the British, Indians were barred from being ordinary members. "Most of us refused to become honorary members", records Iskander Mirza. By 1930, Peshawar was about the

only club which kept Indians out, other than one or two in Bombay and Calcutta. The reason for the Peshawar Club's obduracy was that by its constitution, all past members had a vote in changing the rules. Scores of these, retired and living in England, did not see that India had changed since Kipling's day, and did not suffer the embarrassment of meeting every day friends and colleagues who were barred from one's club.

Iskander Mirza's first independent charge came in 1928, when he went down to Tank (between Bannu and Dera Ismail Khan) as Assistant Commissioner. In Tank he stayed for two years, keeping the peace with the help of the Bhattani Khassadars (the armed tribal levy, used for territorial policing). The work in the settled portion of the Tank subdivision of the District of Dera Ismail Khan was that of the ordinary district administration, but with two peculiarities.

Iskander Mirza had a surfeit of matrimonial cases amongst the Bhattanis settled in the administered areas, which he had to decide under the Frontier Crimes Regulations (FCR). Bhattani girls had a habit of eloping with their paramours. The more a girl eloped, the higher the price to be paid to her family. "We had to operate swiftly under the FCR, using summary procedure, in order to prevent blood feuds leading to murder. The settlement was based on payment of an agreed sum of money to the aggrieved party. As the proceedings were entirely in Pashto, one had to be proficient in this language", explains Iskander Mirza.

The second peculiar feature was the irrigation system, based on the hoary Kukiati Abpashi, or water custom and administered by the Assistant Commissioner. This was interesting work, and if one was lucky in one's experiments, there was an increase in the cropping area, enhancing the popularity of the Assistant Commissioner concerned. On the other hand, a bad decision could lead to inter-village rioting of a furious nature. After such interesting experiments Iskander Mirza left Tank and took charge as Assistant Commissioner Bannu in 1930.

In 1929, there arrived the Simon Commission, appointed to devise a means of bringing India forward on the path of self-government. For other provinces they recommended autonomy, but in the North-West Frontier Province they decided, on bad advice, that Pashtuns were neither capable of democratic self-government nor interested in it. It was a false formulation. Pakhtuns were political minded, and knew far more about practical democracy than any other people in the subcontinent. The Simon Commission's negative attitude presented the opposition in the province with a target they could not miss.

The Khudai Khidmatgars (servants of God) organization, better known as Red Shirts was founded in the same year by Abdul Ghaffar Khan. With military titles and rank insignia, and drill instructions written by Abdul Ghaffar, they trained in the manner of regimental combat teams.

When Iskander Mirza took over in Bannu, as Assistant Commissioner, the situation in the province, as well as in Waziristan had again reached a point of conflict. In Peshawar alone, the Red Shirt Chapter had gained so much strength that it was virtually in a position to seize the city by force.

The British officials could not move freely in Peshawar valley and a permit was required for their safe movement in the border area in early 1930.

By April 1930 that nearly happened when Abdul Ghaffar Khan orchestrated a Red Shirt rally in a school building. Among its features was what the authorities called the performance of a seditious play, calculated to bring the government into hatred and contempt. Two days after the curtain went down, the British arrested Ghaffar Khan and several Red Shirt leaders, and thus played directly into the hands of the movement as a full scale insurrection swept the city.

The high drama of the Kissa Khani killing is yet to be narrated. At the moment, we want to mention the situation at Bannu, which Iskander Mirza and his administration was facing. At Bannu, a similar movement the black Shirts, led by Habibullah Khan—had erupted. The Black Shirts were mainly recruited from Bannu city. The Deputy Commissioner, Sir Claude Gidney, as Iskander Mirza relates, was a very kind man, and one could see he was averse to taking harsh measures. The Bannu Administration was able to get through the troubles without much bloodshed, except with the Hathi Khels. There was a clash between them and the troops, and there were casualties on both sides: including British officers of the 5th Frontier Force Rifles. Iskander Mirza writes:

"From these experiences I drew the lesson that one should always try to avoid the use of troops in putting down civil disturbance, unless the civil officer incharge is actually with the troops, well forward. The troops must be kept under the close control of a civil officer if an unnecessary clash is to be avoided."

Iskander Mirza soon had the opportunity to try out his own methods during the martial law imposed in Peshawar in August 1930.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### KHUDAI KHIDMATGARS

When Iskander Mirza was Assistant Commissioner of Bannu, the whole tribal territory from Malakand to Waziristan was in a state of revolt. The people of the province spontaneously responded and decided to commence a movement in the province from April 23, 1930 from Kissa Khani Bazar of Peshawar. On the 20th April Abdul Ghaffar Khan summoned a large meeting, ostensibly to celebrate the anniversary of the Azad School. Discussions went on for two days, attended by representatives from all over the province, and many villages sent Red Shirt contingents, complete with bands and banners. One of the main items at the meeting was the performance of a seditious play, calculated to bring the government into hatred and contempt, and it was obvious to the authorities that some form of uprising was not far off.

Two days after the meeting at the Azad School, Khan Ghaffar Khan and a number of his lieutenants were arrested by order of the Deputy Commissioner. Two other men who were named in the warrant surrendered to the police, but, on their way to Kabuli Thana, the police lorries were stopped by angry crowds and their tyres were slashed. Word of the Khan's arrest spread rapidly, and soon thousands of demonstrators had gathered and surrounded the jail.

The military force at this time were a battalion of the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry, two battalions of Sikhs, a battalion of Royal Garhwal Rifles, a company of armored cars of the Royal Tank Corps, and Iskander Mirza's first love the Poona Horse. From these units a City Disturbance Column had been formed, the troops of which were at half an hour's notice to move from 4:00 p.m. on the 23rd April. Meanwhile, the situation in the city was deteriorating and the mobs were becoming angry. Dr. Khan Sahib arrived in time to remind the crowd to remain non-violent. But since the citizens were adamant, the police opened fire and armored cars and troops were called in to teach them a lesson, although they were strictly adhering to non-violent demonstration. Subsequently shooting began at Kissa Khani Bazaar and the adjacent lanes, and it continued for several hours killing many and injuring many more, but without breaking the morale of the brave people. According to the government report thirty persons were killed and thirty-three injured. According to Abdul Ghaffar Khan, 200 to 250 persons were massacred. The Jallianwala action was replayed.

For the next two days, Peshawar became a hell to live in owing to the atrocities of the British troops. Then on the night of the 25th, both the military and the police evacuated the city, leaving it in the hands of the Khudai Khidmatgar volunteers. A few days later the police and military reappeared and took control of the city again. One of the first of

the administration acts was to declare the Khudai Khidmatgars illegal and close down their office, scattering all their papers and removing their cash. From that day onward, the Congress Inquiry Committee noted, the city was for all practical purposes, under martial law. "Life, liberty or property of no one in Peshawar is safe.... The province has become a forbidden land to the outside world. It is isolated from the rest of India and no public leader is allowed to step in there .... In spite of all this the spirit of the people has remained unbroken and strict non-violence has been observed."

Now, repression also began in Utmanzai, Ghaffar Khan's village. Dr. Khan Sahib, rushed to his village from Peshawar. He made his first political speech in a public meeting there. As he concluded his address, the Guides Cavalry arrived. The commander announced that his men were going to open fire and ordered the crowd to disperse. When no one heeded him, he appealed to Dr. Khan for help. "The best thing for you to do," said Khan Sahib, "is to go back and let us march to our destination...." The Cavalry had to leave.

Soon more trouble was stirred up, with the creation of a Red Shirt Memorial, and a swift reoccupation was ordered. Four columns moved in at first night on the 4th of May and the city awoke to find itself in the firm grip of the army. On the 19th May, the Memorial was demolished, the pavement where it had stood being cemented over so that no trace remained. Meanwhile, Iskander Mirza had been dealing with Black Shirts in Bannu. Although Peshawar was quiet by the end of May, the troubles had stirred up the Afridis. At a tribal *jirga* on May 2, the elders had counseled forbearance, but the young hotheads were all for action. A *lashkar* was formed South-West of Peshawar, and in June it advanced on the city. It was dispersed by columns of cavalry and aircraft, but it soon reformed and continued to raid over the Peshawar district throughout August.

On May 13, eight hundred British troops surrounded Utmanzai under cover of darkness. The British Deputy Commissioner – apparently the same man, who had ordered his men to open fire in Kissa Khani Bazar commanded the Khudai Khidmatgars to take off their uniforms. They refused. The Deputy Commissioner drew his revolver and held it to the chest of one of the workers. "Remove your clothes!" "Sahib, it is impossible," replied the Khudai Khidmatgar, "the trousers of a Pakhtun cannot be taken off as long as he is alive."

The story goes on. Anyone with a red shirt was stripped, beaten up and taken to jail. "Any more Red Shirts?" bellowed the Commissioner provocatively. It was too much for one old villager named Abbas Khan. He went to his home, doused a shirt in some red fluid, put it on – still wet – and ran back into the street. "Here is a Red Shirt!" the old man barked into the face of the British Commissioner. Where Ghaffar Khan had been able to recruit only a thousand or so Khudai Khidmatgars, British repression had converted eighty thousand men and women to the movement by the end of the summer.

On August 16, the province was placed under martial law. By that time Peshawar district was under the administration of Sir Olaf Caroe as Deputy Commissioner and the police. "I took the Cavalry, to patrol in a radius of eight miles around Pabbi. Very early we humped into trouble. But to cut a long story short, by the first, week of January 1931, I judged that the situation was sufficiently stable to be handled without the deployment of troops, and I was able to return them to their permanent stations in Nowshera and Peshawar." This is how Iskander concludes his story.

There was a dear difference of opinion between Iskander Mirza and the senior British officials, regarding the handling of the situation created by Khudai Khidmatgars. The British wanted to answer Pakhtun non-violence with the sword. Iskander Mirza was not in favor of using force. Some of his Pakhtun friends warned him that his way of dealing with the situation was not popular with senior police officers in Peshawar. Iskander Mirza was not prepared to follow the British way. He thought the Red Shirts actually wanted the Government to be repressive and shoot a few of them, as by this means they hoped to aggravate hatred for the government. During the whole of this period, not one senior police officer came anywhere near him. His Deputy Commissioner, Sir Olaf Caroe, however, was in close touch with him by telephone and expressed himself as quite happy with the way the native Iskander was working.

The situation in the Nowshera sub-division had become quite normal by May 1931. "In those five months, I don't think, I arrested more than 150 persons. I only made arrests when absolutely necessary. The Congress wanted the jails to be filled, and I was not going to play their game," explains Iskander Mirza.

By that time, Abdul Ghaffar Khan having been released from prison in March, under the Gandhi-Irwin Pact was again active with his Khudai Khidmatgars in Peshawar valley.. The movement was now declared lawful. He built up the Frontier Youth League. His influence grew greater than ever and in July, after his followers attempted to obstruct the police, the Deputy Commissioner issued an order banning meetings, processions, and demonstrations along an area four miles on each side of the Grand Trunk Road from Attock to Peshawar in the Nowshera sub-division. The measure drove the Khudai Khidmatgars away from the road, but reports kept pouring in of their activities in the villages. They answered the British measure by arranging religious meetings within the four mile limit, and though the law was being broken Iskander Mirza did not think it was fit for the police to take action. The Gandhi-Irwin pact was in operation, and he had to mind his step.

In August, the alliance between the Khudai Khidmatgars and the Indian National Congress was ratified at a mass meeting at Utmanzai, and Ghaffar Khan was elevated to the title of Generalissimo of volunteers. Under new organizational arrangements the Frontier Youth League and the Provincial Congress Committee were disbanded and in

their place a Provincial Frontier Jirga was formed. The Khudai Khidmatgars announced that despite the ban, their force in Akbarpura would hold a mass meeting. Iskander Mirza termed it open defiance of the law, without any cover of religion, and on the day fixed for it he went to Akbarpura with all the police he could muster, and awaited events.

According to Iskander Mirza himself, as soon as about a thousand Red Shirts were gathered, he ordered them to disperse. On their refusal he ordered a baton charge and covered the police with a hundred rifles, in case of necessity. He accompanied the charge, and ensured that the minimum amount of force was used. But the Red Shirts, as he narrates, intended to make the most of the occasion, and about a hundred of them lay down on the ground, pretending to be badly injured. After about an hour, some of the other Red Shirts and some villagers came out with pitchers of water to give to the injured. "It was a very hot day," recalls Iskander Mirza, "I concluded that if they were allowed to give out the water, the wounded would remain lying on the ground. So I prevented the water reaching them. Because of the heat, every man who was pretending to be wounded gave up, and walked away. I was able to move the police back to the shelters of the trees and the demonstration petered out."

For these actions, Iskander Mirza and other government officials were accused by Gandhiji of violating the Geneva Convention as regard allowing relief to the wounded. Abdul Ghaffar Khan came to Akbarpura and charged Iskander Mirza with having ordered the police to bayonet young children and added that an aeroplane had bombed a house in the village, and that a Koran was burnt. "All these accusations," say Iskander Mirza, were false and foolish. "This was the Congress technique to saddle the government with every type of atrocity."

But things were not so simple. Gandhiji, Abdul Ghaffar Khan and other nationalist leaders launched a movement against the government for the Akbarpura incident. Speaking at a public meeting in Simla, Abdul Ghaffar observed that he belonged to an unfortunate province, where trouble was experienced daily at the hands of the government. Referring to the incident in Akbarpura, he said that the treatment meted out to the villagers by the military, could not be expected of the most savage of governments. That, on this occasion, when women and children went to fetch water for their wounded, their pitchers were broken at the instigation of the British officers. The people were not only beaten up; they had also been arrested.

In a letter to Mr. Emerson, Gandhiji protested against the British attitude towards the Khudai Khidmatgars in Akbarpur. With his letter he enclosed a statement made by Mrs. Khursheed Behn regarding what she saw of the injured men and women in Akbarpura. "I would like you not to push aside all these statements as false or exaggerated," Gandhiji remarked.

Lord Irwin sent for Iskander Mirza to come to Simla. "I went to Simla and was questioned about the incident. I insisted that, although we had been through a rough time, I had often seen as much foul play in a hockey match." The Viceroy was satisfied with his explanation, and indicated that the matter was closed.



## CHAPTER SIX

### ELECTIONS

Iskander Mirza left Nowshera as Assistant Commissioner in 1933, and took up officiating charge as Deputy Commissioner of Hazara, politically speaking the quietest part of the province. But when he went there the district was burning in the fire of religious hatred. The black mountain tribes were being stirred up by the mullahs over the issue of Shahidgunj (whether a site belonged to a mosque or Sikh gurdwara) in Lahore. In view of the expected serious communal disturbance a curfew order was promulgated in Lahore prohibiting people from remaining outdoors from 8-30 pm till 5.30 am. Armed law-enforcers patrolled the city. On July 15, 1935, the District Magistrate, Lahore, promulgated within the district an order under section 144 Cr.P.C. prohibiting meetings to discuss any matter connected with the demolition of the Shahidganj mosque.

A meeting of Muslims was held outside Mochi Gate, and thousands of Muslims wearing blue shirts gathered there. Maulana Zafar Ali Khan exhorted them to unite under the Islamic banner for the restoration of the mosque. Maulana and four others were arrested. On July 20 a Muslim crowd was fired upon. Things got worse when unrest spread all over India. The Frontier Province was also seriously affected. Muslim sentiment overwhelmed Hazara District too. The tribes incensed by reports from Lahore, came down into the valley and it was necessary, as Iskander Mirza himself relates, to call out the Gurkha Brigade from Abbotabad to push them back.

After dealing with the disturbance, Iskander went to Europe in 1936 on six months' leave. On his return, he was posted to Mardan Sub-Division of Peshawar District as Assistant Commissioner, but with the purpose of preparing the ground for creating a separate district for Mardan. "This followed and I became the first Deputy Commissioner of Mardan," he notes.

During this period, elections were held under the Government of India Act, 1935, for the first legislature in which elected ministries were to take office with full powers at the provincial level. The main contestants, according to Iskander Mirza, were the Congress and the Muslim League. In the Muslim-dominated North-West Frontier Province the Congress secured 19 out of 50 seats in the House. It had secured 15 of the 36 seats reserved for Muslims, while the Muslim League could not secure even one seat.

Iskander Mirza, being a Muslim tried to play a role for the League. Sahibzada Sir Abdul Qaiyum, the grand old man of the province, was a minister in the outgoing

government. He belonged to Mardan District and wanted Iskander Mirza to help him. "As a government officer, I was supposed to be neutral, but as a Muslim I did not want the Congress to win," writes Iskander Mirza. "Other than barring one Congress leader – Ghulam Mohammad of Lundkhwar – from standing as a candidate on technical grounds, (he was debarred having served three years' imprisonment) I was not able to do much. "The Congress was all-powerful and won easily, not only in Mardan District, but all over the province, emerging as the largest party in the new legislature. However, the Government decided to call Sahibzada Qaiyum of the Muslim League to form the new provincial government.

Within three months a vote of no-confidence was passed against the Sahibzada's set-up and a Congress refine, headed by Dr. Khan Saheb, assumed office in July 1937. Sahibzada Qaiyum died soon afterwards.

Dr. Khan Saheb's ministry introduced several reforms aimed at the welfare of the people. Among the important steps taken were: introduction of Pashto as compulsory medium of instruction; provision of relief to agriculturists; abolition of the nomination system in local boards; declaring that all recruitment to public offices, whether ministerial or executive, shall be by open competition; removal of restrictions on political parties, replacement of the Frontier Crimes Regulations by the ordinary penal code; and release of all political prisoners. Contrary to these facts Iskander Mirza claimed that there was hardly any change during Dr. Khan Saheb's period when he was running the settled areas as chief minister, and that the latter was quite ready to work with the British Governor. He was a close friend of Sir George Cunningham, with whom he used to play bridge once a fortnight at least. Iskander Mirza is also of the opinion that Dr. Khan Saheb tried to enforce the ordinary law to the exclusion of the Frontier Crimes Regulation but he soon found that this would not work in the peculiar conditions obtaining in the Pathanland, and soon had to sanction a return to the FCR.

The success achieved by the Congress party in the province led to a visit by the Congress President, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, to the province in October 1937. This was the first time he has come to the frontier and he was overwhelmed by the enthusiastic welcome he received amidst loud report of crackers when he reached Peshawar on October 14.

Besides Peshawar, Utmanzai, and the Khyber Pass, Nehru also visited Mardan, going by the same route, as Iskander Mirza remarks, as the Sikh General, Hari Singh Nalwa, had taken when invading the country during the days of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. "In order to avoid trouble," writes Iskander Mirza, "I confined the police to their stations and barracks. There was a tremendous reception for Nehru, and the crowds were terrific. The plans of the Congress leaders went astray, and there was a shemozzle. I was accused of causing this by Abdul Ghaffar Khan, though Dr. Khan Saheb exonerated me.

I could only keep order if I was allowed to make arrangements *ab initio*. But I don't think the public would have wanted an orderly reception."

After this tenure Iskander Mirza was promoted and posted to the key position of Political Agent, Khyber Agency.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### THE POLITICAL AGENT

It was April 1938 when Iskander Mirza took over as Political Agent, Khyber. The duties of the office, despite the glamour attached to its name, as he felt, were far less onerous. Its objective was simple: political control of the tribes in the Agency as well as rectifying their behavior towards Afghanistan. The latter objective was made difficult as the Afghans, through the payment of small subsidies, created an Afghan party amongst the tribe, and thus often got involved in their internal feuds. This forced the political Agent to intervene so as to sort out the mess.

Take one incident of this sort. Mirza noted that in 1938, Mohammad Afzal Khan, the Sanghul Khel Shinwari leader, had a fight with his Afghan overlords and fled to Tirah in the Khyber Agency where he was given shelter by the enemies of the Afghan allowance-holders. Iskander Mirza was ordered by the government to go to Kabul to have talks with the Afghan leaders so as to reach a settlement.

Iskander Mirza, visited Kabul in February 1939. In bitterly cold weather he and the British ambassador there met the Afghan leaders, HRH Mohammad Hashim Khan, the prime minister, HRH Sardar Shah Mahmood Khan, and some other princes at a conference. The talks were friendly and the Afghan princes and officials found Iskander highly impressive and fully versed in tribal matters.

"We were quickly able to arrange a settlement," writes Mirza. "I wished all disputes could have been settled in one meeting. Sardar Mohammad Hashim kept to the point so everything was settled all right." He was able to get the Afridi Maliks of the Khyber to agree to these decisions and Mohammad Afzal Khan Shinwari went back home.

A similar incident occurred in October 1939 after the outbreak of World War II. Iskander Mirza suddenly received information that two relatives of the Afghan royal family had fled to Tirah and were staying with Nawab Zaman Khan Kuki Khel. From there they moved to an Afridi lashkar headed by one Khushhal Khan who had raided Peshawar District in 1938. With the support of these two dissident Sardars, Khushhal Khan was reported to be marching on Jalalabad on his way to Kabul in an effort to vanquish the Afghan royal family. By exercising strong political pressure, and threats of air action, Iskander Mirza forced the Afridi lashkar to retreat back to Tirah, and consequently obtained the surrender of the two Sardars.

Iskander Mirza notes that the Maliks cooperated fully and that helped in evading an Afridi war. The deployment of some thirty aeroplanes in Peshawar was observed by the

tribes. Nawab Zaman Khan was discouraged by the disagreeable possibility of having his home bombed. Iskander Mirza showed him air photographs of his two large houses in Tirah to make it clear that they had his number.

During the war years in 1939-40, Iskander Mirza, as the Political Agent of Khyber, kept himself busy with a secret mission. During the war, the British Government conducted an anti-Axis Muslim propaganda through a secret network of mullahs on government payroll. This idea seems to have been born in a discussion between Cunningham and Iskander Mirza in 1939. The scheme was started by Sir Arthur Parsons, who acted as the governor in Cunningham's absence, when the latter went home on leave in August 1939. Parsons entrusted retired Indian government servants, Khan Bahadur Kuli Khan, (the father of Aslam Khattak and Kalsoom Saifullah) to accomplish the task of organizing this propaganda. To ensure the utmost secrecy, little was put on paper, instead Kuli Khan received verbal instructions from the Governor.

Cunningham made three groups among the mullahs. One contingent consisting of beginners was handed to the local Khans. Those slightly superior in rank reported to the Deputy Commissioner. The senior ones had a direct link with Governor Cunningham himself. A list of the mullahs from Noushera and Peshawar was handed over to Iskander Mirza. He was handling a good deal of the propaganda.

Kuli Khan established a network of mullahs, who in return for doing propaganda in favor of the British and against the Germans and Russians, received regular allowances from the government through him. The line taken by Kuli Khan was that Bolshevism was the enemy of Islam and that the Germans were cooperating with the Bolsheviks against Islam, and against religion in general. These were some temporary difficulties when Britain and the Soviet Union became allies. Iskander Mirza records that this made the situation slightly awkward for those who, from the end of 1939 to early 1941, were directing an intensive anti-Bolshevik propaganda campaign. "I was also involved in this and, as the Political Agent, Khyber, I was doing a good deal of propaganda. When I took up the matter with some of the Afridi and Mohamand Maliks, they all had a good laugh. They told me that they had never taken seriously all the stuff that I used to push out with regard to the Russians."

In Cunningham's opinion, the propaganda had an enormous effect. In 1941, the informers were sent out to spy on the mullahs and their activities in the mosques. The Governor found the results most encouraging. On Eid-uz-Zuha, for example, no less than seventeen pro-British speeches were reported from Peshawar district in which Islamic preaching was mixed with strong anti-Japanese stuff.

Early in 1940, Iskander Mirza was appointed Deputy Commissioner, Peshawar and Political Agent, Mohmands. He was the first Indian to hold these posts.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### "QUIT INDIA" MOVEMENT

The historic Lahore Resolution declared; "It is the considered view of this session of the All India Muslim League that no constitutional plan would be workable in this country, or acceptable to the Muslims, unless it is designed on the following basic principles; that, the geographically contiguous units are demarcated into a region which should be so constituted, with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary, that the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority, as in the North-Western and Eastern Zones of India, should be grouped to constitute units which shall be autonomous and sovereign."

A few days prior to the Lahore Resolution, Iskander Mirza, during his long stay in the Frontier, had gained much experience which helped in shaping the later part of his life. He never forgot the things that he learnt there: how to achieve his own purpose by engaging various factions in conflict and thus neutralizing an opposition which threatened him. However, despite being a government servant, Iskander Mirza, in the wake of prevalent political scenario, welcomed the Lahore Resolution. He was also well aware of the fact that the Resolution had not defined Pakistan. There were no repercussions along the border because, quite honestly, the Muslim League was a non entity there. "Whenever I said that to people in India, they used to get very angry and thought I was anti-Muslim; I was only telling the truth," says Iskander Mirza.

Along with Deputy Commissioner's office, Iskander Mirza had also been appointed Political Agent, Mohmands. He had enjoyed his previous job (Political Agent, Khyber) about which he frequently said, "What a delightful charge I have!"

His new post was, indeed a different one in character. In ordinary times, the DC had to work twelve hours a day, and now it was much worse because of the war. "We were all wondering what the Congress would do," writes Mirza, "now that we were at the beginning of a world-wide conflagration. The stage was set for the Indian politicians to jump in and take charge, manipulating the situation to their advantage. The intentions of the political leaders were clear. All important issues pertaining to the future of India surfaced and there remained no speculations. Soon after I had taken over as DC, Peshawar, the talks between Gandhi and Viceroy Lord Linlithgow broke down. The high command of the Congress directed all the Congress ministries in the provinces to resign, and in pursuance of this directive, Dr Khan Saheb and his colleagues also laid down office. The province with the largest Muslim majority had come under Governor rule.

In the 1937 election, the Muslim League had not been able to win even a single seat from the NWFP. Wali Khan relates that this was a big disappointment for the British. In his letter (16 January, 1940), the Viceroy wrote that Jinnah came to see him.

Referring to Dr. Khan Saheb's resignation, the Viceroy asked whether there was any possibility of another party forming the government in the Frontier province. Jinnah borrowed some time so as to consult his colleagues before answering the question. He also said that it would be a good idea to request the Governor to take special interest in the matter.

One month later, Jinnah told the Viceroy that he had spoken with some other leaders of the League. They felt that they were not in a position to form a government themselves. However, they believed that they could give it a shot if Cunningham, the Governor of NWFP, could assure them of his cooperation. Then Jinnah enumerated the advantages of this action. If the Muslim League succeeded in forming a government in the NWFP, it would be a slap on the face of the Congress. Besides, the news that a Muslim majority province had formed a non-Congress government would spread like wildfire. Mr. Jinnah added that, he was most anxious to see this through if it was possible, because he was confident that there could be no other salutary lesson for the Congress than this. This step as Mr. Jinnah believed, would be a big blow for the Congress, compelling its leaders to import some flexibility to their attitude in the wake of the changing political scenario in the North-West Frontier Province. To implement the plan, Governor Cunningham and his Deputy Commissioner Iskander Mirza, had to play a role in mobilizing the mullahs to now conduct an anti-Congress propaganda campaign.

The token civil disobedience movement had been started by some selected Khudai Khidmatgars and Congressmen. The anti-state demonstrations consisted of a few workers going into public places asking people not to help the government in the war. Offering themselves for arrest was also a part of this movement.

Civil disobedience activity by a few individuals later turned into the famous Quit India Movement in August 1942. After the Japanese successes in the war in early 1942, the Congress and the British once more tried to find a formula for operation. A prominent member of the British War Cabinet, Sir Stafford Cripps, was sent to India to seek agreement on a plan which had been worked out in London. But the British proposals were turned down by the Congress, as the British insisted on retaining ultimate control of India during the war, and because the plan openly recognized the possibility of Pakistan.

The Congress demanded immediate British withdrawal from India. On August 9, Gandhi and other Congress leaders were arrested. The party and its committees were declared unlawful. Serious disorders followed, which the government met by mass

arrests. By the end of 1942 about 60,000 persons had been sent to the lock-up and about a thousand had lost their lives in the disturbances.

In the NWFP, there was virtually no trouble in the beginning. On August 19, governor Cunningham wrote in his diary: "Civil Disobedience Movement is not going too badly in this province in spite of serious riots and shooting down of people. Liquor shops have been picketed in Peshawar and some other towns, but people can apparently get what they want from the backdoor. As it hurts nobody and is a good face saver for the Congress, I don't propose to stop it. Iskander Mirza told me today that Dr. Khan Saheb has left for Kashmir. "I sent Khan Saheb a message a few days ago, that if he meant to start on the slogan 'English leave India,' then he must come and say. it to me first. In that case I would take him at his word and go off to England, taking Mrs. Khan Saheb (an English lady) with me."

On August 22, Cunningham reported that the situation was satisfactory. He attributed the failure of the campaign so far to hardening Muslim opinion against the Congress all over the Frontier.

Cunningham recalls: "However, the Congress was still there. Iskander Mirza told me that Ali Gul Khan had said that he would see things did not boil up enough to make me curtail my trip to Kashmir. So far Congress efforts have fallen flat.... Iskander Mirza says that they will start something around 14th September, including a declaration of independence, but nothing serious is likely to happen until 10th September."

On 13. September, Cunningham writes: "Congress had a meeting today at which they are said to have decided to picket courts intensively, and by force if necessary. As Dr. Khan had promised me to pay a casual visit tomorrow, it is difficult to believe that they really mean business." On September 15, Cunningham notes: "Khan Saheb came to dinner last evening. He was wearing a shirt with the faintest suggestion of pink in it, which I suppose satisfied his sense of obligation to the Red Shirts. He was in a friendly mood, but I deliberately refrained from talking politics. Iskander Mirza tells me today that it has had a good effect, and that Khan Saheb himself is against any kind of trouble being given to the government, but he is somewhat at the mercy of Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Qazi Ataullah and others. They are trying to push him into the forefront, in order to get him into trouble. I told Iskander Mirza that our policy, therefore, should be to allow him to remain in the forefront, as we know that he will do nothing extreme..."

However, in October, the Congress leaders changed their mind again and once more decided to picket law courts, but this picketing was never on such a scale as to worry the authorities. The picketers were simply cordoned off from the courts and in the evenings they were allowed to go home. On 27 October, Abdul Ghaffar Khan was arrested.



Iskander Mirza's account about the disturbance sheds more light on the real law and order situation in Peshawar district. He had learnt to deal with a whole species of opportunists, intriguers and marauders.

## CHAPTER NINE

### FINAL ENCOUNTER

Iskander Mirza had realized that this time it would not be a easy job, and he had to make serious preparations. Sir George Cunningham sent for him. They discussed in detail the situation in the province. Cunningham was rightly of the opinion that the NWFP's position was quite different from that of the rest of India, and whatever directives the Government of India might send, he would maintain his liberty of action and would not fill the jails. He directed Mirza to try to control the situation with as few arrests as possible, and, above all, avoid shooting. He added that Peshawar was the focal point in the whole province and that he relied on him to overcome all difficulties. He would back him up to the hilt.

Iskander Mirza thanked the governor for the confidence that he had placed in him and asked him not give too much importance to police reports: "My experience as a government officer in these districts has convinced me that news is usually exaggerated, and sometimes faked." However, Iskander had to concentrate on Khudai Khidmatgars activity in the city.

"We maintained that we would be happy if the agitations would be dispersed, as, with our sophisticated equipment, we could easily deal with any sort of agitation to bring the government to a standstill. The reverse would have been the case, as with our limited police force, we could not have operated in many places. The only way we could have succeeded in suppressing the mob was by resorting to shooting," but this was a course of action in complete variance with Iskander's own training and to the instructions given to him by Cunningham.

The Khudai Khidmatgars had gathered at Islamia High School (now Government High School No. 3) in Peshawar city. They established a camp, which controlled, housed and fed about 1,500 workers. The Deputy Commissioner deployed as much police force as he could in the city and awaited events. Every morning, the Khudai Khidmatgars would parade in front of the school and at about 9 am their commanders would harangue them, asking them to sacrifice their lives, and march them off towards the cantonment.

On a railway bridge near the boundary of the cantonment, Iskander Mirza used to deploy a heavy contingent of police, armed with batons while a company of British troops with rifles waited behind.

Iskander Mirza narrates that on the first day, about a hundred Red Shirts got over the bridge and entered the session court, where they messed up things and stopped work. After that, the Deputy Commissioner and his force improved their dispositions, and no Khudai Khidmatgar succeeded in getting into the cantonment area. Every day, the workers of the movement would make a rush at the force chanting the slogan, Allah-o-Akbar.

It was an interesting game. The law enforcing agencies had to use batons for stopping them, In their effort to push the angry mob back, as Mirza claims, sometimes quite a few Red Shirts were injured, and some of them bled profusely.

Thus, taking the victims of the clash with them, the Khudai Khidmatgar workers used to parade in the city, as a protest against the government and to arouse the people's sympathies for the movement. The conflict was watched by large crowds, who began to join in slinging large stones at the police. Some policemen were injured. Iskander Mirza also received a large stone upon his thigh and the bruises made him lame for some time 'We had always managed to keep back the Red Shirts. We arrested large numbers every day, and kept them in a pen till sunset," he noted.

Things were worsening. The encounters carried on throughout the month. Iskander Mirza noticed that people got more excited and the volume of the people from the city as well as the villages joining the protest rallies increased. At an average, twenty to fifty thousand people attended different rallies; mostly belonging to the Afridi and Mohmand tribes. He could see that the situation could not last much longer and the government would have to, sooner or later, resort to shooting at the mob. He had the support of two companies of British troops always standing by. Iskander Mirza further noted that firing meant heavy casualties among the masses and a wave of resentment and hatred against the government would spread all across the province and the tribal areas. And to counter this, the establishment might have to enter into a full scale tribal war at a time when Iskander Mirza was short of supplies and troops.

Iskander Mirza, faced with this great problem, discussed the conditions prevalent in the province with Sir George Cunningham, who told him to do what he thought best to resolve the crisis. Iskander Mirza then talked to Dr. Khan Saheb, who laughed and said that Pakhtuns were ready to die in thousands. Iskander's determination not to shoot down Pakhtuns, among who he had lived for twenty years and with whom he had developed close associations was reinforced, because he was quite sure things would get worst that way.

Finally, Iskander Mirza sought to deal with the situation in quite different manner. Through his secret agents, he got in touch with two Khudai Khidmatgar generals and started paying them to work for him inside their organization. At this critical moment, Iskander sent for them and suggested that they should take charge of the food

arrangements in their camp in Peshawar city. They succeeded in doing so. After carrying out his instructions, they came to see him and Iskander gave them some long phials containing castor oil and told them to pour the contents of each phial into the tea cauldrons before the morning tea was served. This they succeeded in doing. The thousand Khudai Khidmatgars, as recalls Iskander Mirza, after taking the doctored tea, paraded before the commander, and before long, started breaking ranks and running all around. Most of them ran towards the bank of the canal nearby. They could not get rid of their trousers quickly enough as they had wound themselves with their turbans to deaden police blows. But this very action made it impossible for them to remove their trousers and most of them spoilt them, a great disgrace amongst Pakhtuns. In short, the sorry state of the Khudai Khidmatgars on the canal bank was witnessed by large crowds of Peshawar citizens who laughed their hearts out, and whenever they saw any Red Shirt in the city they used to laugh, and no Red Shirt dared to come to the city in uniform, concludes Mirza. He claims that the movement collapsed from that. The nine Congress doctors, who sat in solemn conclave, gave their opinion that the sudden attack of violent dysentery was the aftermath of a severe epidemic of malaria which was rampant in Peshawar district during the summer.

## CHAPTER TEN

### POLITICAL MANEUVERS OF MUSLIM LEAGUE

In March 1943, the Nawab of Bhopal invited Iskander Mirza for a tiger hunt. On his way back to Peshawar, Mirza made a brief stay in Delhi and called on Nawabzada Liaqat Ali Khan, an old friend. Liaqat Ali Khan informed him that Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah wished to see him immediately. The Quaid already had social contacts with Iskander's mother, Dilshad Begum.

The Quaid asked whether he was a Muslim. He replied, "Yes, I am a Muslim, and we have been Muslims since the days of the Prophet (PBUH) as we are not converts." Then the Quaid asked, "Do you consider me the leader of the Indian Muslims?" Iskander Mirza said, Yes. The Quaid then came straight to the point and said that he was trying to form Muslim governments in areas where Muslim population predominated. But the League had not been able to establish its government in any of the provinces. In the course of the discussion, Quaid further said he had been reliably informed that he (Iskander Mirza) was the only one who could help in forming a Muslim League government in the NWFP, and if he accepted Quaid as leader of the Muslims from all over India, then he must do it.

Iskander Mirza said he was only a Deputy Commissioner. This task could be accomplished by none other than governor Cunningham. Mirza explained that the Muslim League did not exist in that province, and its leader, Sardar Aurangzeb Khan was a corrupt person. The Quaid insisted that Iskander Mirza should help to straighten out things for the League and should serve the interests of the Muslims of India, ignoring Sardar Aurangzeb Khan's reputation and the standing of the Muslim League in the NWFP.

Iskander again tried to explain to the Quaid that, although Cunningham had been very kind to him, he was not the kind of man who accepts anybody's advice against his own better judgment.

Iskander Mirza did put up a strong argument to convince the Quaid that it was no use trying to consolidate the Muslim League's position in the NWFP. However, it is also true that Iskander Mirza was probably among the few officials of British day who were deeply involved in the League's affairs. The party's general secretary, Mian Ziauddin says: "Mirza supported the Muslim League throughout. Using all the powers at his disposal, he did whatever he could to help the party."

However, he was strongly against the leadership of Aurangzeb Khan. As Aurangzeb himself claimed, in the spring of 1943, Iskander Mirza tried to undo the Muslim League's endeavors to form a government in the province by opposing him in a meeting of the Muslim League high command. On March 11, 1942, Sardar Aurangzeb Khan wrote to the Quaid: "The NWFP is a strange land. The Muslim League, besides its natural enemies, has to fight additional enemies in the shape of Muslim officials. There are factions which don't want to see the Muslim League's dream of forming a government in the province realized, and one such faction is led by Major Iskander Ali Mirza ... and the other is led by Major Abdur Rahim." (11/3/43 QAP File 239).

When, in June 1944, the Action Committee of the All India Muslim League visited the Frontier, Qazi Isa stayed with Iskander Mirza while Liaqat Ali Khan resided at Mian Ziauddin's place. The rest of the members stayed with Aurangzeb Khan. Iskander Mirza took a very active part in the discussions during the visit. In the evenings, Mirza would go to Mian Ziauddin's house where, according to Mian Saheb, "Liaqat Ali Khan would ask us (Mian Ziauddin and, Iskander Mirza but not Aurangzeb Khan) about the background of the people whom they had met during the day, and we used to give him the necessary information." Another official, who by then was taking an active part in the League's affairs was Major Abdur Rahim. Major Rahim was, however, extremely antagonistic towards Iskander Mirza.

Earlier, Governor Cunningham had not been in favor of a Muslim League government in the NWFP. During the Quit India Movement, Lord Linlithgow again took up the question of a Muslim government in the province with Cunningham but the latter did not think the prospects were favorable. The question was, however, kept alive throughout the autumn.

In early 1943, the Congress party in the Frontier seemed to have been gravely weakened, and Cunningham had avoided the great difficulties which might have been created for the government if there had been massive arrests in the previous year. Cunningham's biographer, Norval Mitchell, notes that the general trend was to take advantage of the circumstances and work for the formation of a Muslim League government.

A fortnight after his return to Peshawar, Iskander Mirza received a telephonic message from the Quaid through a mutual friend, urging him to hurry on with the formation of a ministry. "I was at my wit's end as I had not made an inch of progress," recalls Mirza. "However, God was on our side. Sir George Cunningham had been on a visit to Kabul, and when he returned, he at once asked me to go and see him. I had hardly sat down when he remarked that the Government of India was pressing him to form a new ministry in the province as they were most anxious to demonstrate that Congress was not the only party, and that popular government could function, despite their Quit India Movement."

Mirza further notes that the situation was completely normal and he could honestly say that the time was favorable. "I must say here that under no circumstances would I have ever dreamt of giving any but an honest view to my Governor, for whom I had feelings of deep affection."

When asked who should be called upon, to lead the government, he put forward the name of the Muslim League as this was the only party in the arena. And as Sardar Aurangzeb Khan was the leader of this party in the province, he became the automatic choice, thus saving Mirza the distasteful job of suggesting his name.

When the viceroy visited the province in April 1943, the possibility of forming a Muslim League ministry was discussed and it was decided that the idea might be encouraged in general terms. Sardar Aurangzeb Khan appeared to have almost completed his job of forming a ministry in April, helped, of course, by defections from the Congress members. He was becoming more hopeful towards end of April and the beginning of May. "On May 13 Aurangzeb came to see me at 9 am," notes Cunningham in his diary, "He showed me a letter which said that the two Sikh members would follow him, and I finally made up my mind to ask him to form a ministry. But I asked him to come again in the evening so that I could have time to go through some constitutional points. He came again at 7 am and I asked him informally to assist me in the formation of ministry. He said he would take about eight or ten days to fix it up, and promised to keep me informed about the progress daily. I noticed that the Khans have developed a strong feeling in favor of Aurangzeb during the last week or so."

On the morning of May 25, it was possible for the governor to revoke Section 93 of the Government of India Act, 1935, and the League-Akali coalition ministry was sworn-in at 10 am. The new ministry consisted of the following: Sardar Aurangzeb Khan (chief minister), (Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar (finance minister),— Mohammad Samin Jan (education minister), Abdur Rahman Khan (information minister) and Sardar Ajit Singh (minister for public works).

This installation of Aurangzeb Khan's Ministry entirely a League affair in the garb of a coalition was a sensational development for the All India Muslim League. It raised the alluring prospect of constricting the Congress fold and helped in shifting loyalties in favor of the League in a province which would form a vital part of the future Pakistan. Establishing the Leagues domination over the Frontier through the exercise of power and privileges of office, suddenly seemed to have paid off. This development even led to Quaid's belief that the Muslims of the NWFP had sided with the League.

Regarding the formation of Muslim League Ministry in the NWFP, Iskander Mirza's version bears some more interesting points: "I don't know if Quaid-e-Azam really thought this was made possible because of me alone," he says "I am convinced he was

too clever to think so. The Sardar was now getting out of my hands and requested for my help in the formation of a ministry. The human factor was useless. I had my eyes on Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar. He was the leader of the Ahrars, a fanatical Islamic group. The Ahrars were bitter opponents of the Muslim League, and by a peculiar chance, allies of the Congress. Nishtar was certainly not fond of Jinnah. He had made a violently abusive speech against Jinnah the previous year at the Mahabat Khan Mosque in the presence of a friend of mine, Maulana Jamal Khan. Nishtar was a native of Peshawar city and I knew him. I appealed to Nishtar and he readily agreed to join the Muslim League and was taken by Aurangzeb into his cabinet."

The Muslim League succeeded in forming a government in the NWFP with the help of the British. Actually the League Ministry was the product of political maneuvers and not a result of the Frontier people's demand for the restoration of provincial autonomy.



## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### THE QUAID'S JEHAD

"The Rise and Fall of a President" is the title of the book that President Iskander Mirza had written. He lived a long time with his rise when Pakistan dawned, as well as with his fall, when Pakistan fell victim to military dictatorship.

After serving for a short time as Political Agent to the Orissa State, Mirza was appointed joint secretary in the Ministry of Defence in New Delhi in 1946.

In April 1946, he received a telegram notifying him for this position. It was an unusual decision, for this post was not a part of the Indian Political Service. Iskander Mirza was sure that this post was created for him by Sir Ambrose Dundas, who had served as chief secretary in the NWFP and who was secretary of the Defence Ministry at that time.

The set-up in the Ministry, as Iskander Mirza describes, was as follows: Defence Member, Field Marshal Sir Claude Auchinleck (who was also commander-in-chief), Secretary, Sir Ambrose Dundas, an Additional Secretary, Mr. A. S. Bhalja, and two joint secretaries, Mr. Philip Mason and Iskander Mirza. This team worked in perfect harmony. The work was not as onerous as that of deputy commissioner, Peshawar, but was tiring enough and a good deal of time was taken up in committee meetings. Iskander Mirza writes: "Nawab Mushtaq Ahmad Gurmani was in charge of rehabilitation of demobilized soldiers. He hardly did any work. He was just passing time to get a better job which he got soon afterwards. He was posted as prime minister of Bahawalpur state, greatly to the annoyance of a Muslim ICS officer who thought he had the job in his pocket."

When Iskander Mirza joined the Defence Ministry, the drama of the Red Fort trials of Indian National Army (INA) officers had met its farcical drop scene. The INA was a product of the British military disaster in the East. Subhash Chander Bose was its creator. The trial, in Iskander Mirza's opinion, was a blunder as it gave a great deal of publicity to the accused officers. Sir George Cunningham too had advised to drop the matter. But it was not to be. "The damage was done; politics had been brought into the army," notes Iskander Mirza.

Commander-in-Chief Auchinleck was also of the opinion that if the British were honest about leaving India, there could be no justification for reinforcing the British garrison in the country. (Auchinleck to Viceroy, 22 August, 1945). Both, Auchinleck and Wavell were against the idea of testing the loyalty of Indian troops by engaging them to repress their own countrymen, and advised Whitehall not to use Indian troops in Indonesia.

Being imbued with nationalist ideas, they might not wish to suppress freedom movements elsewhere (John Connel, Auchinleck, pages 823-4).

Popular unrest at the trial of the three INA officers, against whom the charge of waging war against the king was leveled, sparked demonstrations and riots in all the big cities of India in November 1945 which continued till February 1946. British officials did not know what the policy of the government was, and the authority of the government was being undermined. The three INA men, Captain Shahnawaz, a Muslim, Captain P. K. Sehgal, a Hindu and Lieutenant Gurbux Singh Dhillon, a Sikh, according to Nehru, "Became symbols of India's struggle for independence ... The trial dramatized the old contest: England versus India." Private Secretary to Auchinleck, Major-General Shahid Hamid, suggests that Auchinleck misjudged the mood of the people. Nor did the Labour Government realize that it was becoming a political trial, a trial of strength between them and the Congress. They thought they were holding another Nuremberg Trial. When the people protested and demonstrated against the trial, Wavell, Auchinleck and the British government did not know what to do and were anxious to get out of the mess, somehow. But they were trapped.

According to Iskander Mirza, the Congress helped some officers, and the Muslim League too intervened to help some others. The whole thing ended in a fiasco. As Iskander Mirza observes, "Lord Pethic Lawrence, with his committee, was in Delhi, trying hard to solve the Hindu-Muslim problem. They actually came to a settlement with the concurrence of the Quaid-e- Azam, Mahatama Gandhi and some other Congress leaders. But Pundit Nehru made a speech afterwards which amounted to a repudiation of all that had been agreed upon earlier. This gave Quaid-i-Azam the opportunity to withdraw from his commitment, and he announced that nothing but Pakistan would satisfy the Muslims. The Viceroy, Field Marshal Lord Wavell, notes Iskander Mirza, then asked the Hindu and Muslim leaders to form an interim government. Jinnah refused while the Congress agreed, and an interim government was formed with Nehru as the senior member of the Council of Ministers.

Quaid-e-Azam felt that he had been let down by the British. He had assumed that the Congress would not be allowed to join the interim government because of its conditional acceptance of the 16th May statement as well as its rejection of the statement of 16th June.

Mirza also records that it led to Hindu-Muslim riots on a larger scale in Bengal and Bihar. The Muslims of Calcutta observed a 'Direct Action' day, followed by mass violence. Rioting continued in Calcutta in which many persons were killed and over 1300 injured. The police opened fire on several occasions. All services were suspended, curfew was imposed and Section 144 was promulgated. This action succeeded in defusing the tension in Calcutta considerably.

The police and the army, according to Iskander Mirza, did admirable work, consequently proving that the fears in the minds of the British administrators that the Indian Army wasn't reliable anymore were baseless. Auchinleck, however, felt that the Muslim troops might not take action against Muslims, or the Hindu troops against Hindus. He summed up the general situation as unpredictable and full of potential dangers. He felt that as long as the Indian Army remained loyal, he had sufficient force to deal with any situation.

With the passage of time, the Muslim League realized that its decision not to join the interim government was not paying off, and notified the Viceroy that it was ready to join now. "Soon after taking over the communication portfolio, Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar asked me several times to become the director general of Civil Aviation. I had absolutely no knowledge of aviation and declined the offer," notes Iskander Mirza.

In early 1947, Lord Wavell was replaced by another famous military leader, Lord Louis Mountbatten. Working with the Defence Ministry, Iskander Mirza was of the opinion that despite the fact that the Muslims' struggle for Pakistan had gained momentum, there were no signs of the British government surrendering to it. It was in February 1947 that the Quaid telephoned Iskander Mirza and asked to come over to see him in the evening.

Mirza thought the Quaid was handling a complex situation quite cleverly. The Quaid started by asking Iskander Mirza if he still regarded him (the Quaid) as the leader of the Muslims of India. Iskander Mirza immediately replied, "Yes". The Quaid told him he was sure he would not be able to get Pakistan unless some serious trouble arose for the government, and the best place to start such a trouble was the Frontier province and the adjacent tribal areas. The Quaid thought it advisable for the Muslims to register their anger with the British regarding their decision to hand over the country to the Congress. He explained that if the Muslims failed to get Pakistan through negotiations, they would get it by force, that is, by waging a war. Iskander Mirza reveals that the Quaid wanted him to resign from the Defence Ministry so as to go to the tribal territory and start a jihad.

"His request took my breath away", writes Iskander Mirza. "My associations with the British were of long-standing. I had a very good relationship with them. With Hindus too, my relations were excellent and I had some good friends among them. Having worked for such a long time in different political agencies, I knew how efficient the British system was to control the tribes. They had established a remarkable intelligence network. Besides, the uprising, if it took place, would mean bloodshed. This could only take the form of raids on the border villages in the settled areas which meant loss of a lot of innocent lives. All tills passed through my mind in a flash." Iskander Mirza, however, decided to get on with the Quaid's plan. "If the Muslim leader, with all his knowledge of the political ramifications, was of the view that a certain course was

necessary to safeguard the future interests of the Muslims, I felt it was not for me to raise objections."

By spending money liberally, Iskander Mirza succeeded in causing some trouble in Waziristan, Tirah and the Mohmand agencies. He gave an estimate of ten million rupees to make the plan a success. He also insisted on fabricating a cover up story before he could disappear in the tribal territory. The Quaid had already anticipated these requirements: he had a cover-up story with him as well as the money. Iskander's visit was camouflaged by an appointment with the Khan of Kalat, and the money was provided by the Nawab of Bhopal. Iskander Mirza met the latter the same day that he arrived there, and Nawab Sahib placed Rs. 20,000 at Mirza's disposal for preliminary activities. The Quaid also gave Mirza an assurance that if anything happened to him, his family would be taken care of.

Iskander Mirza states that next day he began to make plans. It was an important undertaking and required time to organize. "I am sure Mr. Jinnah was too shrewd to expect anything spectacular. A few tribal uprisings would have been enough for this purpose."

The drama went on. Iskander Mirza sent for some of his friends from the tribal area, and from Peshawar and Dera Ismail Khan. After a good deal of discussion, he drew up a plan for approaching the Waziristan, Tirah and Mohmand tribes; the people he had worked with and knew well. It was in early May when the Quaid sent for Iskander Mirza again and told him that as Pakistan was going to be conceded, the plan was being abandoned. "To be honest, I sighed with relief." notes Iskander Mirza.

## CHAPTER TWELVE

### TOWARDS D-DAY

Soon after the withdrawal of the jihad scheme, the British government announced that it would hand over power on 15th August, 1947. "We were all given calendars indicating the number of days left before the D-day," notes Iskander Mirza.

The task, as the Joint Defence Secretary thought, was enormous. Its completion spoke volumes for the esprit de corps of all concerned. A simple transfer of power was not an easy task, let alone handing over power to two countries at a time. Since both India and Pakistan were to be liberated, it truly became a Herculean task.

"I must mention Chaudhry Mohammad Ali, the military financial advisor, who represented Pakistan at the Steering Committee. He was at his best in that operation. His experience in the audit and accounts service made him highly efficient." notes Mirza. In its meeting held on April 26, 1947, the committee had its papers submitted by the Member Finance, together with comments thereon prepared by the Member Defence and Commander-in-Chief.

The Commander-in-Chief fully appreciated the great importance of ensuring complete secrecy in the matter. His reason for bringing the matter before the committee was to get members' views in his report to the British government having his recommendations with regard to the formation of the new government in India. Pakistan was an issue which must be faced and the division of the armed forces was one of its most important implications.

Member Defence emphasized all the points that he had written in the report with respect to division of the armed forces during the partition. Such a division of forces was expected to be followed by a political decision in favor of Pakistan. In case that decision had been taken, it would have sparked off trouble in the country as its consequence.

Member Finance agreed that the decision about the armed forces must obviously follow the political decision but there must be a plan in readiness to go ahead with, if the demand of a separate homeland for the Muslims was accepted. Furthermore, nothing should be done which, in any way, would complicate the existing problem.

The Commander-in-Chief summed up as follows:

- a) The issue should not be put to the cabinet until the political decision has been taken.
- b) The whole affair should be kept secret and those members of the committee, who did not need the papers for subsequent reference, should return them to the cabinet secretariat at the end of the meeting for safe custody. The papers would be re-issued when the subject was again put on the agenda.
- c) After the division, the armed forces could probably assume their respective commands by 1st June, 1948.

According to the Commander-in-Chief, dividing the army and then sending it to India and Pakistan to take control on the same day was dangerous. He stressed the unique position of the armed forces and their reputation for impartiality in the existing state of communal tension. He pointed out that he had borne the responsibility for law and order in the country and he must keep it that way during the transition period. During that time, the C-in-C had British troops to fall back on in a case of dire necessity.

After 1st June, 1948, the British troops would be withdrawn. However, the presence of reliable and impartial armed forces would be an imperative for both the countries. By unnecessarily hastening the process of separation, we might end up producing a situation in which the armed forces would not be in a position to deliver what was expected of them, much as the C-in-C would like to see the separation completed.

- d) It would be wiser to think in terms of pooling the forces of India and Pakistan, and though each would have its own GHQ there would be a federal GHQ in general control until the process of partition was completed without causing detriment to efficiency.
- e) Since the creation of Pakistan was announced, it would be imperative to put the armed forces on alert, so they might be mobilized immediately when required. He suggested that a direct communication network should be laid down so that the Commander-in-Chief might have easy access to the armed forces.
- f) The possibility of setting up a small 'high-level' committee be examined to consider, in secret, the outline of plans for going ahead with separation if it was necessary, and also on the possibility of holding measures regarding division and subsequently, posting of respective armed forces until the political decision was taken.

The Commander-in-Chief agreed that he could suggest a plan in broad outline only to determine the problems which would have to be tackled and the staff that he would require to undertake the work.

The committee decided that the issue should not be put to the cabinet until the political decision had been made. It directed the Commander-in-Chief to provide details regarding (a) the personnel of the small 'high- level' committee that he himself proposed to set up, and (b) general introduction to the problems he would have to tackle if the decision involving separation was taken. The terms of reference for the committee would be drawn up in that event by the Viceroy on the basis of the political decision.

The committee also authorized the Commander-in-Chief to hold up the posting of troops in India and Pakistan at his discretion until the political decision was reached. The guiding principle being that no action should be taken which would complicate the process of partition, should it finally become necessary.

In early June 1947, a proposal to retain the Indian army undivided was debated. When two separate states were being created, argued Iskander Mirza, the idea of not dividing the armed forces was absurd. However, ultimately it was settled that the army would be divided on the lines of Muslims opting for Pakistan and Hindus and Sikhs for India. According to Iskander Mirza, this was not difficult; rather the division of armaments and stores was difficult. It was decided that this should be carried out by the Supreme Commander, Sir Claude Auchinleck, as a military operation without any political interference. But the time was too short and the politicians could not be excluded.

As the joint secretary, the task of watching over the division in the interests of Pakistan, as he himself refers, fell on Iskander Mirza. It was obvious that Pakistan was going to be very short of essential supplies, especially in tanks and ammunition. Mirza used his powers to concentrate as much as he could on essential items of arsenal kept at Ferozepur. "We were sure that Ferozepur would come to Pakistan as the Muslim majority district under the partition of Punjab, which was being worked out by the tribunal set up under Radcliff. Later, Radcliff awarded Ferozepur to India. This was a serious blow which hamstrung our military right from the word go. We now had no arsenal in Pakistan," Iskander Mirza recalls.

About two months prior to D-day, the defence ministry constantly received reports through military and civil intelligence of a conspiracy in the Sikh princely states, and in East Punjab, to create communal disturbances with a view to kill Muslims, and thus driving them out to Pakistan. The Viceroy and the political leaders knew all about this but seemed incapable of doing much. Nobody was prepared to postpone the D-day, or delay the departure of British troops. When Pakistan declined to accept Lord Mountbatten as the joint governor general of the two new newly-independent states, Mountbatten no longer had much interest in the Muslims. There was a chance of settling the water dispute — the control over canal waters — by asking for a decision by Lord Spens' committee. But this was overlooked. Altogether, the situation was drifting from bad to worse. At a period when it was essential to have a strong administration,

and at a time when a reliable army was required to maintain law and order, the circumstances were taking a turn to the disadvantage of Pakistan. In Rawalpindi a general headquarters for the Pakistan army was being formed with Lt. General Sir Frank Messervy as the commander-in-chief and Lt. General Sir Douglas Gracy as chief, of the general staff. The air and naval headquarters were being built up at Karachi, which was selected by Jinnah as the seat of the government. The defence ministry too was located in Karachi.

The defence ministry train, which was carrying important documents, etc., never reached Rawalpindi as it was burnt in India at Bhatinda by the Sikhs, thus creating a grave problem for the new ministry. Sir Ambrose Dundas, the secretary of defence in India before the partition, opted for Pakistan. It was decided that he should remain in Delhi to supervise the division of stores, a very wise decision. Nevertheless, Mirza had to organize the ministry of defence in Karachi and Rawalpindi under extremely difficult conditions.

Iskander Mirza arrived in Karachi on August 18th, 1947. The ministry was located in the High Court building. Everyone and everything was scattered, with hardly any communications and there was a general shortage of stationery. The ministry of defence in Rawalpindi was much better as it was located in the old Northern Command Headquarters. The deputy defence secretary, Wing Commander Mikoy Hayes and the Chief Administrative Officer Mr. Ayton did a remarkable job and deserve all praise. Iskander Mirza only had one under-secretary, Ghaus, who too did a very good job. Mirza created so much trouble in the High Court building that the old Western Command Headquarter was allocated to the ministry of defence and he got his ministry under one roof, and established good telephone connections with Rawalpindi and Lahore.



## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

### EARLY FOLLIES

Mohammad Ali Jinnah had brought Pakistan into being, Iskander Mirza was of the opinion that Jinnah had shown great determination, and was always prepared for any action, if, in his view, it was necessary for a particular course. According to Mirza, Jinnah took no advice and acted on his own. He had no illusions about, the Muslim League.

It was immediately after the partition that Iskander Mirza saw Jinnah, the Governor-General of Pakistan, one day. "I said, in the course of conversation, that we must try to be considerate to the Muslim Leaguers as, after all, they had struggled for the creation of Pakistan." Jinnah immediately replied: "Who told you that the Muslim League brought Pakistan into being. I did it alone, with my stenographer."

Iskander Mirza further records that Jinnah was a very polite man unless something roused him. When Lord Mountbatten invited him to lunch to meet Prince Shah Mahmood Khan of Afghanistan, he refused saying, "If His Royal Highness wishes to see me, he can come to my home." Undoubtedly, Jinnah wished to emphasize his position as the leader of the Muslims. But the result was that this fine man, Shah Mahmood (Mirza suggests) was not friendly towards Pakistan at a very critical period when it would have been possible to settle all differences with Afghanistan in a friendly manner. All because Jinnah allowed his pride to run away with him.

Things were serious and critical. Iskander Mirza started getting one shock after another. One night, at about 9 pm, he was summoned to the foreign ministry. He found the prime minister, the deputy foreign minister, and the foreign secretary in deep conclave. The PM addressed him more or less as follows, Colonel Iskander Mirza, Junagadh has acceded to Pakistan and the government has accepted the accession. The Nawab of Junagadh has asked for military help which must be provided immediately." It is noteworthy that Nawab's domain was surrounded by India and the vast majority of his state's population was Hindu. As Stanley Wolpert notes in "*Jinnah of Pakistan*", the apolitical Nawab's shrewd diwan was a Sindhi landowner, Sir Shah Nawaz Bhutto (the enterprising father of Pakistan's late prime minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto). Sir Shah Nawaz Bhutto drafted the documents of accession on Jinnah's advice and personally delivered them to him. Nehru and Patel were outraged when they learnt of Junagadh's "treachery" and delayed military invasion of the state only till November, driving Muslim courtiers like Bhutto to sail from Veraval port to Karachi with their treasure and talents placed at Pakistan's service.

After hearing about the accession of Junagadh and request for Nawab's military help, Iskander Mirza was completely aghast, and had to exercise great control over his nerves so as to keep cool. He, however, respectfully replied that it was not a practical proposition. The only means of communication with Junagadh was by sea, and at that time there was only one unit fit for service, the frigate Godavari. The rest of the fleet was in the Indian harbor of Bombay, being repaired.

Iskander Mirza warned Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan and his associates that, "If foreign policy should run away from defence preparations, we would be courting disaster."

The request was all the more surprising to Iskander Mirza as Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan was also in charge of the defence and the foreign portfolios. "Our leaders were not interested in geography or details while formulating the policy."

Iskander Mirza further tells that no troops went to Junagadh because it was impossible. The ruling family was evacuated to Karachi by air, to its ultimate ruin. Politically, the acceptance of the accession was disastrous, Mirza suggests. There was no logic in Pakistan's protests when India accepted the accession of Kashmir since Pakistan had already set an example by accepting the accession of Junagadh, which was a predominantly Hindu area.

The situation of mass killing was much more serious. The Sikhs were on the rampage. They were clearing Eastern Punjab of Muslims, butchering hundreds daily, forcing thousands to flee westward, burning Muslim villages and homesteads. In their frenzy, at times, they even burnt their own houses too. This violence, as *The Times* special correspondent in Punjab reported on August 25, had been organized from the highest levels of Sikh leadership, and it was being done systematically, sector by sector. Some large towns like Amritsar and Jullundur were then quieter because there were no Muslims left. "In a two-hour air reconnaissance of the Jullundur district at the weekend, I must have seen 50 villages aflame," the correspondent noted.

Mass killing of Muslims in East Punjab and Delhi was in full swing. About a million were killed and there was mass exodus of the Muslim population of this area. Then killings of Hindu and Sikhs started in West Punjab which resulted in another mass exodus to the other side of the divide. According to Iskander Mirza, a joint force of the army under a British commander had been created to control and manage a smooth flow of people in both directions.

The mass migrations created a huge problem in West Punjab. This vast two-way migration of populations was certainly not visualized by Jinnah. Tears rolled down his cheeks several times as he spoke of the mass human misery. In his memoirs, Iskander Mirza notes that the exodus of the Hindus from the North West Frontier Province was

neither desired by the Hindu inhabitants nor by the vast majority of Pathans. It was brought about by the Kashmiri chief minister of the NWFP, Abdul Qayyum Khan.

Describing the situation in Sindh, Iskander Mirza suggests that the migration from Sindh province was completely unnecessary; there were no communal disturbances in the province and the relations between the two communities were cordial. Mirza, however, blames a Congress leader, Acharia Kirpalani, whose visit to Karachi and the interior of Sindh, sparked off mass migration from the province.

Iskander Mirza thinks that the Sindh migration was instigated by the communal section of the Indian National Congress with a view to bringing about the migration to Sindh of hundreds of thousands of Muslims from the United Provinces, the Central Provinces and Rajputana.

The settlement of these refugees in Sindh was haphazard and the town of Karachi was ruined in pursuance of the plan to create a UP enclave of Muslims. Later attempts to improve the sub-human conditions in which these refugees were living in Karachi, as Mirza concludes the question, were frustrated by political rivalries.

The matter, however, was not so simple. Immediately after independence, Sindh had to face problems like the separation of Karachi from Sindh, the influx and rehabilitation of refugees and the plight of the common folk, especially the *haris*. In 1949, a draft communication was forwarded to the Speaker of the Sindh legislative assembly by G.M. Syed to be submitted as a communication from the assembly.

According to the said document, it was Sindh, which with love and solicitousness in its heart, opened its doors to thousands of riot-stricken refugees, and did everything possible to promptly give them the comfort and solace they so badly needed. It was Sindh, which received with open arms, the early post-partition helpless immigrant brethren and immediately started absorbing them and owning them as its own kith and kin. Iskander Mirza thinks that, in return, Sindh had to face a plan to create a UP enclave in Sindh.

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

### DEFINING THE ROLE OF DEFENDERS

Defence Secretary Lt. Col. Iskander Mirza, who was also a member of the Defence Council and vice-president of the Defence Minister's committee, was closely involved in creation of the new armed forces of Pakistan. He attended the first meeting of Pakistan Defence Council on September 5-6, 1947, along with other members, including Liaqat Ali Khan, prime minister and minister of defence as Chairman. The meeting decided the role of Pakistan armed forces, as Major General Shaukat Riza records, in the following terms.

**A. Internal Defence:**

- i) In support of the Civil Government and the police to maintain law and order within the boundaries and territorial waters of West and East Pakistan.
- ii) In support of the political authorities in fulfilling their responsibility within the tribal areas and in preventing raids from tribal territory.

**B. External Defence:**

- i) To prevent aggression by a major power.
- ii) Within the resources available to the Pakistan Government, to plan for defence and to provide a framework for expansion in the event of attack by a major power. For this role, the Pakistan armed forces must be properly balanced as to the three services and in their organization, having regard to the reinforcement which may be received from other members of the Commonwealth. Their equipment and training must be of the standard required for war against a first class enemy.

Regarding a practical side of the issue, Pakistan had seen how the Junagadh fiasco arose because of Pakistan's military helplessness.

Mirza states that "Our navy was based in Karachi, where we had good naval depots and training centres. We pulled our ships out of Bombay (where they were undergoing repairs and renovation) in a hurry while they were in various stages of readiness. For the new air force, we already had two squadrons of fighters. We found twelve Tempest planes in crates in Karachi harbor. With my encouragement, M.A. Khuhro, the chief minister of Sindh at that time, seized the crates. But it transpired that the prime minister, Liaqat Ali Khan, had given his word to Sardar Patel that he would send these

aeroplanes on to India. My intention was either to keep the Tempests or to exchange them for double the number of Churchill tanks, our share of the division of pre-partition resources."

On the other hand, India treated Pakistan shabbily, even in such a petty matter as that of shoes. The Indians sent Pakistan P.T. shoes, which, because of their small size, could only fit Gurkhas. Iskander Mirza's diaries of those days were full of such incidents.

Out of these meager resources, an army, however, was created in a short span of time. Describing the role of the first British Commanders, Iskander Mirza observed that General Sir Frank Messervy, Commander-in-Chief of Pakistan army (till February 1948), and General Sir Douglas Gracy, Chief of Staff and then C-in-C, and others, including General Ross Mackay, worked day and night planning to create an army of seven infantry divisions with one armored brigade. Their combined efforts, as Mirza emphasizes, soon established the Pakistan Army as a fine fighting force. They established the Kakul Military College and the Staff College at Quetta where, after a short time, Pakistan was accepting officers from Commonwealth armies and Iran.

Iskander Mirza, however, admitted that the Air Force started in a bad way. It was very small, though it had some good Pakistani pilots. Air Vice Marshal R.L.R. Atcherley took over its command on February 19, 1949. In his very first message, he said: "The sole preoccupation of every individual in this Air Force, no matter in what sphere of activity he finds himself, is to keep our aircraft flying, ready to fight, equipped and trained for war, down to the last detail." From the time he took over command, says Mirza, the Pakistan Air Force never looked back. Atcherley raised the élan of the air force to an astounding degree. He was never defeated by difficulties. When he realized that he could not get the right sort of material for his officers, he established a school at Sargodha on the English Public School pattern, and a feeder school at Murree.

The navy was commanded by Rear Admiral Jefford, who according to Iskander Mirza, was loved by all officers and men. But with our scanty financial resources Pakistan could not do anything spectacular. Some destroyers were purchased, and in two years only "We were appreciably stronger," concludes Iskander Mirza.

In the early days, Pakistan had to take an important military decision related to the future of the NWFP. Pakistan could not continue to tie down troops in the great camps of Razmak and Wana in Waziristan. No money, men, or resources existed for this purpose and this point of view was pressed by Iskander Mirza from the Ministry of Defence in no uncertain terms. This point of view was backed on political grounds by Sir George Cunningham who, after a period of retirement in Scotland, had returned to his old post as Governor of the NWFP.

A conference on withdrawal was convened by the prime minister at Rawalpindi. Evacuation, Iskander Mirza claims, was resisted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but their objection had no solid basis. For the Foreign Ministry, colonel A.S.B. Shah argued that the tribes would rise and Afghanistan would send in troops.

Major General Shaukat Riza, on the other hand, suggested that for British officers, military life in Waziristan had the attractions of 'Beau Geste'. It had been romanticized by the tales of Rudyard Kipling. Naturally they were reluctant to accept the withdrawal. They warned that the evacuation would lead to uncontrollable trouble. Jinnah, however, refuting the argument, said, "If I have to keep their loyalty with armed force, I would rather not have them."

For some twenty years before World War II Waziristan had been a particularly troublesome area. In order to keep the tribes in a reasonable frame of mind, notes Major General, Shaukat Riza, the area was garrisoned by approximately 30,000 troops. This force was designated Waziristan Area Command with its headquarters in Dega, Ismail Khan. In October 1947, warning order for, operation was issued. On November 6, the resident commander announced the decision to a tribal jirga. The decision to evacuate Razmak, was speeded up because of events elsewhere. In the middle of December 1947, "Operation Gurzon" as it was sardonically named, was successfully completed. Mirza says that, the troops pulled out from North and South Waziristan without a casualty. Sir George, Cunningham himself marched with the troops, and not a shot was fired. It was carried out like pre-war Frontier operations. There were regular road-opening days when pickets protecting the road were occupied by troops. After the completion of the operation Waziristan Area and the subordinate brigade headquarters were disbanded. The troops were distributed to other formations.

"The success of the policy was proved time and again in later years," suggests Iskander Mirza "The fear that the Afghans would cross the Durand Line and take over Razmak and large slice of Waziristan has not materialized. The Afghans are far too experienced to tie up a division of their army in the wilds of Waziristan for no purpose whatsoever: while, in addition, burdening themselves with the task of controlling the Mahsuds and the Wana Wazirs", Iskander Mirza recorded in 1967-68.

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

### KASHMIR: A FAIR OFFER?

After the Junagadh fiasco, a messenger from Sardar Patel, who was in charge of the integration of the princely states, came to Karachi. According to Iskander Mirza, "Patel said that if we would lay off Hyderabad (Deccan), we could take Kashmir."

This is confirmed by Chaudhry Mohammad Ali too. He says that Sardar Patel, although a bitter enemy of Pakistan, was a greater realist than Nehru. In one discussion between the two prime ministers, at which Patel and Chaudhry Mohammad Ali were also present, Liaqat Ali Khan dwelt at length on the inconsistency of the Indian stand with regard to Junagadh and Kashmir. If Junagadh, despite its Muslim ruler's accession to Pakistan, belonged to India because of its Hindu majority, how could Kashmir, with its Muslim majority, become a part of India simply by virtue of its Hindu ruler having signed a conditional instrument of accession to India? If the instrument of accession signed by the Muslim ruler of Junagadh was of no validity, the instrument of accession signed by the Hindu ruler of Kashmir was also invalid. If the will of the people was to prevail in Junagadh, it must prevail in Kashmir as well.

When, according to Chaudhry Mohammad Ali, Liaqat Ali Khan made these incontrovertible points, Patel could not restrain himself and burst out: "Why do you compare Junagadh with Kashmir? Talk of Hyderabad and Kashmir, and we could reach an agreement." Patel's view at this time and even later was that India's effort to retain Muslim majority areas against the will of the people was a source of weakness and not of strength to India. He felt that if India and Pakistan agreed to let Kashmir go to Pakistan and Hyderabad to India, the problem of Kashmir and of Hyderabad could be solved peacefully and to the mutual advantage of the two countries. Iskander Mirza suggests that it was a fair offer; but the government of Pakistan let it go.

Meanwhile, the situation in Kashmir came to the boil. The Maharaja's officials and Dogra troops were plunging into something like a policy of genocide in the province of Poonch. The blood-stained clothes of Muslims, men and women, notes Mirza, were being exhibited in the tribal territory and the tribesmen were getting excited. They were encouraged by Abdul Qayyum Khan, the chief minister of the NWFP, behind the back of Sir George Cunningham, Governor of the province. The invasion of Kashmir was progressing and Cunningham estimated that some 2,000 trans-border tribesmen and perhaps 2,000 men of Hazara had gone in addition to many thousands more from West Punjab, who would not be well-armed.

Norvall Michell, Cunningham's biographer, further states that the force appeared to meet no opposition as it advanced up the Jhelum to Baramula. Cunningham ordered the deputy commissioner of Abbotabad to get in touch with the Mahsud leaders in this force and "try to keep them in order." He feared that if the Mahsuds reached Srinagar, there would be indiscriminate looting and murder. According to Cunningham, on October 25, 1947, Iskander Mirza arrived from Lahore. "He told me all the underground history of the present campaign against Kashmir, and brought apologies from Liaquat Ali for not letting me know anything about it sooner. Liaquat had meant to come here last week and tell me about it personally but was prevented by his illness, which seems to be fairly serious heart trouble. Apparently Jinnah himself first heard of what was going on about fifteen days ago, but said, 'Don't tell me anything about it. My conscience must be clear'. Iskander is positive that Hari Singh (Maharaja of Kashmir) means to join India as soon as the new road from Pathankot is constructed, which might be within three months. He had got a lot of Sikhs and Dogras into Poonch and Jammu, and has been trying to shove Muslims into Pakistan in accordance with the general Indian strategy. It was decided apparently about a month ago that the Poonchis should revolt and should be helped. Abdul Qayyum was in it from the beginning..."

When Cunningham discovered what was happening, he said he would resign, and Iskander Mirza had to beg him to stay. Mirza says that the thing was done in the worst possible way; the tribes were told this was Jihad. They were even told they could loot villages. This made Iskander very angry.

On October 26, the news was that the tribesmen were expected to be in Srinagar by nightfall. Although Cunningham could not believe that they had yet met the real resistance of the state forces, however 3,000 more tribesmen had been called for, and Cunningham recorded: "I am shutting one of my eyes."

The Jihad story goes on. Cunningham resisted proposals that regular forces should be sent in, and turned down an order by the Ministry for police from the NWFP to go to Kashmir.

Tribesmen were so busy in looting and raping that they failed to capture the airport of Srinagar the only way the Indian troops could get to Kashmir. The Indians landed in full force and the Pakistani attack was pushed back.

The story, as Iskander Mirza tells it, was that one night he left for Karachi by a Pakistan Air Force plane: but on arriving at the airport he found an urgent message from the prime minister telling him to return immediately. He flew straight back to Lahore. There he learned that the Indians had flown in troops to defend Srinagar and were sending reinforcements by road via the Banilial pass. The Maharaja of Kashmir had acceded to India on October 27. Iskander Mirza was further told that there was a clash



between the Indian troops (Sikhs) and advanced elements of the Mujahideen's lashkar. They had taken a nasty knock, and the tribes were running back as fast as they could.

Iskander Mirza jumped into a car and drove to Rawalpindi as fast as he could. When he reached there at 10 p.m., he drove straight on to Domel in Kashmir, where he met some tribal mullahs: the Pir Mankiz the Pir of Wana and Badshah Gul.

"They tried their old trick of blackmail: fifty lakhs of rupees to 'about turn'." Pushing them aside Mirza directly spoke to the tribesmen, and more by luck than anything else, he was able to get the lashkar to take up a strong position; but Pakistan was able to consolidate its forces. Later, Pakistan put in regular troops. It was vital for the security of West Pakistan to deny Domel to the other side.

Iskander Mirza, as he himself admits, is always charged with promoting this tribal invasion. He refuses to accept any responsibility, for the invasion which was executed in the most stupid and childish manner. "If our government really wanted to take Kashmir by force, then with proper control over the tribes, a few guns, machine guns, and a thousand trucks, Kashmir could have been taken in forty eight hours at the most," explains Iskander Mirza. He further says that the Kashmir army, as a fighting machine, was far inferior even to that of Hyderabad. The objectives were easy to identify: capture the airstrip at Srinagar, and a few vital points in the Banilial pass. This would have sealed off Kashmir, and India could have done nothing.

Concluding his point, Mirza remarks: "History, I am afraid will blame Pakistan for not adopting stronger measures with the tribesmen. But it must be remembered that the army was not yet completely operational at the time of this tribal invasion: there were still units allocated to India within Pakistan, and we were not in a position to take strong measures."

## CHAPTER SIXTEEN

### THE CEASEFIRE

It was on October 28, 1947, when Auchinleck rang up Mountbatten from Lahore to say that he had succeeded in persuading Jinnah to cancel orders which he had given the previous night asking Pakistani troops to move into Kashmir. Mountbatten's secretary Alan Campbell Johnson records that the order readied General Gracy, the acting Commander-in-Chief in the absence of General Messervy, through the military secretary of the Governor of West Punjab, with whom Jinnah was staying. Gracy replied that he was not prepared to issue any such instruction without the approval of Supreme Commander Auchinleck. At Gracy's urgent request, Auchinleck flew to Lahore on October 28, and explained to Jinnah that the Government of India had a right to send its troops in response to the Maharaja's request as Kashmir had acceded to India, Jinnah, anyhow cancelled the order and stopped Pakistani troops from marching into Kashmir. He then sent a message to Lord Mountbatten and Nehru through Auchinleck inviting them to Lahore for a meeting to discuss the Kashmir problem.

Pakistan, however, was fully committed to Kashmir and had no option but to carry on the fight. Iskander Mirza was fully aware that the entire Frontier and even parts of Afghanistan were involved. The Afghan tribes, the Suleman Khels, gathered in great numbers in Gujrat on the instruction of the Pir of Wana, and marched towards Akhnoor. But instead of heading for Akhnoor, the Suleman Khels, wonders Mirza, changed direction and made towards Jammu. In the plains, they were attacked by armored vehicles. They came back to Gujrat with quite a few Hindu prisoners. Iskander Mirza had great trouble in rescuing these Hindu civilians from the tribesmen, who believed in killing all the male prisoners and distributing the women among themselves.

Mirza records that other Afghan tribes as well as the forces of the Nawab of Dir made some daring attacks in the Rajgarh area. The Indian government had deployed heavy contingents of troops in the Poonch province and in the Kashmir valley, and it was no use pitching tribesmen against them.

Jinnah was unhappy over the whole situation. He was watching these events with growing impatience and agitation. One day, he sent for Iskander Mirza and asked him, "Why don't you march in?" Mirza replied, "Your Excellency, it is not easy to march in. We are not organized on the ground. Moreover, we are short, of arms, and we don't have enough ammunition to even sustain a fortnight's contact. We can't afford to wage a war in these conditions."

"The same thing was told to Jinnah in much stronger language by Sir Claude Auchinleck, and also by the acting Commander-in-Chief, General Gracy," says Mirza.

After the disastrous retreat, however, volunteers from the army were encouraged to go into Kashmir for a short time. They were sent in dribblets. Regular troops were mixed with local volunteers, an expedient which delayed but did not halt the Indian advance. "The Indian army was putting in so many men that we had to engage more and more troops," writes Iskander Mirza. "My orders at that time were to drive the Indians out of Kashmir but it was not possible. There had been a considerable popular uprising in the area of Poonch. We tried hard to capture the town and nearly succeeded in doing so but the troops which had been sent there retired before repelling the attack," reveals Iskander Mirza. He could not understand why they failed in doing so. "We should have been able to capture Poonch without much difficulty. The troops did not make advance with the kind of determination required to win such battles."

Iskander Mirza further reveals that one battalion was an Azad Kashmir Unit having no experience of such encounters. But there was also a brigade of regular troops but it also retreated too quickly, and too far back, with the result that a good deal of area in the Poonch region, including the strategically important village of Mehendarz was lost by Pakistan. "I wanted to take action against the Brigadier but General Gracy dissuaded me," tells Mirza.

The operation in Kashmir continued in 1948 and by the end of October, Indian army had about twelve brigades operating in Kashmir. Opposing them were five Pakistani brigades supported by about fifty assorted guns. Major General Shaukat Riza reveals that after the capture of Poonch and Kargil by the Indian troops, the GHQ sought to destroy the bridge at Beri Pattan on the river Tawi with artillery fire. It was thought that destruction of the bridge would bring about a collapse of Indian force in Nausher to Poonch. On December 14, the bridge at Beri Pattan was shelled. It was damaged. Within 24 hours, Indian vehicles were forced to operate over a diversion. On December 30, both sides agreed upon a-ceasefire.

Before the ceasefire was arranged on January 1, 1949, General Gracy visited Iskander Mirza and showed him a plan according to which Pakistan's strike force would be concentrated at the Akhnur border so that Pakistani forces could cut the lines of communication of the Indian troops operating in Poonch. In case the plan worked, Pakistani troops could capture Akhnur and round up about five or six Indian divisions. He also had another plan through which Pakistan could, lay, aside enough troops to protect Lahore and Sialkot borders. Iskander notes: "We had about seven divisions out of which we had concentrated, five in Kashmir. If the Government had allowed us to attack, I have no, doubt that we would have captured Akhnur and destroyed about five Indian divisions."

Iskander Mirza had to persuade the government to make a decision quickly so that Pakistan could carry out the attack. General Gracy was in command. His plan was to seize this strategic point and cut off the Indian supplies, communications and reinforcements thus rounding up in Poonch. But the government, of Liaqat Ali Khan refused. They sat on Iskander's proposal for a week or ten days and in the end, they said it could not be done, because the UN would not, like it. And Pakistan had to agree the ceasefire. "I am sure if this had succeeded, we would have got the whole of Kashmir," says Mirza.

In the northern areas, however, things went well, the British Indian government had assumed administrative control of the Gilgit Agency in 1901. The Gilgit Scouts were established to maintain internal security and to give early warning of hostile incursions from across the border. According to Major General Shaukat Riza, in early August 1947, Brigadier Ghansara Singh arrived in Gilgit to take over the control of the agency from the British political agent. The Gilgit Scouts were commanded by Major W. A. Brown. The junior Commissioned Officers were recruited from among the relatives of the local chiefs.

According to Indian claims, however, soon after the announcement of the transfer of power, the Gilgit Agency was ceded back to the Maharaja of Kashmir. The Maharaja then appointed a Governor for the area. The Governor, accompanied by Major-General H. L. Scott reached Gilgit on July 30, 1947. On arrival, they found that all the officers of the British government had opted for service in Pakistan. There was no civil staff of the state available (as V.P. Menon claims) to take over from these officers. The Gilgit Scouts also wanted to go over to Pakistan. In addition to the Scouts, 6 Jammu and Kashmir infantry Battalion (including Sikhs and Punjabi Muslims) was the only state force unit available. It was commanded by Lt. Col. Majid Khan and was stationed at Bunji, 34 miles away from Gilgit.

On October 28, news of Maharaja's accession to India was received in Gilgit with considerable Anger. Iskander Mirza also confirms that the Gilgit Scouts were pro-Pakistan. Pakistan Air Force established an air link with Gilgit, flying over a hazardous route between high peaks in appalling weather conditions.

One day, Chaudhry Mohammad Ali sent for Iskander Mirza and said that a senior official should pay a visit to Gilgit in order to boost the morale of the local people. Mirza suggested several names but Mohammad Ali turned down his proposed name each time giving solid reason regarding the officer's inability to visit Gilgit. In the end, Mirza said to Mohammad Ali: "Do you want me to go then?" He expressed gratified surprise that he (Iskander Mirza) would take on the mission. He left for Gilgit.

Despite daily bombing of the little town by the Indian Air Force planes, Iskander Mirza found conditions in Gilgit quite favorable. He had ordered the Gilgit Scouts band to

play after every air raid. This amused the Gilgitis and annoyed the Indians. Pakistan had an air raid warning system which warned the town of Gilgit ten minutes before the first aircraft could arrive. This was organized by the political agent, Mohammad Alam Khan. Each time, the Indians tried to blow up the political agent's house. One portion of the house was destroyed. The moment alarms went, Mr. Alam Khan and Iskander Mirza used to run for shelter. Mirza also hoisted the Pakistan flag on a tower in the outskirts of the town. The Indians must have wasted hundreds of bombs trying to destroy that tower but they only hit it once. "I must mention here the bravery of the bomb disposal officer who had accompanied me to Gilgit," writes Mirza. "Many times he carried in his arms bombs which did not explode. He collected all of them on the other side of the river and blew them up. I take my hat off to this young chap..."

Indian sources claim that on October 31, at midnight, the Governor's residence was surrounded by the Gilgit Scouts. The next morning, the Governor was put under arrest and a provisional government was established by the 'rebels'. The Muslim elements (including officers) in the state force garrison deserted, claims Menon, and escaped to the hills and then joined the garrison at Skardu.

Iskander Mirza left Gilgit after some pleasant days in that delightful corner of the world. The Kashmir problem was constantly in his mind. "It is my view that if this conflict had not arisen, relations between India and Pakistan would have been friendly, and mutual cooperation would have resulted in the benefit of both the new states. But as things developed, public opinion in Pakistan would not have permitted any government to give up the struggle," says Mirza.

Iskander Mirza opposed the UN ceasefire proposal as the Indian position was worst than Pakistan's at that time. As ceasefire was a mean towards an end and not an end, Iskander begged for more time, that is, three months, to settle the dispute. But all was in vain; he had no support, even from the GHQ. "The result is that despite so many UN resolutions for holding a plebiscite, and a seventeen days war with India in 1965 (by that time India had become strong, thanks to massive military help from great powers), the Kashmir problem still exists and Indo-Pak relations are as bad as ever," Mirza commented in late 1968.

## CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

### TOWARDS FANATICISM

As it is an established fact, Mohammad Ali Jinnah had achieved his aim without the support of an army. General Sir Frank Messervy, the first Commander-in-Chief of the Pakistan army, told Hector Bolitho, the biographer of Jinnah: "Jinnah was not really interested in the army. He had no ideas on the subject, and said to me, 'I have no military experience. I leave that entirely to you and Liaquat'."

One day, Jinnah asked Iskander Mirza to come and see him once a week to give a report on the armed forces. This seemed a little like going behind the Prime Minister's back, but when Mirza consulted Liaquat Ali Khan about the propriety of this, the Prime Minister told Mirza to go ahead. Although, Jinnah did not know a great deal about military affairs, it was not difficult for Iskander Mirza to explain points to Jinnah who did not attempt to overrule professional military decisions.

In the spring of 1948, the Government of Pakistan directed Iskander Mirza to take a mission to Europe to try to purchase ammunition, of which Pakistan was very short. Mirza found that owing to the Kashmir impasse, the British government was very reluctant to provide any real help. Some of his friends in England, however, told him where to go, and he was able to make ample purchases at prices which were much lower than what he had at first thought he would have to pay. While in England, he was told to buy weapons and ammunition for Hyderabad state too (which was still holding back from adherence to India) and he was told to arrange for an airlift of arms and ammunition from Karachi to Hyderabad.

Iskander Mirza was further directed to help the Arabs in their fight with the Israelis. He was lucky enough to be able to arrange the airlift through one Sidney Cotton. This was a dangerous game, as the planes had to fly over 600 miles of Indian territory, and carry enough petrol for the round trip to Karachi. Recalling the adventure, Iskander Mirza recorded: "As far as I can remember, we only lost one plane, after three months of operation."

Jinnah was equally interested in the Arab cause. But to Iskander Mirza, it too was a complicated matter. When he contacted the military attaches of Egypt and other Arab states, they began to ask about their 'cut'. In the end, Mirza offered them some 81 mm mortars, with the necessary ammunition. They were to return these when they had achieved their objective. Needless to say, reveals Mirza, Pakistan never got them back. "So my efforts for both these courses were wasted: Hyderabad would not fight, and the

Arabs could not achieve enough unity to make a concerted effort. But I had no option. I had to obey the orders of my government."

Jinnah died on September 1948. He had been brought from Ziarat to Quetta and then to Karachi in the governor-general's Viking. There was no one at the airport to receive him. His military secretary had brought the army ambulance in which the governor general was carried on his stretcher. "After we had covered about four or five miles, the ambulance choked and came to a sudden stop," recalled Miss Fatima Jinnah. "Nearby stood hundreds of huts belonging to the refugees, who went about their business, not knowing their Quaid, who had given them a homeland, was in their midst, lying helpless."

It took over one hour. "What a catastrophe if, having survived the air journey, he were to die by the roadside," wrote his doctor Col. Ilahi Bakhsh. Another ambulance was brought from Karachi. The trip from the airport to the Government House took about two hours — a journey of death, in true sense of the word. After a few hours, Jinnah breathed his last.

A day after his death, when Iskander Mirza came to know about the last day's circumstances, he called one of his friends and discussed with him the whole matter. Mirza drafted his resignation as a protest against the "shabby treatment" allegedly accorded to the Quaid in his last moments. Joint Secretary Defence, A. T. Naqvi was also present on the occasion. After discussion, they decided to tear off the resignation as "it could turn the people's despair into wrath and lead to very serious results."

Soon after Jinnah's death, the first big step in framing the constitution of Pakistan was taken by the Constituent assembly in March 1949, when it passed a resolution on the aims and objects of the constitution, popularly known as the Objectives Resolution. Moving the resolution in the constituent Assembly on March 7, Liaqat Ali took pains to emphasize the role of the state in the achievement of this objective. Amidst loud applause, he declared that the state would not play the part of a neutral observer wherein the Muslims may be merely free to profess and practice their religion, because such an attitude on the part of the state would be the very negation of the ideals which prompted the demand for Pakistan. The resolution, Liaqat claimed, provided to the Muslims an opportunity that they had been seeking throughout these long years of decadence and subjection. This was the opportunity of finding freedom to set up a polity which may prove to be a laboratory for the purpose of demonstrating that Islam is not only a progressive force in the world, but it also provides remedies for many of the ills from which humanity has been suffering.

These high claims were, in fact, contrary to Jinnah's first speech to the constituent assembly of Pakistan which he had delivered on August 11, 1947. *The Pakistan Times* pointed out the dangers inherent in the ambiguities in the Resolution particularly in its

affirmation that "the principles of democracy, freedom, equality, tolerance and social justice as enunciated by Islam shall be fully observed. It was not clear, (said the paper), whether the principles of democracy, freedom, etc. shall be fully observed because all these principles had been enunciated by Islam or whether some special brand of these principles had yet to be evolved. In accordance with the former, the formula is progressive and straightforward; if it is the latter, it might easily open the door of disruptionist and sectarian tendencies.'

Iskander Mirza was not happy with the enactment of the Objectives Resolution. According to him, this did a lot of harm. It was a gift to the mullahs, and brought in fanaticism. "When I asked him (the prime minister) why he had felt it necessary to bring the resolution forward, he answered that he needed to do it to strengthen his position, 'Some of these people regard me as an outsider' he said. This was after the death of Quaid-i-Azam; and then the Muslim Leaguers began to show- what small men they were," says Iskander Mirza.



## CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

### BEGINNING OF THE AMERICAN ROLE

In mid-June, 1949, Lt. Col. Iskander Mirza headed a military mission which was to have discussions with the officials of the State and Defence Departments in Washington. Foreign Minister Sir Zafrullah Khan announced at a press conference on June 8 that Prime Minister Liaqat Ali Khan had accepted an invitation from the Soviet government to visit Moscow. On June 11, Liaqat Ali Khan himself declared: Pakistan cannot afford to wait. She must take her friends where she finds them." Ra'ana Liaqat also told an officer of the American Embassy that while Truman had not seen it fit to invite the Liaqat Ali's to Washington, Stalin had thought it fit to ask them to come to Moscow.

It is worth mentioning here that continuing requests for military items from the Pakistani Embassy and the scheduled visit of the military mission were among the most important factors that had led Washington to remain unperturbed over Liaqat Ali's acceptance of Moscow's invitation.

M.S. Venkataramani notes that the senior Pakistani military officials had remained in close touch with the US Military Attaché in Karachi expressing deep interest in getting early authorization from American authorities for acquiring various items of military equipment. One 'high official' had told the Attaché that Pakistan was so critically short of spares that the 'tanks were not in a position to even last a week's combat.' On June 3, 1949, the US Embassy in Pakistan sent the following cable to the secretary of state regarding Pakistan's military mission:

"Pakistan Military Purchasing Commission leaving Karachi on June 4 for UK and the US to arrive at the US on June 12. The Mission comprises: (1) Lt. Col. Iskander Mirza, Secretary, Ministry of Defence (2) Ghulam Abbas, Military Finance Advisor (3) Maj. Gen. Iftikhar Ali Khan, Commander 10th Division (4) Lt. Col. Saifur Rahman (5) Major Faruki. One and three (Iskander Mirza and Major General Iftikhar) personally well-known pro-Americans, ready to discuss Afghan, Kashmir problems ... primary purpose of the mission, military supplies and stores. Hope the Department can assist. Military Attaché advising National Military Establishment." (The Charge D' Affaires in Karachi (Doolittle) to the Secretary of State (Acheson), 845 F.00 (W)/5-649; 9 June, 1949. 845 F.00/7-549 cited in the *"American Role in Pakistan"* by M.S. Venkataramani, P. 80)

The military mission spent whole two months of June and July in the United States under the active leadership of Iskander Mirza. Venkataramani further notes that on July

14, 1949, substantive discussions were held between an American team comprising of Pentagon and State Department representatives led by Maj. Gen. L.L. Lemnitzer and members of the Pakistani military mission. Initiating the proceedings, Lt. Col. Iskander Mirza stated that the principal objective of his mission was to get a reliable source of military supplies for Pakistan—the United States. Pakistan had definitely decided to take 'American types' for its military transport. Apart from purchases that had already been made, the mission hoped to persuade Ford and General Motors to set up assembly plants in Karachi so that Pakistan could be assured of a continuous supply.

Mirza very successfully pleaded Pakistan's case. The Pakistanis were of the opinion that if they could get 25 percent of the essential items from the lists that they had submitted, it would be sufficient to fulfill the purpose for the time being. After the formal meeting was concluded, Iskander Mirza sought to convey to the American representatives Pakistan's stand on Kashmir, that is, Pakistan's attitude on the Kashmir dispute would continue to be fair and reasonable. He expressed the hope that the Kashmir issue would not have any influence on America, *vis-a-vis* its consideration of Pakistan's request for military aid. Pakistan desired that the Plebiscite Administrator, Admiral Nimitz, should proceed to Kashmir as early as possible. The government of Pakistan would abide by any settlement effected by the Admiral even if it did not correspond to what Pakistan desired. (Memorandum of conversation by Lloyd Berkner July 14, 1949, 845F. 24 7-1449).

Some days earlier, Iskander Mirza and his associates were invited at a lunch hosted by Lt. Gen. George Wedemyer. Mirza made a speech on the occasion, in the course of which he expressed the hope that a group of American officers would visit Pakistan, and that the US officers would also be deputed to attend the Pakistan Army Staff College at Quetta. (Department of State, Officer Memorandum, July 1, 1949 485F. 22711/17-149).

There is nothing on record regarding the question of the appointment of the first Commander-in-Chief of Pakistan, it was never raised during those discussions. It is, however, clear that Major General Iftikhar Ali Khan, a pro-American member of the Pakistan Military Mission would be a favorite candidate. By the end of 1949, as Mirza reveals, the Pakistan government had definitely decided to have a Pakistani Commander-in-Chief for the army. "We had promoted several Pakistani officers to the rank of Major General, but we had not decided whom to make the Chief of the Pakistan army", notes Mirza. After careful examination of the records of all possible candidates, General Sir Douglas Gracy recommended General Iftikhar of Probyn's Horse. He was easily the most gifted Pakistani officer we had."

Major General Iftikhar, as Mirza suggests, had a very good brain. He was devoted to his profession and had no political ambitions. Iskander Mirza and General Gracy recommended his name and the prime minister accepted the joint recommendation. It

was decided to send Maj. Gen. Iftikhar for final grooming at the Imperial Defence College in London. But unfortunately, on his way to England from Lahore via Karachi, his plane crashed and he was killed together with his fellow companion, Brigadier Sher Mohammad Khan, who had also been selected for the College, and would have received a high appointment on the General Staff. This tragedy was a bitter blow. As Iskander Mirza notes, intrigues began among generals to step into the shoes of General Iftikhar.

But this is not the whole story. Ayub Khan writes in his memoirs that when he came to Rawalpindi as Adjutant-General, the talk about the identity of the next Commander-in-Chief had become very lively. Once or twice his wife also asked him about the likelihood of his appointment as Commander-in-Chief. He told her, "Quite honestly, I do not know; but I do know that whoever is appointed, I shall have to do a great deal of work for him." Ayub further claims that people then started making direct inquiries of him. "I thought the best way to avoid all the gossip was to take some leave. So I took my wife and children and retired to the cool heights of Chhanglagali for two months."

This 'innocent' statement does not seem successful in hide Ayub's ambition to become the first Pakistani to get that post. His remarks are quite interesting: "I think General Raza and a few others were among the senior most officers and they were frequently spoken of. There was also a great deal of talk about General Iftikhar, a good officer; there was an impression that the British were backing him."

Ayub Khan, who was himself an ally of the American lobby in Pakistan, further comments:

"General Iftikhar was a difficult man to get on with, and he was short-tempered. I do not know how he would not have met with considerable difficulty."

At the very last moment, tells Iskander Mirza, however, the Adjutant-General (later Field Marshal) was nominated to succeed General Gracy. One September night in 1950, Ayub was rung up by an officer of the Ministry of Defence (most probably Lt. Col. Iskander Mirza) and informed that he had been selected as the next Commander-in-Chief. "I prayed to God that he grant me the courage and ability to prove myself up to the task. It was an event of some significance for the country," writes Ayub Khan with a sense of pride and self-praise, "After nearly two hundred years, a Muslim army in the sub-continent would have a Muslim Commander-in-Chief."

## CHAPTER NINETEEN

### RAWALPINDI CONSPIRACY (1)

Ayub Khan took over as Commander-in-Chief in January 1951. Soon after his take-over, occurred the drama of the so-called Rawalpindi conspiracy. Iskander Mirza terms it, "A plot to murder Liaqat Ali Khan, take over the army and run the country by a military dictatorship." An air of mystery still surrounds certain aspects of the case.

The only direct source of information for the public was the statement made by Prime Minister Liaqat Ali Khan who said: "The aim of the conspiracy was to create commotion in the country by violent means, and ... to subvert the loyalty of Pakistan's defence forces." Liaqat Ali Khan himself revealed the plot in early March 1951. He announced: "They planned ... to resort to force with the support of communist and revolutionary elements, making use of such members of the armed forces as could be brought under a military dictatorship, when the existing authorities, both civil and military, had been eliminated. The government was thereafter to be patterned on the communist model, but under military domination. For this purpose, economic and constitution-making missions were to be invited from a certain foreign country." (Constituent Assembly Debates, 1951, Vol. I)

Iskander Mirza tells us that all this came out by chance. The then Governor of the NWFP, Mr. I. I. Chundrigar, was told of the plot by a political officer to whom, the leader, Major General Akbar Khan, had imparted his plan in confidence. Chundrigar informed the prime minister, who at that moment was in camp in Sargodha.

Iskander Mirza was touring the Khairpur State in Sindh when he received a telegram to join the prime minister immediately. Mirza rushed over to Sargodha and met General Ayub. Both went to Liaqat Ali Khan who was looking very glum as he gave this information. Both recommended the prime minister to take immediate action against the 'conspirators'.

Mirza however, suggested that before taking any action, they must go to Peshawar to question the political officer, Kiyani, who was the informant. After doing that, they reached the conclusion that there was definitely something going on. First, they got hold of the officer commanding the Bannu Brigade, who was involved in the 'conspiracy,' and who told his companions that everything must be called off because the authorities already had suspicions about them.

The two men moved very fast and ordered the arrest of Akbar Khan, his wife, Nasim Jehan Begum, Faiz Ahmad Faiz, Brigadier Latif and several others. Iskander Mirza

claimed that "at General Akbar's residence, they found all the documents relating to the conspiracy."

The real story, however, brings out some contrary facts. According to General Akbar himself, they had no plan of arresting or killing anybody in pursuance of their objectives. He accused General Ayub Khan of concocting the story that they were planning to use violent means to replace the government. General Akbar, however, admitted that the final plans to overthrow the government were prepared on February 23, 1951, at his residence. According to these plans, the civil government was to be overthrown and a military council consisting of generals was to take its place. The new government was to implement its policy on Kashmir and hold elections on the basis of adult franchise for the constituent assembly. The army was to supervise these elections.

The 'conspirators' were tried secretly. The case lasted 18 months, and those found guilty were sentenced to varying terms of imprisonment. Iskander Mirza remarked: "We were quite ruthless in dealing with everybody involved."

It is strange to note that Mirza seems unaware of the Ayub-Akbar differences on certain matters. Ayub Khan himself admitted that the Rawalpindi conspiracy had deep roots; it grew in the soil of discontent and distrust and it was able to develop for several reasons. There was considerable unrest among the officers caused by a spate of swift promotions from junior to senior ranks. According to Ayub Khan himself, "Every officer felt that unless he was made Commander-in-Chief, no one would believe that they had done well in life."

So, many of them were disappointed when Ayub Khan was named for the post instead. Ayesha Jalal thinks that General Gracy, the then Commander-in-Chief had a hand in the appointment. Even the Americans seemed reassured; Ayub was believed to be 'pro-American.' General Gracy, who had perhaps come to imbibe some of the social mores of the state that he was serving, had been disturbed by Akbar's tendency to throw "drink parties" where pretty girls were introduced as decoys and, at a suitable stage of the proceedings, officer guests were sounded on subversive topics, (cited in Ayesha Jalal's *'The State of Martial Rule'* P- 119)

Iskander Mirza has also ignored another key issue, the Kashmir war, as the root cause of the 'conspiracy'. According to certain traditions, Kashmir was the only point of difference between Akbar and Ayub Khan. When, as Commander-in-Chief, Ayub had to promote certain officers to the rank of Major-General, including Akbar Khan, Ayub decided to post him at GHQ as Chief of the General Staff. "I did this to ensure that he remained under my eye and not in direct command of the troops," said Ayub Khan. He complained later, however, that Akbar was inclined to neglect his duties and spend a lot of time in Azad Kashmir in meeting local people inclined to aggression and others. Akbar Khan, on the other hand, believed that a military solution of the Kashmir

problem was still possible and he made no secret of his disagreement with government policy on the subject.

It is a known fact that Akbar Khan was a popular hero of the war in Kashmir. He had strong and extreme views on the issue. Ayub Khan and Iskander Mirza, on the contrary, represented the moderate viewpoint. In this way, apart from the Ayub-Akbar rivalry, it was a tussle between two divergent perspectives on the Kashmir dispute.

It has also been noted that the roots of the 'conspiracy' went much deeper than the Kashmir dispute itself. Several patriotic army officers, whom Iskander Mirza terms as conspirators, were expressing a strong sense of anti-neocolonialism. They wanted the government to formulate its foreign and defence policies independently of British and strategic interests. Washington saw it as a threat to its 'national objectives' in South Asia. Ayesha Jalal has analyzed this matter in her in depth account. She notes that as early as February 1949, Major General Tottenham, then serving as Divisional Commander in the Pakistan army, had received directions from General Gracy for moving a Pakistan Division into the Iranian oil fields to 'lend a hand' in case the British or Americans needed it. Towards the beginning of 1950, a top secret letter from the American Embassy in Karachi to the Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) Directorate had asked for detailed information on airfields in Pakistan, the actual spread of its railway system, classification of major bridges, and facilities for stationing standard divisions in the Western border areas, (cited by Ayesha Jalal p. 122)

It is also worth mentioning that Pakistan's defenses in Balochistan along the Khojak Pass were also fortified in readiness for a British decision to resort to a military solution in the dispute over the nationalization and control of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company. This brought Ayub into direct confrontation with Brigadier Latif, the Station Commander in Quetta and one of those accused in the "conspiracy" who felt that it would be in "Pakistan's interest to be neutral in any future war." General Gracy had apparently masterminded an exercise, aptly entitled 'Exercise Stalin', in which the Pakistan army was to fight against the Soviet Union. The same source concludes that the so-called conspiracy was nothing more than a frame-up engineered by the British and American intelligence agencies, working through their stooges in the Pakistan government and armed forces in order to 'clean up' the army of outstanding patriotic officers.

It also seems clear that one of the motives of the Iskander-Ayub group might have been to counter the sentiment that had been developing in Pakistan in favor of closer relations with the Soviet Union and other communist countries. The group might have also been interested in ending, once and for all, the prospect of the Prime Minister's visit to the Soviet Union, thereby giving additional reassurance to the United States that Pakistan was ready to commit itself to an anti-Soviet course. M. S. Venkataramani records that the very brief and casual reference to the 'conspiracy' in the US State

Department's paper was made in the context of a description of Pakistan's diplomatic exchanges with the Soviet Union, China, and Czechoslovakia, the renewed Soviet invitation to Liaqat Ali and trade agreements with Poland and Czechoslovakia.

The US State Department document mentioning the "conspiracy," noted: "Though these events had aroused some feeling for a greater rapprochement between the USSR and Pakistan, this trend was sharply reversed in March 1951, because Pakistani communists were involved in an abortive plot to overthrow the present government and set up a military dictatorship on the communist model." The document further revealed, "It now appears that his (the prime minister's) Moscow visit is postponed indefinitely."

The State Department paper also added: "The Central Government (of Pakistan) is aware of the danger" from communists and the Pakistan Communist Party, and, at times, it has exercised close surveillance over communist leaders and has used strong measures to repress their activities ... Both the central and provincial governments have shown a readiness to cooperate with Western democracies in building a counter propaganda programme to prevent the spread of communism in Pakistan against which the tenets of Islam may not provide as strong a bulwark as we might have thought."

Contrary to Iskander Mirza's views on the issue, the basis exist for a definite inference that the 'conspiracy' was used as an excuse to start a witch hunt among the pro-leftists. It was used as a cover to justify mass arrests all over the country, in which prominent leftist leaders and workers were put in prison. It became a pretext for a systematic crackdown on individuals and groups espousing anti-imperialist sentiments. Furthermore, the army's "great tradition of loyalty, sense of duty, patriotism, and complete subordination to civil authority" was restored. "We examined the antecedent of officers and got rid of the doubtful ones." Ayub wrote in his memoirs, "I knew that the cancer had been removed but that there was still tremendous amount of lost ground to be regained."

## CHAPTER TWENTY

### THE RAWALPINDI CONSPIRACY (2)

Iskander Mirza was of the very strong opinion that the Rawalpindi 'conspiracy' was the first stance which showed the direct interest of a section of the military in politics. Mirza and Ayub, like Liaqat Ali, also stressed on the Communists' involvement in this so-called conspiracy. Even people like Tariq Ali claim that the tiny Communist Party of Pakistan became embroiled in the plan, when Syed Sajjad Zaheer, the famous leftist who moved to India after conspiracy, met Major-General Akbar Khan, the mastermind behind the plot, at a cocktail party. The General broached the subject of the intended *coup* and requested help in drafting manifestos and a possible plan of action. The Communist Party of Pakistan, it is said, accepted the offer and participated in various meetings with army officers. Eventually the plan was shelved for some time, but one of the officer conspirator fearing that the truth might be revealed at a later stage, turned informer and the 'conspiracy' was unveiled.

This point of view held by Iskander Mirza and others is yet to be clarified. As far as the Communists' involvement in the plot is concerned, the real state of affairs was quite different. In his article, 'My version of the Pindi conspiracy', Zafarullah Poshni (one of those arrested — a captain in the army) is of the view that there was no such thing as the fact that the Pakistani army was cheated out of a victory in Kashmir in the 1948 war. Poshni insists that it was only a myth and as a matter of fact the ceasefire was the only solution to the stalemate reached in the Kashmir fight.

As Zafarullah Poshni reveals, a conspiratorial meeting had taken place as early as December 5, 1949 at the Attock Rest House, under General Akbar Khan's aegis. The next and final meeting was however, held at Akbar Khan's residence on February 23, 1951 at which, besides Communist leaders like Sajjad Zaheer and Mohammad Hussain, Faiz Ahmad Faiz, Major Ishaque Mohammad and Poshni himself, several other army officers were also present. Poshni states:

"Akbar Khan presented a critique of the existing politico-economic set-up in the country and followed it up by unfolding a plan of how to overthrow the existing government. The governor-general and the prime minister, who were coining to Rawalpindi shortly afterwards, were to be detained and a proclamation was to be issued in the name of the governor-general dissolving the existing government and substituting it with a new government under General Akbar Khan. There was to be no bloodshed. There was no link-up or contact with any foreign power whatsoever. General Akbar proposed that after assuming power



he would withdraw the warrants of arrest against all CPP members (most of the CPP leaders were underground in those days) and allow them to organize trade unions and *kissan* (farmers) organizations freely. In return, the CPP would publicly applaud the *coup* and support the new military government."

Poshni further records that the meeting at Akbar Khan's house lasted the whole day. Most of those present had great reservations about the plan. Questions and answers went on hour after hour... the discussions seemed almost interminable. "I remember that", recalls Poshni, "the tension was so great that I had smoked away a full tin of fifty cigarettes by the time the meeting had ended... and then came the final punch. When the meeting ended, it had been decided that there were too many unanswered questions posed by the participants, and that, therefore, the plan should be abandoned..."

Poshni argues that according to the law, as spelt out in the Pakistan Penal Code, it is only when two or more persons agree to commit an unlawful act by unlawful means that a conspiracy is said to have taken place. In the meeting at Rawalpindi on February 23, 1951, there was no agreement to commit an unlawful act and the plan was in fact completely abandoned. However, the approvers, Lt. Col. Siddique Raza and Major Yusuf Sethi, who gave evidence in the case, were told by the police to wrongly state that an agreement had in fact been reached. This was a false statement which the approvers made before the special tribunal so that the 'conspirators' could be convicted... (*Outlook*, Karachi, February 3, 1973, pp. 8-10).

As mentioned earlier, about 16 years later, Iskander Mirza confessed according to his own conviction: "We were quite ruthless in dealing with everyone involved."

Later Major Ishaq Mohammad, another 'conspirator', also refutes Mirza's allegations about the communists' participation in a plot to bring about a military *coup*. In an interview, given for a doctoral thesis in winter 1974; Ishaq said, that he strongly opposed the feasibility of the *coup* and warned the communists about it. He even put it in writing. In his letter to the CPP, Ishaq said he, argued that Akbar had the key to the whole thing and that the CPP should not get dragged into it. Akbar was no socialist, but personally a very ambitious man. Why should he be trusted? Ishaq also warned the CPP that the plot was no secret and the intelligence was aware of it. He also argued that an easy victory of the left would not be allowed by imperialists. People still had illusions about Pakistan and the Muslim League. They would not accept a military *coup*. British and American opposition, and manipulation of people by the reactionary-class would not allow the *coup* to succeed. (Cited in a yet unpublished doctoral thesis p. 66-67)

In his doctoral dissertation, the author, Mr. Leghari includes another inside story narrated by Sardar Shaukat Ali, a veteran Communist leader. He reveals that Latif

Afghani, a CPP member from the army ranks, had participated with General Akbar Khan in the Kashmir War. Akbar's wife, Begum Nasim Jehan was also in touch with the CPP. The CPP often collected party funds from Akbar and Nasim. Latif Afghani, as a CPP man, was in charge of organizing a group of progressive officers in the army. He reported to the party's secretary-general Syed Sajjad Zaheer that there were some progressive officers in the army, and that there was frustration amongst them concerning the present government of Pakistan which they were planning to overthrow.

Leghari notes that Sardar Shaukat Ali, communist party's representative, was deputed by the party to contact the frustrated officers in the army through Latif Afghani. After investigation, Shaukat Ali reported to the central committee of the CPP that he was not sure of the army officers, nor of their strength. According to Shaukat Ali, some days later, the secretary general summoned a meeting of the CPP. Dada Ferozuddin Mansoor, Comrade Lal Khan, C.R. Aslam, Mohammad Afzal, Sardar Shaukat Ali, Mirza Ashfaq Beg, Syed Sibte-Hasan and Sajjad Zaheer himself were among the participants.

The meeting was tense and Sajjad Zaheer was not his usual calm self. He put the matter bluntly before the party comrades that the army had contacted Faiz Ahmad Faiz and told him that they were going ahead with the *coup*, and that the CPP had no alternative but to support the army *coup*.

Sardar Shaukat narrates that a heated discussion followed, and Mohammad Afzal and Shaukat Ali argued strongly against the CPP's participation in the military *coup*. They pointed out that:

1. Army officers were few, and one did not know them well, nor their future policies; the CPP could not rely on them. They would seek the CPP's support, but once in power, they would proceed to carry out their own policies;
2. The CPP would be too weak a party to influence the army.

Sajjad Zaheer, under the strong influence of the Indian Communist Party's political line:

1. Thought that this would be a progressive *coup* and a mass movement could be built through army support;
2. Used to say that all kinds of ways could be employed used to achieve socialism;
3. Also thought that a successful army *coup* would prevent Pakistan from falling into the hands of American imperialism.

Concluding the episode, Sardar Shaukat states that after a tense and heated debate; a vote was taken and the majority voted with Sajjad Zaheer to join the military *coup*. Many others, however, differed with Sardar Shaukat regarding the voting results. According to them the majority was against Sajjad Zaheer's line. The party, however, attended the fateful meeting of February 23, 1951. Sajjad Zaheer's argument regarding America's designs to bring Pakistan under the imperialist yoke, was not, in any way, without weight. Iskander Mirza and his close associates; Finance Minister Ghulam Mohammad, Army Chief Ayub Khan, Foreign Minister Sir Zafarullah Khan, Foreign Secretary Mohammad Ikramullah and the Secretary-General Chaudhry Mohammad Ali, were very active in this regard. The importance of Pakistan to American policy-makers in the early 1950s was based upon the fear of communism, and the perceived threat of a shift in the global balance of power in favor of the Soviet Union along with the People's Republic of China.

As a great hater of communism, and under the influence of his own brand of patriotism, Iskander Mirza was well aware of the prevailing state of affairs. Pakistan's strategic location, on the boundary of both the USSR and China, greatly commended itself to the United States for use in its containment policy. As Shirin Tahirkheli, looking at US-Pak relations notes, Pakistan was seen as directly augmenting US capability. The military might of Pakistan was taken to be "the measure of American military power on that continent..." An increase in Pakistan's military capability was seen as a natural corollary of the US global power equation. Being a country in the "right location at the right time," Pakistan thus emerged as a utility for US policy. It was a marriage of convenience one that both partners sought quite eagerly at first.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

### THE CHIEF MULLAH

A few months after the Rawalpindi Conspiracy trial, Liaqat Ali Khan was assassinated while delivering a public speech. This occurred in Rawalpindi on October 16, 1951. Iskander Mirza was in Karachi at the time, playing tennis. A man came running up to him and said the Interior Minister wanted him on the phone. Iskander Mirza rushed to the club telephone and was told, "Liaqat has been murdered." Mirza was also informed that the shot was fired at a Muslim League meeting and the assassin was himself killed on the spot. "So we never got to the origins of the crime," notes Iskander Mirza.

Liaqat Ali's death provided an opportunity that was quickly and successfully exploited by a small coterie of serving and former bureaucrats headed by Ghulam Mohammad and Iskander Mirza. They were men who had grown grey in the service of the British and they favored "very close" relations with the West, especially the United States. Despite his critical attitude towards Liaqat Ali, Iskander Mirza had a very good equation with the Prime Minister. Ayub Khan claims that as Commander-in-Chief, he had to tackle certain problems in Karachi. He used to ask Iskander Mirza, the Defence Secretary, whether he would like to take them up with the Prime Minister. According to Ayub Khan, Iskander Mirza always wanted him to go and see the Prime Minister himself. For Ayub Khan, it developed into a tedious routine; first, to get the Prime Minister's decisions, then to explain them to the Defence Secretary for the follow-up action. Sometimes Iskander Mirza had to check on certain decisions with the Prime Minister. Ayub further claims, "At one of my meetings with the Prime Minister, I suggested that it would be convenient if the Defence Secretary could also be present. Liaqat Ali Khan said, 'You might bring him along, but you should know that I do not like him'. After that Iskander Mirza and I used to go to the Prime Minister together and their relationship improved."

According to Iskander Mirza himself, "I was defence Secretary from 1947 onwards. Ayub became C-in-C in January 1951. What was happening from '47 to '51-the most crucial years in which the army was reorganized and trained on a proper basis? As C-in-C, he got a 100 percent trained army ... As for Liaqat not liking me, this is news to me. What was there to prevent him from getting rid of me? Many Civil Servants were after my job; his favorites, Naqvi and Ghulam Mohammad were amongst them. He once refused to let me go on a diplomatic assignment on the grounds that I could not be spared. Ayub used to come to Karachi mostly in the winter for a shoot or two; what happened for months together, when I had to see Liaqat Ali Khan at least, once a week? Again what happened to all the problems of the navy and air force? Did Ayub settle them once in four months with Liaqat?"

Since Mr. Jinnah's death, the office of Governor-General had been held by Khawaja Nazimuddin, the grandson of the Nawab of Dhaka. The day after Liaqat Ali was assassinated, Nazimuddin stepped down, to become Prime Minister and Finance Minister Ghulam Mohammad was elevated to the position of Governor-General of Pakistan. Ghulam Mohammad, who had recently suffered a stroke, was a sick man, so Nazimuddin accepted the new position in the belief that Ghulam Mohammad would not live long and even as long as he lived, he would be a mere figurehead. Nazimuddin, according to Iskander Mirza, was a very nice and pious man, who would have done very well as the Chief Mullah. "As Governor-General, he quietly went about his ceremonial duties, leaving Liaqat Ali Khan to run the country. Now, as the Prime Minister, he was completely out of his depth," notes Mirza.

As Defence Secretary, Iskander Mirza was supposed to see Prime Minister Khawaja Nazimuddin once a week, in the PM's capacity of Minister for Defence. It was difficult for Mirza to get to see the Prime Minister. Khawaja Nazimuddin frequently skipped the interview, and Mirza couldn't get a decision from him. "I found I could never get answers on the most difficult files; these seemed to disappear under the other files," recalls Iskander Mirza. "I told him bluntly that in the Defence Ministry we had to have decisions. If he did not want to take a decision by himself, I was quite willing to bring the files along and stand beside him and take the decision on the spot. But it didn't work out like that."

By 1951, there were two centres of power in Pakistan - Karachi and Rawalpindi. The latter was gaining ground. The political leadership was under subtle but sure challenge from the men in uniform on both domestic and foreign policy. By 1952-53, the United States had made its presence strongly felt in Pakistani politics. When in February 1952, the United States provided economic assistance to Pakistan as "defence support" the possibility of larger and more fruitful cooperation between the two countries was already being discussed in Pakistan at the highest levels.

In the autumn of 1952, Iskander Mirza went to Turkey with a military team which included General Ayub as C-in-C. In Ankara, Mirza had a talk with Mr. Warren, the American Ambassador to Pakistan and arranged talks with the American Under-Secretary for Defence who was coming a few days later. The talks in Ankara seemed so full of promise that Mirza told Ayub Khan to go to the United States forthwith to pursue the matter further in Washington. Ayub Khan arranged to cable Mirza in Karachi if there was a chance of success. In due course, the Defence Secretary received the telegram. He reported these developments to the Governor-General Ghulam Mohammad. "To my horror," notes Iskander Mirza, "the Governor-General decided to go to Washington himself at once. He should not have gone until there was some progress." However, Pakistan got a promise of aid. An American military mission assessed Pakistan's needs and supplied it with artillery, though far from enough.

Earlier, around March 1952, the Pentagon invited Major General Shahid Hamid, the then Master General of Ordnance of the Pakistan Army, to visit the United States. The visit, according to General Olmstead, signified "A very definite understanding that a programme would be undertaken", and indicated what the Pakistanis wanted in the programme. The General told the prominent Egyptian journalist, Mohammad Hussain Heikel, during a meeting in the Pentagon, that the United States hoped to see the emergence of an 'Islamic Pact', with Turkey, Pakistan and Egypt as its principal members. Such a pact, he suggested, could fill the power vacuum in the Middle East, deter Communist expansion, and even have an impact on the millions of Muslims in the Soviet Union and China. M.S. Venkataramani adds that it was the Truman Administration that had firmly set the United States on the course of "containment" of the Soviet Union. It had proclaimed the Truman Doctrine offering its protection and largesse to regimes which were willing to adopt an anti-Soviet posture, involving itself on the side of the French in Indo-China, leading the nation into a shooting war in Korea and initiating the supply of arms to Pakistan as part of a master plan to acquire bases in that country and to obtain Pakistani troops to perform the kind of role that the Indian army had done for the British in the imperial days.

"We also entered into a secret military pact with Turkey," reveals Iskander Mirza. "All this laid the foundations for the solid military support which was to come."

## CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

### MARTIAL LAW: ACT ONE

The 1953 movement against Qadianis (Ahmadis) was not an Islamic one, claims Dr Javed Iqbal after all these years. He believes that this movement was launched from the beginning with mala fide intentions. For this reason, instead of getting the Qadianis imposed as a minority, it all ended up with the first martial law being declared. His statement, no doubt, is still valid, and gives some idea of the dirty motives behind the whole game. However, the generalized and rather vague manner in which he has made his remark, hides the real 'message', that the army was the only 'hope' for the country.

It is interesting to note that from the very first day of Pakistan's emergence, the Army was prepared to support any government determined to maintain law and order. Although Ayub Khan had stressed the point that the Army's major task was to give cover to the country behind which it could build a sound democratic system, his political ambitions could easily be observed after he took over the command of the Army in January 1951. There were several instances of political agitation when the Army was called out to maintain law and order and restore the authority of the civil administration. The anti-Ahmadi riots was one such instance.

It should also be noted that the agitation against the Ahmadis was led by religious leaders (Ahrars, Maudoodi) many of whom had previously engaged in anti-Pakistan politics. The early stages of the movement were conducted by members of the Ahrar, a politico-religious group which before 1947 had been an ally of the Indian National Congress. As the movement progressed, it won the support of many of the more reputable *ulema*. The objective of the campaign were to have the Ahmadis declared a non-Muslim minority, the dismissal of Sir Zafrullah Khan and the barring from high public office of all members of the Ahmadiya community.

On January 21, 1953, a deputation of the *ulema* authorized by the Majlis-i-Amal (set up by the All Pakistan Muslim Parties Convention) delivered to Prime Minister Khawaja Nazimuddin an ultimatum which threatened to resort to direct action if, within a month, the demands were not accepted. Strangely enough, the governments at the centre and in the Punjab, as Keith Callard suggests, made no serious attempt to suppress the fast-growing campaign. On the contrary, there were substantial indications of government support or even acceptance of the demands.

Worried by the worsening situation, the then Secretary Defence, Iskander Mirza, in a top secret/personal letter, warned the prime minister of the rapidly deteriorating situation. He wrote: "The problems created by your personal enemies including

*Mullahs*, if not dealt with firmly and now, will destroy the administration and the country.... Though I am not a very religious man, I have the greatest respect for your religious beliefs and realize your hesitation and dislike for vigorous action against those persons who are working against you in the garb of religion. But is religion to destroy the very foundation of the administration of the premier Muslim state? In Cairo Sir Zafrullah Khan is being received with the utmost honor and respect. He is also meeting the heads of all the Arab countries where he has a very high reputation. While in Karachi he is being abused in public meetings and his photographs are being spat upon. Last night he has been cartooned with a donkey's body. Can anybody say all this is not being reported to all the foreign capitals? What then is the position of Pakistan today internationally?

Concluding his letter, he gave dear hints regarding the imposition of martial law. He guaranteed the prime minister that the armed forces would carry out any directive given by him. "For God's sake become a courageous leader and take decisive action. Once, you do this, the whole country, with the exception of rascals, will rally round you..."

The warning proved of no use. It is not surprising that when Mohammad Ali Bogra took over the prime minister's office, he found this letter in the prime minister's desk without any mark of action. The Government continued to ignore the activities of the agitators, who then naturally became more bold in their defiance of law and order. The top-ranking officers of the police and intelligence departments continuously drew attention to the growing intensity, violence and obscenity of the movement. The Deputy Inspector General of the Punjab Police wrote: "These tendencies will spread and bring disaster in their wake, and the whole of our machinery will go to pieces."

The Punjab chief minister, Mian Mumtaz Daultana, ignored the warning. Instead, he made it clear that he personally accepted the view that the Ahmadis were non-Muslims, but that this presented a problem for the Constituent Assembly and the Central Government (Munir Report, pp. 263, 264). Keith Callard remarks that this was a clever political move, since it enabled Mr. Daultana to show his sympathy for the basis of the demands while explaining that satisfaction could come only from the capital.

Today, it is no more a hidden fact that various agencies and supporters of the Punjab Government went much farther than the chief minister in their support for the Anti-Ahmadia movement. The Punjab Education Department spent more than Rs. 200,000 in two years in subsidies to newspapers. The papers concerned, says the Munir Report, "were all actively engaged in this controversy, and went on fanning the agitation even during the days that they were receiving the payments. In 1951, the Punjab Government established a department of Islamiyat for purposes of religious education. A board of six *ulema* was set up, four of whose members played a prominent part in the movement and two of these were arrested. The department employed eighteen persons as



lecturers, and of these eleven took a leading role in the agitation and seven were arrested" (Munir Report, pp. 87-88).

The Central Government, even though its Foreign Minister was under personal attack, was hardly more resolute. Its policy for several months was described as one of indecision, hesitancy and vacillation. The Board of Talimaat-i-Islamia, paid out of central funds, was deeply involved in the agitation. Khawaja Nazimuddin's own religious convictions were in no small degree responsible for emboldening the fanatical elements in society, which had been prevented from raising their heads by the sagacity and shrewdness of Liaquat Ali Khan. The concession that Nazimuddin made in proposing the creation of a Board of Divines to advise the Governor-General on the Islamic character or otherwise of legislation, gave direct encouragement to the movement for a more thorough-going religious policy. The Constituent Assembly had also decided that Pakistan was to be a state based upon Islam. The agitation was so unsurpassed in its violence and virulence that its suppression was impossible without resort to strong measures which Khawaja Nazimuddin avoided as long as possible. Under the circumstances, the civil and military bureaucracy was helpless.

On February 26, one of Iskander Mirza's intelligence men came to see him and informed him that the cabinet members were meeting the next morning to decide what action they were going to take about the demands upon the prime minister. But the Majlis-i-Amal had decided that about a hundred thousand people were going to march to the prime minister's house at 8 o'clock the same morning. Iskander Mirza rushed to the house of Interior Minister Nawab Gurmani. Gurmani was fast asleep. His body-guard tried to prevent Mirza from entering his room. Mirza, however, succeeded in approaching Gurmani. Both went to the prime minister. In a little while, the prime minister came running in asking about what was happening. Iskander Mirza repeated the information which his agent had given him. Nazimuddin's response was to say: "Double my guard; immediate action." Mirza assured him that, of course this would be done; but asked what else they should do. The prime minister replied that he was not prepared to do anything without consulting the cabinet.

The cabinet, in a meeting held in the early hours of the morning of February 27, took a fateful decision. It was decided to reject the ultimatum and to arrest the prominent members of the Majlis-i-Amal. In Karachi the agitation was immediately and effectively stopped by swift police action. The situation in Lahore was, however, deteriorating. Things had come to such a pass that the police dared not go into the city because they thought it was too dangerous for them. Iskander Mirza, in his unpublished autobiography writes that at this stage, he told the prime minister that something would have to be done. A cabinet meeting was called. Mirza writes:

"When I arrived, everyone was talking at once. Then a telephone call came through. It was the Governor of the Punjab, Mr. I. I. Chundrigar, calling the

prime minister. He said that Daultana, the chief minister of the province, was also in his office. He (Daultana) said: 'Sir, we have lost all control. Either you give in to the Majlis-i-Amal immediately, or the whole of Lahore will be burnt down.' Then the prime minister repeated this to us in Urdu. I kept quiet thinking that one of the ministers would speak up, but nobody said a word.... The prime minister asked me what I wanted to say, and I replied: "The first thing you had better do is put that telephone down. The chief minister had no business to talk like that on an open line. Tell him we are not discussing anything. That's all. And let me go.'

By now, the stage for military action was ready, Iskander Mirza, the Defence Secretary had decided to impose Martial Law in Lahore. He left the cabinet meeting and went to the Military Intelligence office and asked for a special scrambler telephone. He talked to the Officer Commanding at Lahore, Major General Azam Khan. He ordered: 'Azam, it looks as though the civil authorities have lost control in Lahore. You are to take over immediately, and declare Martial Law. Don't wait for any further orders. I take all responsibility. Declare Martial Law, take action, and finish the thing off.' It was March 6, 1953.

He went back to the prime minister and declared that he had ordered Martial Law and also ordered reinforcements to be sent to the Lahore Division. He ordered the Deputy Chief of the General Staff, General Musa, to ask GHQ to dispatch the Sialkot Division to Lahore to reinforce Azam Khan.

The Army got the first chance to run civil administration directly in 1953. Law and order was restored within a few days. However a certain amount of unrest followed, and Azam Khan started to sent telegrams to Iskander Mirza – with a copy to the prime minister stating: 'X number *Mullahs* shot today.'

One day, the prime minister called on the Defence Secretary and said, 'Colonel, I cannot sleep.... The Army are killing these men of God... and I can't sleep'. Iskander Mirza got on the telephone to Lahore and said to Azam Khan: "You idiot, when you have to shoot these *Mullahs*, why do you have to advertise that you are shooting *Mullahs*?"

Azam Khan replied: 'What should I call them, sir?' Iskander Mirza replied: 'Say, so many bad characters shot'. After that Azam Khan used this formula, and everyone was happy, except perhaps the *Mullahs*. "And this was how we were running the country." Thus concludes Iskander Mirza.

The brief period of Martial Law, as Hasan Askary Rizvi suggests, gave the Army a valuable experience of performing the duties of civil government. It also created the wrong impression in the mind of the masses that the Army could restore peace and effective government when all other devices had failed. *Dawn* reported 'memories of the

Army rule in Lahore will linger for a long time to come and the new look that Lahore has acquired and the sense of discipline inculcated among its people by the Army will bear eloquent testimony to the good work done by Major-General Azam Khan and his men.'

This was no so. A reign of terror shook the city for weeks in which countless men were shot down in the streets. Ayesha Jalal suggests that Ayub's men had proven true to his words — the army would not let politicians or religious ideologues turn the country over to anarchy. The message to Washington was more than implicit: the army was Pakistan's main, perhaps only hope. Although the people of Pakistan had their first taste of the suppression of civil rule in 1953, the real significance of the event went unnoticed until October 7, 1958, when the whole scenario was re-enacted on the national stage.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

### SOWING THE SEEDS OF HATRED

On April 17, 1953, Governor-General Ghulam Mohammad dismissed Khawaja Nazimuddin's ministry, which had got its budget passed by the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan a few days earlier. It is believed that the dismissal was the outcome of a lack of trust in the strength of character of Nazimuddin, and of signs of incompetence in the top levels of his administration. Informing the public of the dismissal, the official press communiqué referred to the grave food situation, the necessity for vigorous measures to deal with economic problems and the urgency of the question of law and order.

It is claimed that in mid-April of 1953 Nazimuddin called a few members of his cabinet and told them that he was aware that the Governor-General and a few cabinet ministers were conspiring against him. He told the small gathering that he was going to cable Queen Elizabeth and ask that Ghulam Mohammad be removed as Governor General. But one member of this gathering was in cahoots with Ghulam Mohammad and he disclosed to him Nazimuddin's plans. Shrewd old Ghulam Mohammad realized that under the Government of India Act, 1935, which was still the law of Pakistan, he had the power to dissolve the cabinet and ask someone else to form a new one.

These theories may be valid and sound in their place. It may also be true, as Keith Callard notes, that the administration had failed to surmount all the obstacles that lay in its path. After eighteen months in office, it had not provided a Constitution (but neither could Liaquat Ali despite remaining prime minister for 38 months); it had encountered a food crisis and was experiencing the consequences of the disastrous decline in the value of Pakistan's exports following the end of fighting in Korea. But, perhaps, foremost in the mind of an old servant of the Government of India was the weakness shown in standing up to the politico-religious agitation (anti-ahmadiya) that had plunged Punjab into civil violence. A government that was incapable of maintaining law and order did not deserve to retain office. But was this a fair charge to bring against Nazimuddin's ministry? Certainly not.

This question, however, cannot be separated from the American role in Pakistan which had become more decisive with the death of Joseph Stalin on March 5, 1953. Stalin's sudden disappearance from the helm of affairs in the Soviet Union, and the likely complications of the struggle for succession, provided a good opportunity to the United States to take care of some unfinished business. US Secretary of State Foster Dulles made arrangements to visit Pakistan and many other Middle East and South Asian

countries. Governor-General Ghulam Mohammad began certain preparations to receive his distinguished visitor.

According to Iskander Mirza, "The Governor- General used to send for me and say: 'How can we hope to run the country with this prime minister?'... The Governor-General came to a decision that Nazimuddin must go." On April 17, 1953, he was dismissed. The documentary evidence points to the fact that Nazimuddin's dismissal was "planned and accomplished through the combined efforts of the Army leadership, particularly Iskander Mirza and General Ayub Khan and the Governor-General himself. Ayub Khan confessed that he had worked hard to have something along this line accomplished. Iskander Mirza for his part disclosed that the army had been positioned at key points in the country on the day of dismissal.

Khawaja Nazimuddin made an appeal to the Queen as the constitutional sovereign of Pakistan. Somehow, as Mirza reveals, Nazimuddin was unable to get a telephone connection to Buckingham Palace and so he acquiesced in his dismissal. "They treated him very shabbily after his fall from power. All the official facilities were summarily withdrawn. He had no place in the eyes of authority." Mirza further states, "At one official reception, I noticed that he had been put among the most junior and subordinate persons present. Once, when my wife, Rifa'at, gave a dinner, she attempted to give him a little respect. Some person of importance could not come, so she put Nazimuddin in his place instead. There were protests from those whose official dignity was hurt by this act of kindness, that is, giving protocol to Nazimuddin."

However, Musarrat Hussain Zuberi in his memoirs, '*Voyage Through History*', blames Iskander Mirza that he was definitely privy to the plan of dismissal and it was he who made arrangements for army disposition and posting in Karachi. His motive was personal. Minister Fazlur Rahman had conveyed it to him that at the end of his term as defence secretary, he would be retired but would be provided with a diplomatic post abroad. Zuberi claims that like Ayub, Iskander was also developing political ambitions.

This may not be true. Iskander Mirza was coming to the end of his time at the ministry of defence, and was thinking of retirement. "I had gone past the full period of service for my retirement pension as head of the civil service. But I was told that my services were still required." he recalls.

Zuberi refers to a conversation. Once private secretary Faridullah Shah met President Iskander Mirza in the Government House, Peshawar, and said, "Sir, our service career has run parallel. You were assistant commissioner Nowshera, I became the assistant commissioner Nowshera. When you went to Mardan as the deputy commissioner, I had served on the same post. You later took over as P.A. Khyber, I was P.A. Khyber too. You were deputy commissioner, Peshawar, I have this post now. Sir, I have only one

request, help me to become the defence secretary, I will become President of Pakistan myself."

In closing the account of his years at the ministry of defence, Iskander Mirza emphasizes how much the ministry did for the armed forces, "We got the money that we possibly could at a time when the financial position was bad. We laid the foundations for Pakistan's membership of SEATO (1954) and the Baghdad Pact (1955), whereby we at last gained access to the armaments needed to expand and modernize our forces. In particular, we established good relations with the United States and obtained all sorts of benefits including a splendid military cantonment at Kharian."

Iskander Mirza expresses high opinion about his Deputy Chief of Staff Major-General Sir Walter Cawthorne, without whose brilliance Pakistan could not have attained one quarter of what it actually achieved. He worked in closest liaison with Mirza. Cawthorne's loyalty was a byword. During the Second World War, he was the head of military intelligence in the Middle East. "I took his guidance in all situations," says Mirza, "and his ideas always came up trumps." After Cawthorne left the Pakistan service, he joined the Australian diplomatic service and returned to Karachi as Australian High Commissioner.

Iskander Mirza also puts on record that General Ayub Khan did a good job as Commander-in-Chief of the army. He kept up the morale and discipline of the army though, unfortunately, he was not able to get on with some talented officers like Generals Latif and Sher Ali Khan.

As far as the appointment of new Prime Minister Mohammad Ali Bogra was concerned, Iskander Mirza had no open or secret hand in this affair. In his memoirs, however, Mirza informs that Sir Zafarullah Khan had suggested the name of Mohammad Ali Bogra as Pakistan's ambassador to Washington. "He had made himself popular there," notes Mirza, "and we were beginning to seek the friendship of the Americans." Also, he was a Bengali, so the replacement of one Bengali (Nazimuddin) by another would not upset the Bengalis as much as the appointment of a politician from West Pakistan. So, Mr. Bogra was summoned. On his arrival he was told that he was the new prime minister.

It just happened that Bogra showed up in Pakistan for consultation at the right moment. Musarrat Hussain Zuberi relates another story about Bogra's presence in Karachi at the moment of Nazimuddin's dismissal. Zuberi says that it was also known then that Mohammad Ali Bogra nearly spilled the beans when he was sent for by PM Nazimuddin and questioned why he had come and what for. He feared that the PM knew all and was going to make full confession, when PM blurted out that his visit might be connected with the visit of a high dignitary from USA. The CIA had just crushed the anti-Shah Dr. Mosaddeq in Iran and it was in touch with people who

mattered here, and someone in the thick of it was the personality the PM was referring to Bogra took a deep sigh of relief and disagreed with the PM.

Mohammad Ali Bogra also became the defence minister. As a matter of fact, he knew nothing about the army, and was only interested in having guards of honor mounted to give him a dignified welcome. Still, according to Iskander Mirza, Bogra was far better than Nazimuddin. He was a more modern type and you could get on with him. Although he was always thinking about the political consequences of everything, he did realize that strong action must be taken occasionally.

Iskander Mirza was rather disappointed with him when he (Mirza) went with him to Delhi in one of the innumerable attempts to settle the Kashmir issue. Bogra habitually called Pundit Nehru 'elder brother', which, according to Iskander Mirza, was wrong since it came from one prime minister to another. Also Bogra went on a shopping spree in Delhi. Mirza said to his wife, "Please don't you buy any *saris*. We are not going to show the Indians that we need their *saris*."

Iskander Mirza was also critical of Bogra's first cabinet because according to him, "It was a cabinet of politicians. They all intrigued like hell."

Early in 1954, Iskander Mirza had a recurrence of his old back trouble and had to go to England on sick leave. Just at this time, in April 1954, elections were held in the East Pakistan. The Muslim League was utterly routed by a United Front of opposition parties (the Jugto Front), which was led by the old guard politician, Fazlul Haq.

There is a long story of East Pakistan's economic and political grievances, which played a major role in the formation of the Jugto Front in late 1953 in anticipation of the provincial elections scheduled for February 16, 1954. To meet the election challenge, three public leaders, A.K. Fazlul Haq, Shaheed Suhrawardy and Maulana Bhashani, came to the forefront with the formation of the Front. The opposition campaign gained considerable momentum with big public meetings addressed by the three Bengali leaders all over the province.

The Muslim League government in East Pakistan was a decadent institution, typifying the semi-feudal contradictions of the East Bengali countryside. It even lacked a strong social base. Tariq Ali says that this government had come to represent the interests of alien landlords; it could not even begin to represent and fight for the interests of the disinherited Bengali bourgeoisie, who were preparing to inflict on it a blow from which it would never recover. With this state of affairs, the Front had adopted a 21-point manifesto in which the key point was a demand for provincial autonomy. Other important demands included: the adoption of Bengali as a national language, nationalization of jute indus-try; declaration of February 21 as an official memorial day,

erection of a Shaheed Minar for martyrs of the language movement, release of political prisoners; and repeal of the Safety Acts.



## CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

### MUSLIM LEAGUE'S WATERLOO

Elections were due in March 1954. These had already been postponed in 1953 for one year and the prevailing temper in East Bengal did not allow further postponement. At US Secretary of State Dulles' insistence President Eisenhower announced it was time to 'help' Prime Minister Mohammad Ali Bogra's Muslim League in the elections in East Bengal. The polls, therefore, were again postponed by three weeks to enable the League to make political capital out of US military aid. This postponement, however, favored the Jugto Front rather than the Muslim League.

Eisenhower's announcement of US military aid to Pakistan was made on February 25. Furthermore, Fatima Jinnah felt that the defeat of the Muslim League would be dangerous for the country so she went to eastern wing to provide moral support for the party. But the solemn observation of the second anniversary of Shaheed Day (February 21), more than balanced these tactical moves.

Almost the entire central cabinet took a hand in the pre-election campaign. The Constituent Assembly suspended its sitting so that members could take part in the canvassing. But such desperate measures proved of no avail. The ruling party met a crushing defeat. In a house of 309, it was reduced to puny group of ten. The Front won 223 seats. Chief Minister Nurul Amin was defeated by a young student and the Muslim League, which was founded in Dhaka in 1906, ceased to have any appeal in the province from that day onwards. It is interesting to note that a Punjabi leader, Feroz Khan Noon, described the Front's success as 'the victory of the Calcutta communists.'

On April 2, 1954, Front leader Fazlul Haq formed the first non-League ministry in Pakistan. Soon after the ministry was installed, there were riots in industrialized areas between Bengali and non-Bengali Muslims. In one of these riots, as many as four hundred people were killed. A political historian Syed Nur Ahmad claims that just a few days before the last riot took place, Fazlul Haq had visited Calcutta, where, pleased with the welcome he received and carried away by his passion for Bengali unity, he made a speech objectionable to Pakistan. On his return to Dhaka, Governor Khaliquzzaman, showed the chief minister the report of his Calcutta speeches. Haq denied the charge and said that the division of India was an established fact, that Pakistan had come to stay, and that he and all Pakistanis would defend the sovereignty and integrity of Pakistan.

But more was to come. The chief minister was summoned to Karachi. Prime Minister Bogra alleged that because of heavy communist infiltration, Haq was unable to

maintain law and order in the province. Haq strongly denied this charge but, unfortunately, as Mohammad H.R. Talukdar notes, *The New York Times* correspondent John P. Callahan, with deliberate malice, reported on May 23, that the Front Premier was working for the independence of his province. Haq quickly contradicted the report as a "reversion of truth". But the Centre, humiliated at the defeat its provincial counterpart had suffered, pretended to believe Callahan's "gathered" news and, determined to dislodge the popular ministry, moved quickly to take advantage of the situation. It branded Haq as a traitor.

By now the stage was ready for the final act. The Front's reaction to US military aid was the last straw; 162 members of the newly elected Bengal provincial assembly expressed "grave concern" over the possible undermining of Pakistan's "freedom and sovereignty." An "Anti US-Pakistan Military Pact Day" was observed. On May 19, Pakistani and US representatives signed the agreement. Within two weeks, the Front's ministry was dismissed.

Rumor had it that *The New York Times* reporter was playing a part in a plan by which the USA would hasten the demise of the pro-left East Pakistan government. It is on record that Khaliquzzaman, as souvenir of East Bengal, was using his powers trying to play the Front leaders against one another so that the ministry fell.

*The New York Times* remarked that, "The dismissal of the elected provincial government and the dispatch of Pakistan army and navy units to East Bengal may seem, on the face of it, a reversal of the democratic process. But Fazlul Haq and H.S. Suhrawardy had shown willingness to play with the fire of collaboration with the communists.

"We are interested in that country's union and strength. We want our Pakistani friends to enjoy the security of a prosperous and viable state. We realize the difficulties under which they are working. We must encourage them to meet and surmount those difficulties."

M.S. Venkataramani remarks that one difficulty was overcome — a democratically elected government in East Bengal, with overwhelming support in the legislature, had assumed office. It had opposed the Military Assistance Agreement with the United States. *The Daily Worker* of London wrote on June 1, 1954, that, "Fazlul Haq, the United Front Ministry and the people of the East Bengal are the first to be slaughtered on the altar of the US-Pak military pact."

As mentioned earlier, Iskander Mirza was in England. Bogra began sending him telegrams: "Come back immediately." Although the doctor warned him that if he discontinued the treatment, there was a good chance of his ending up paralyzed, Mirza felt he had no option but to go.

When Iskander Mirza returned, Bogra told him that he was to go to East Bengal to take over as Governor and restore order. "He warned me," writes Mirza, "I would have to take extra powers in order to put down the rioting, 'Would I have to inflict casualties?' Bogra inquired of me anxiously. This man had brought me back thousands of miles in order to give me more trouble. I was entitled to play a little game with him. I replied that it might be necessary to shoot five thousand people in order to restore order. At this he laid back and groaned."

Iskander Mirza went off in a hurry but before he left, he wired the army commander in Dhaka, General Sheikh, to prepare his troops for an emergency. According to Ayesha Jalal, "This was 'Act one' of Plan Mirza."

## CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

### MAN FROM THE WEST

Iskander Mirza arrived in Dhaka at 12.30 hours on May 30, 1954, in the C-in-C's aircraft. At 5 p.m. the same day, he was sworn-in as Governor. Earlier, in Karachi, he pulled out the plans from his inner pocket and over sips of tea with ailing Governor-General Ghulam Mohammad managed to get his way. It was, as Ayesha Jalal states, not too difficult. There was a law and order problem in East Bengal even if the proposed remedy was liable to fall short of providing the cure.

A day before Iskander Mirza reached Dhaka, Chaudhry Khaliquzzaman received a telephone call from Karachi telling him that Iskander Mirza would be arriving the following day, and that he should leave for Karachi along with his family by the same aircraft. Chaudhry Khaliquzzaman's aide-de-camp Major S. G. Jilani tells the remaining part of the episode: "This upset him (Khaliquzzaman) and his family. He meditated on the situation for a few hours and then suddenly at 10:00 p.m. he called me in and asked me to bring Mr. Abu Hussain Sarkar and Mr. Moazammuddin Hussain Chaudhry (both ministers) to the Governor House. Sarkar soon arrived. Then I went to the house of Moazammuddin Hussain Chaudhry. The old man was fast asleep. When he was awakened and informed that a person in uniform was waiting for him, the entire family panicked assuming that I had gone there to arrest him. On being assured of the nature of my mission, he came along with me to the Governor House. After consulting with the ministers, Chaudhry Sahib rang up Karachi again to say that a new ministry could be formed in East Bengal, eliminating Fazlul Haq. The cabinet in Karachi probably had further discussions on the proposal but ultimately the reply came at 2 O'clock in the night persisting on their earlier decision."

Iskander Mirza, however, has a different story to tell in this regard. He says that when he landed in Dhaka, he found that the central government had not notified Chaudhry Sahib that he was about to be relieved. "I had the embarrassing task of telling him myself that he would now have to vacate Government House," Mirza informs. It is a pity to note that Chaudhry Khaliquzzaman left for Karachi on May 31, 1954, by the same aircraft.

In his eyewitness account, Major Jilani, ADC to the new governor, suggests that as a result of the dismissal of Fazlul Haq's Ministry and the promulgation of Governor's Rule, the situation in the province was uneasy and it was feared that the malaise would manifest itself in large-scale strikes and protest demonstrations. However, the Sandhurst-trained cavalry officer, with a varied experience of political service, was not

dismayed by the challenging situation. He knew that the general impression of the people of the East Bengal about him was that of a blood-thirsty, ruthless person, and he took advantage of that reputation. Everyone in the province knew that Iskander Mirza had arrived and he would tolerate no nonsense.

This impression was furthered by certain interesting stories narrated by Altaf Gauhar, Major Jilani and many others. According to Altaf Gauhar, later that evening, a few officers were summoned to the Governor House. They were all seated in a dimly-lit lounge next to the governor's bedroom. While they sat holding their breath and mopping the sweat from their brows, Iskander Mirza walked in and everyone jumped to his feet, Mirza was wearing a red silk dressing-gown, and without any formal introduction, told the officers to arrest 600 persons before 6 O'clock the next morning. Having announced what seemed like his breakfast menu, he immediately left the room.

It was the beginning. The DIG Police, Anwarul Haq, noted down the figure "600," on his pad and started dividing it by 17, which was the number of districts in the province. He was left with a surplus of five which was quickly assigned to Dhaka district! The officials now knew the number of persons to be rounded up in each district. To one of them was assigned the task of communicating the magical number to every district magistrate. By the appointed hour, the police had locked up the required number of culprits, most of whom were innocent vendors and rickshaw pullers. The daily *Dawn* reported that the former cooperation minister of East Pakistan, Sheikh Mujibur Rehman, Mr. Ghulam Qadir Chaudhry and 150 other respected personalities were arrested under the Public Safety Act and other specific charges.

Major Jilani had his own story according to which the governor started his first day with a conference with the top bureaucracy responsible for law and order in the province. He told them that his first priority was to restore peace and tranquility and, to that end, they could have a free hand to go to any extent. In the afternoon, tells Mirza's aide-de-camp, the governor visited the riot-torn area of Adamjee Jute Mills. "We did not come across any dead body but the burnt hutments of the colony had a ghastly look."

On May 31, the governor met people from different walks of life including five ministers from the dismissed cabinet. The purpose of meeting these people was not to seek any advice from them but to warn and frighten them of the consequences in case someone stepped on his toes. Then came the press conference in which Iskander Mirza announced that all demonstrations against the imposition of Governor's Rule would be suppressed by the military, and if necessary, the army would not hesitate to kill even ten thousand people for the sake of national unity.

Iskander Mirza himself, however, reports quite a different state of affairs. As soon as he had time to look around, he found that things were not so bad as they thought in Karachi. "It was not necessary to use force to restore order" tells Mirza, "although the

army remained deployed for internal security for several weeks, there were no casualties." His job was to restore peace and prosperity to a demoralized province and people. "Because almost all the civil servants were either from West Pakistan or were 'refugees', that is, from what was now the Indian Union. They had bad relations with the Bengalis. Too many of them adopted an exalted attitude," Mirza notes.

It is noteworthy that Mr. N. M. Khan and Mr. Majid Malik, Principal Information Officer, Government of Pakistan, had arrived in Dhaka with Iskander Mirza in the same plane. N.M. Khan later took over from Hafiz Mohammad Ishaq as chief secretary to the Government of East Pakistan. H. M. Ishaq proceeded on leave. Altaf Gauhar relates "Operation Can Can" with the same N. M. Khan. Mr. Khan was an officer of the old Indian Civil Service and the general belief was that with his long service in undivided Bengal, he could do anything.

American expertise was invited to advise the governor about the introduction of security measures in Eden Building where the provincial secretariat was housed. N. M. Khan was sent to Thailand on a special CIA mission code-named "Can Can" (meaning Khan can do it) to study the methods that were being used to mobilize the Buddhists against communism. The Americans wanted Mirza to turn Bengali Muslims into a bulwark against communists in the region. The mission failed because "Can Can" found the Buddhist operation in Thailand a total hoax.

Iskander Mirza had a distinct disliking for the communist party in his heart. "There was left-wing terrorist activity, notes Mirza, "Which, I suspected, was fomented by the communists. The *mazdoor* trade unions were simply extremist political organizations, while the students bodies were infected by the unrest." On July 5, 1954, he banned the communist party of East Bengal and instigated the setting up of police committees in the industrial areas. The job of these committees was to discover the communists and their sympathizers in the factories and report them to the employers. The employers were warned that they must dismiss communist workers or face the wrath of the government. This was used as an excuse to dismiss many non-communist militants in industrial units. In this series of repression, it became difficult for the communist party to function at all. In one of his earlier public statements, Iskander Mirza also warned Maulana Bhashani, "That lad Bhashani should be careful."

Maulvi Fazlul Haq was placed under house arrest and guards were posted at his residence. Syed Nur Ahmad, in his famous account, *"From Martial Law to Martial Law,"* notes that within a week, several hundred others were arrested under the public safety laws, most of them communists. The press was placed under censorship for some time. Strong police protection was given to the factories in which riots had taken place. Only those people were allowed to enter who had permits.

Syed Nur Ahmad further states that Fazlul Haq had submitted a declaration to the governor in the meantime which practically amounted to an apology. Perhaps the governor had threatened to put him to trial. There were already allegations against him with regard to his speech which he delivered in Calcutta, and he had followed this with a press conference in which he used the word "independence" rather than "autonomy" with reference to the "preferred condition for East Pakistan." He denied that this was what he had meant, in a separate press statement. This statement, released on July 23, 1954, over Maulvi Sahib's signature, said that in an unguarded moment, he had made a slip of the tongue and uttered words which were not proper for him to say. He was a faithful citizen of Pakistan and a well-wisher of the country. He regretted his words. He added that, owing to advanced age, he was retiring from politics. In response to this, Iskander Mirza said that there was no need to put Fazlul Haq on trial anymore. The house arrest restriction was also withdrawn. However, the retirement was only temporary and Maulvi Sahib soon returned to politics.

One week after Iskander Mirza took over, the political weather was brought to normal. Even the Jugto leadership chose to keep quiet. On June 9, 1954, he said, "There is no intention of retaining Section 92-A a day beyond the period for which it is absolutely necessary." He added, "After the mission entrusted to me is fulfilled, you will be free to have a parliamentary government in this province." Addressing a press conference at the Government House, he said, "During my period in office, I hope to restore confidence in the minds of administrators so that they can act without fear." He, however, warned, "I shall not allow political agitators, who try to spread discontent and hatred to make capital out of the people's grievances."

Iskander Mirza also complained that the civil service had been crippled because of political interference. A great deal of dissatisfaction had been "exported" by India. On June 28, the East Bengal governor expressed the view that the situation in the province was well under control and several industrial concerns, which were not expected to resume work for months because of the turmoil, had already been functioning for weeks. He declared that his second task would be to expand the administration. In this regard he said, "When I assumed my duties as governor, I found it demoralized and at the verge of collapse."

After Iskander Mirza had restored law and order and arrested the leading political leaders of the Jugto Front, he turned his attention to reforming the educational situation in the province. He said that the whole educational system "needs a vigorous reorientation." He found that there were 78 degree colleges in the province but there were no technical schools which could impart technical education to the youth, an education having greater practical utility than merely formal schooling.

Iskander Mirza was also convinced that the students and staff had many rightful grievances. The facilities provided to many colleges were very poor and some buildings

had been taken over for other purposes. "I began to make plans to move the university right away from the inflamed atmosphere of Dacca (Dhaka) to a brand new campus about twenty-five, miles from the city. I also overhauled the youth organizations, which started to have a good influence on the students."

Altaf Gauhar is of the opinion that Iskander Mirza wanted to divert the Bengalis from politics to less volatile pursuits. A sports stadium was constructed in Dhaka and the Bengalis were introduced to the game of cricket. Gauhar says that the central government could now relax. So long as Iskander Mirza was there, its authority would not be challenged in East Bengal. He employed devices suited to the psychology and temperament of the local people. His aide-de-camp, Major S. G. Jilani suggests that Mirza used the carrot and stick diplomacy and took full advantage of the inherent rivalries and suspicions of the politicians. While the administration was in command, notes Altaf Gauhar, political intrigues continued unabated. Mirza started supporting the Awami League against Fazlul Haq's Krishak Sramic Party (KSP), which upset Prime Minister Bogra who started negotiating with Fazlul Haq (whom he had condemned as a traitor earlier) about the possibility of reviving the United Front government. Mirza, however, refused to withdraw the ban on political meetings in the province.

On August 9, 1954, the governor warned the people against machinations of "disruptionists, communist workers and other enemy agents" who, he said, had gone underground and were busy in hatching fresh conspiracies aimed at destroying the social and communal life in the province.

"We will not be caught unprepared," the governor said, and added that many of the disruptionists had been arrested while others had withdrawn to their hide-outs or had crossed the border. These elements, according to him, succeeded previously in spreading disorder and anarchy "for which the inspiration and guidance came from across the border". In a broadcast he spoke of all-round improvement in the province. Peace and order had been restored. The business community was now feeling reassured and industrial concerns had regained their previous level of production.

The governor emphatically condemned the activities of the "professional politicians" who exploited schools and colleges, and used them as recruiting grounds for political agitation. Such politicians would no longer be allowed to mislead and bully the students whose interests were dear to the government. He thanked the people and the press for their wholehearted cooperation in restoring normal conditions in the province.

The process of reforms was started in July 1954. On July 24, the first thermal power plant was inaugurated by Iskander Mirza at Siddhirganj near Dhaka. The giant convertor wheels of three units of the plant and three mighty engines were capable of generating 2,610 Kilowatts of thermal energy. The opening of the Siddhirganj power



station, as the daily *Dawn* reported, marked a red letter day in the history of East Pakistan and a milestone in the industrial progress of the country.

About his other reforms, Iskander Mirza notes, "I tackled the poor morale of the police but they lagged behind the police of West Pakistan in discipline and efficiency. The labor situation was stabilized and production began again at the Adamjee Jute Mills and other textile mills. Then came the problem of distributing cloth and other supplies to the people. Previously, it had all disappeared into the black-market. I was troubled because so much of the trade and industry were in the hands of Marwaris whose homes were in Calcutta."

Mirza further states that the condition of the villagers, who formed 98 percent of the population, was deplorable. He asked for a commission of experts to be supplied by the central government to solve their problems, both economic and social. He hoped to launch a programme of development spending funds in the countryside, where it was most needed, and also setting up village councils or *panchayats* in order to train the ordinary people in managing their own affairs. He was convinced that Bengal needed a rest from party politics, which had been the main cause of the rot which had spread throughout the province.

An unfortunate event during his tenure of office, recalls aide-de-camp. Major S. G. Jilani, was the unprecedented flood which engulfed the whole province in the months of August and September 1954. Here also Mirza's personality and resourcefulness came in handy as international help came to the province in a big way. American aircraft started landing substantial quantities of relief goods while an American army medical contingent also arrived and rendered good service in adverse conditions. Mirza himself recalls: "At the beginning of August, all our resources had to be diverted to fighting the unprecedented floods which swept down the great rivers and inundated about 10,000 to 15,000 square miles, affecting a great number of the population — the figure reached to about ten thousand. The local organizations mainly utilized the situation in order to try to make political capital out of the difficulties and to take credit for relief measures. The army and air force did sterling work in restoring communications, moving supplies and carrying out mass inoculations. American aid agencies came to our assistance very readily. They gave us food, milk and cloth and provided workers."

Major Jilani also recalls some interesting aspects of Iskander Mirza's personality. He says that Mirza's presence in the Government House caused the atmosphere to revert to the western style. A lot of alternations were carried out in the setting of furniture, paintings, photographs and other decorations. Mirza was fond of entertainment, throwing parties was one of his favorite things. After some time, the governor felt that the parties attended by the people having different temperaments, social status and vocations often led to confusion. So the invitees to the Government House were

grouped into suitable categories for these occasions. The military secretary and Major Jilani were given the responsibility of preparing the lists of invitees to specific parties.

One category of guests was termed as "jolly." Whenever this group was invited to the Government House, the atmosphere used to be informal, and the party would go on till late in the night. The other group, comprising of bureaucrats, judges, senior government officials and other highly placed persons, was strictly formal. "The understanding with us was to wind up these parties in the minimum possible time," states Major Jilani. "On these occasions, the head steward would announce dinner just half an hour after the arrival of the guests. The sitting at the dinner table would be of short duration with the usual long row of wine and liquor glasses missing. And, following the governor's instructions, exactly twenty minutes later, I would go up to him and, in the hearing of the guests, inform him that the Governor-General was on the telephone. On this, he would raise a quizzical eye and, with a surprised "Oh", would politely take permission from his guests and depart for the night."

In his rich account; Major Jilani further notes that Governor Mirza used to keep Sundays completely free for relaxation. He would go on a river-cruise or hold a bridge party in the Government House. Pigeon shooting used to be another pastime on Sundays. At times, he would content himself with shooting jackals in the evening in the vicinity of Government House. "We had packs of them breeding among the thick growth of shrubs and trees on the hilly side of the house," recalls Major Jilani. He further says that due to his long association with the NWFP, Pathans (Major Jilani himself being a Pakhtun was very close to him) were great favorites with Iskander Mirza, and a contingent of the Frontier Corps was always stationed in Dhaka. To revive memories of his Frontier days, he would occasionally visit them, eat with them and enjoy the Khattak dance in their company.

As a person and as a governor, Iskander Mirza was always approachable to every needy person. Kind and generous to all those who sought any kind of help from him, he was strict only in discipline as an official and as a common man too. Jilani testifies that he would often surprise people by making an unexpected informal appearance. "I went with him twice to see pictures at the Gulistan cinema of Dacca (Dhaka), and on both occasions, we stood in the queue to buy our tickets," tells Jilani. Sometimes, he would make incognito visits to places like the market to check the prices, or go to some school or hospital for inspection.

Iskander Mirza stayed in Dhaka for four months only, from May 30 to September 21, 1954, but during that brief period, he not only put down all political agitation in the province but also restored the morale of the administration. He employed both conventional and unconventional methods for keeping himself informed of trends and developments in the province. Besides reading reports from different intelligence

agencies, he daily used to meet a few selected persons and hear from them privately the latest gossip in the town.

Iskander Mirza was hoping that he would be allowed to stay in Dhaka for two or three years in order to carry out a thorough job of rehabilitation. Instead, he left the province in late September 1954 and did not return. On September 20, in accordance with the instructions received from Karachi, he refused to permit the United (Jugto Front) Assembly Party to hold a meeting. In a letter to Mr. Ataur Ralunan Khan, he expressed his inability to withdraw the ban from the political party. On September 21, the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan adopted a bill drastically curtailing the powers of the Governor General reducing his status to that of a constitutional head. The bill sought to curb the powers of the head of state with regard to dismissal of ministers, besides making the advice of the cabinet binding on him.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

### A HALF-MAD GOVERNOR GENERAL

As stated earlier, on September 21, the Government of India (Fifth Amendment) Bill was moved, whereby the Governor-General could not dismiss a ministry which enjoyed the confidence of the legislature. It appeared that Bogra did not expect opposition from the Governor-General, who was reported to be hardly in full possession of his faculties. It is noteworthy that the bill was passed in the course of a few minutes.

In his detailed account, Syed Nur Ahmad has narrated the details of the drama. According to him, this bill went through all the stages of legislation within 18 hours. The lightning speed with which it was rushed through is evident from the time-table below, which appeared in the press the following day.

#### **September 20**

4 pm: Hashim Gazder gave notice of a bill to amend the constitution, to the office of the assembly.

6 pm: The Steering Committee, charged with the preparation of the agenda, met and altered the agenda for the following day by placing Gazder's bill at the head of the list.

9 pm: Copies of a gazette extraordinary containing the draft of the bill were distributed to the press and to the members at their residences.

#### **September 21:**

9 am: The meeting of the assembly began with barely a quorum present. Gazder moved his bill in a few sentences to complete the first reading. This done, the second reading of a clause-by-clause consideration was taken up and completed. A motion was approved for the third reading. All these motions were passed by voice vote.

9.30 am: Maulvi Tamizuddin, President of the assembly, affixed his signature to the bill, declared it law and sent it to the press to be printed in the gazette.

Syed Nur Ahmad further notes that several members of the assembly were still at home, preparing to "attend" the session and most had not read the special gazette which had been delivered to their mail boxes (pigeon-holes) the night before, nor were they

aware of the drama going on in the assembly chamber. Nevertheless, the bill to curtail the powers of the Governor-General had become part of the constitution.

It is also noted that while this was happening, Ghulam Mohammad was in Abbottabad. He received information about it by telephone only after it had happened. It is reported that the Governor-General swore in pure Punjabi at the minister who gave him the news. He wanted to know whether the minister was sleeping when the attack took place.

A foreign correspondent reported that word had leaked out that the Constituent Assembly was about to take this action, or the GG to dismiss Mohammad Ali Bogra before the new law could be put into effect. But either by arrangement or by accident, the Governor-General's plane was held up at Chaklala for a few hours, and by the time he reached Karachi the Assembly had passed the new law.

A half-mad Governor-General sat alone and wept.

Within less than five weeks after the Constituent Assembly had redefined the powers of the Governor-General, on October 24, Ghulam Mohammad issued a proclamation of emergency, declaring that the constitutional machinery had broken down, and the assembly could no longer function. A new assembly would have to be elected and the cabinet reconstituted. As Major-General Iskander Mirza notes in his memoirs, the Governor-General "had turned the table on Mohammad Ali (Bogra); this time he was in Washington and could not effectively act".

General Ayub Khan thinks (in his book) that Ghulam Mohammad was not the kind of man to take things lying down. He was a sick man at that time and his speech was quite unintelligible. He must have said to himself, "All right, if this is how you have treated me, I shall pay you back in the same coin." Altaf Gouhar says that the old man was in a state of fury. How dare the Constituent Assembly, a gathering of stooges and time-servers, challenge his authority and how dare little Bogra, whom he had retrieved from the wilderness of the foreign service, have the audacity to act without consulting him?

At this point, Iskander Mirza came back into the story. M. A. H. Ispahani, the then High Commissioner in London, phoned him up and asked him come to London Airport to meet the Prime Minister, Mohammad Ali Bogra, who was returning from the United States. It is worth mentioning that when the Prime Minister was to be in Washington, General Ayub Khan, Foreign Minister Sir Zafarullah Khan and Secretary General Chaudhri Mohammad Ali, were to accompany him on his travels to the United States. M. S. Venkatramani observes that Ayub Khan had arrived in Washington ahead of the Prime Minister. *Dawn* reported that Ayub Khan would hold "preliminary discussions" with American officials to prepare the ground for the Prime Minister's visit. The Prime Minister's talks with the US leaders brought forth only brief, statements from the

American side. It was stated that the United States was preparing to give additional economic aid to enable Pakistan to deal with its current "emergency." Venkataramani remarks that whatever the emergency was, its first victim was the Prime Minister of Pakistan himself.

It is also noteworthy that when Bogra was packing his bags under the watchful eyes of Ayub Khan, the US Government announced an aid package to Pakistan of 105 million and drew attention to the fact that the amount was nearly four times larger than what had been previously planned for the year. It was also announced that arms deliveries to Pakistan would be increased by 50 percent over earlier plans. On October 20, the Prime Minister got a message from the Governor-General to return home at once. Ayub Khan sensed trouble and realized that the old man was on the warpath and was going to dismiss Bogra.

The Prime Minister had arranged to visit Ottawa after his stay in the United States, but after receiving this message, he cancelled his Canadian visit and crossed the Atlantic. In London, Iskander Mirza accompanied Ispahani to the airport, but before they reached there, Mohammad Ali and his party had already lauded. As soon as Bogra saw Mirza and Ispahani, he said: "Don't you know there is a great deal of trouble in Karachi and that they have just heard from one of the ministers, Mr. Malik that the Governor-General is about to declare martial law?"

When Iskander Mirza told Ayub Khan what he heard, he (Ayub) took him (Mirza) aside and said, "Do not propose anything, because, before leaving for America, I was promised by the Governor-General that I will be asked to take over the country."

Iskander Mirza replied, "Look, it would be a very stupid thing to do. He is a very sick man and you must not take everything he says seriously. Let us have time to think and see how things come about when we return to Karachi."

The four men and Begum Mohammad Ali retained together to Karachi, where they arrived late at night on October 23, in an atmosphere of intense crisis. When the plane touched down at Karachi Airport, a group of soldiers snapped to attention, as if to honor the Prime Minister. Reporters yelled out to him, asking, "What about the crisis?" Bogra (like every Prime Minister in power), responded with a toothy grin and the pretense that there was no crisis.

According to American press reports, Bogra strode past the soldiers to his Cadillac, his wife at his side. He got into the car, but was astonished when a couple of Pakistani generals shouldered his wife aside and got in behind him. "There is no room for you," the general told his wife. "You go straight home in another car and wait for your husband. We are taking him to the Governor-Generals palace."

There are varied accounts of the whole episode. Major-General Iskander Mirza notes that when they landed they found an enormous and very excited crowd running here and there, with the Director of Civil Intelligence jumping from one side to the other, and the whole place like a madhouse. "I then suggested to the High Commissioner, Hasan Ispahani, to get hold of Bogra, put him in a car, and take him to the Governor-General's house.

A British correspondent, who had flown into Delhi to escape Karachi's censorship, sent the following dispatch to the *Daily Express*: "Troops poured into Karachi. An army brigade with armored cars and artillery was alerted around the clock. Telephone lines to politicians' houses were cut." The correspondent, Russell Spurr, stated that the Governor-General had seized power. He had told the helpless Prime Minister "If you do not cooperate, the army will take over. There will be mass arrests." *The New York Times* reported that the Governor-General peremptorily told Mohammad Ali that he could either agree to the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly and cooperate with the Governor-General and the army or resign. If he resigned, martial law would be proclaimed, with, extended powers of arrest vested with the military authorities.

Ali, reportedly was angry. "Suppose I refuse?"

Cold, merciless Ghulam Mohammad replied, "Refusal is out of the question." And refusal was out of the question, according to the report, for Mohammad Ali could see that the Governor-General was backed by Iskander Mirza and Ayub Khan. Ayub Khan was indebted to Ghulam Mohammad because in 1953, when Khan faced compulsory retirement, Ghulam Mohammad had used his "extraordinary powers" to extend Khan's term for five years.

Masarrat Hussain Zuberi has a slightly different story to tell. He notes that Iskander Mirza brought Ispahani with him and all the four landed near midnight at Karachi. The Military Secretary met the VIP arrivals at the airport and the Prime Minister, accompanied by the two generals, was whisked away straight to the Governor-General's house. A very angry Governor-General met them and peremptorily asked the Prime Minister what would he do with the emergency. The Prime Minister did not know of any emergency and was nonplussed with all the drama around him. He innocently asked which emergency he was referring to. It was then rumored that the Governor-General lost control of himself, rudely abused the Prime Minister, and asked the two generals to take him away. Dungeon in the Lahore fort, with muscle-bound jailors, torturing him with their jibes and mocking smiles, crossed Mohammad Ali's mind. He, however, retained his nerve and mustering all his courage asked the Governor-General what did he, in fact, want him to do.

Alia, the Prime Minister's newly wedded wife, as Zuberi continues, was in a fright. It was two in the morning and her husband had not returned home. She frantically

continued to ring up the Governor-General's house and every time drew a blank. After a long huddle between the two generals and the Governor-General, the Prime Minister was called in from the lonely room, where he was cooling his heels and warming his spirits with black coffee, generously provided by the Military Secretary, who kept him company. He was informed that the arrant Constituent Assembly was being dissolved, but there was no ill-will towards him. He would remain Prime Minister, and a list of his new colleagues would be given to him when he would be re-sworn. A parting assurance was that three of them were present with him in the room.

Masarrat Hussain Zuberi claims that General Mohammad Ayub Khan began protesting against his inclusion, thinking he would lose his command as C-in-C of the army, but Iskander Mirza took his arm and the arm of the crestfallen, humiliated Prime Minister and walked out of the room.

Iskander Mirza, a major actor in the game, has also related the story in quite a dramatic way. When Iskander Mirza and Ayub Khan got to the Governor-General's house, both generals went towards the Governor-General's room (there was no sign up to then of Mr. Ispahani and Mohammad Ali Bogra). When they got in there, they saw Chaudhri Mohammad Ali walking about in the room and the Governor-General lying on the floor on a white sheet in a terrible state. He was almost foaming at the mouth and striking out, right and left. His face was red and he looked terribly ill and really not quite in his senses. They asked him what had happened and why he was lying on the ground in such a bad state.

"Oh," he said, "I am very angry, I want to get rid of this government, I do not want to see the face of the Prime Minister again. He has been disloyal to me and I want you to take over the country."

Iskander Mirza notes that he talked to the Governor-General quietly and said, "Look, this is not the way to do things. What will the world say? You wait. Mohammad Ali Bogra must have come by now. He will come up, you must see him and have a heart-to-heart talk. You can settle things like that."

Iskander Mirza further states that one of the servants there was sent down and Mohammad Ali Bogra with Mr. Ispahani entered the room. In the first minute, Mirza thought that the Governor-General was going to burst and have a nervous breakdown. But he gradually recovered, and then he started talking, and was very furious. However, there was at last a breathing space and they came to an agreement on the basis that a new cabinet would be formed and the Assembly would be dissolved and things would start de novo the next day. Chaudhry Mohammad Ali was running between the Governor-General and Bogra and drafting something for all this to take effect next morning.



Ghulam Mohammad gave a list of persons he wanted in the cabinet: M.A.H. Ispahani, General Ayub, Chaudhry Mohammad Ali and Iskander Mirza. Bogra was to be the Prime Minister, and the other member of the cabinet was to select himself.

Bogra surrendered and was then told to stay on in office. Having thus summarily dealt with the Prime Minister, Ghulam Mohammad turned promptly to deal with the people of Pakistan. Having placed the nation in a "state of emergency," the Governor-General was in a relaxed mood as he ordered a private showing of the movie *Love in Venice*. At 2:10 on the morning of October 24, 1954, Mohammad Ali trudged home. His wife was still up, waiting with a few alarmed friends who feared the Prime Minister might have been killed.

The two generals deposited him in his house, safe and in one piece to the great relief of his wife.

"What happened? What has happened?" his wife screamed when Ali walked in.

Mohammad Ali collapsed in a chair and asked for water. He gulped down three glasses while a newspaperman friend cried. "Tell us what happened. We'll support you."

"I have done something so bad, so cowardly that you could not possibly support me." said Ali.

"Tell us about it," his friends demanded.

"I'm hungry" said Mohammad Ali abruptly, and left the room to get something to eat. A short time later he summoned to his friends and told them what had happened: "The Governor-General was a changed man — a raving maniac. Two nurses were trying to hold him down. But he kept shouting to me, 'I have been insulted, I'll have my revenge!' He demanded that his powers be restored. He made me agree to a proclamation dissolving the Constituent Assembly and reconstituting my cabinet..."

As far as the selection of Iskander Mirza as Minister of the Interior is concerned, he did not join the cabinet without a struggle. In his own words Mirza explains:

"I had talked with Ghulam Mohammad and convinced him that I ought to go back to Bengal, where I was really needed. I did not see that as Minister of the Interior I could be of much use to the country. But when Ghulam Mohammad agreed to my returning, General Ayub Khan and Mr. Ispahani both said they would not go into the cabinet unless I was also a member. And that is how I was roped into that cabinet, misnamed, 'Cabinet of Talents' or 'Cabinet of Brains'."

The action of the Governor-General however, was a big blow to the weak democratic structure in Pakistan and caused a serious political, legal, constitutional crisis. On August 11, 1957, *Dawn* commented: "There have indeed been times such as that October night in 1954 when, with a general to the right of him and a general to the left of him, a half-mad Governor-General imposed upon a captured Prime Minister the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly and the virtual setting up of a semi-dictatorial executive."

## CHAPTER TWENTY SEVEN

### A CONSTITUTIONAL DICTATORSHIP

Inclusion of Hoseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy and Dr. Khan Saheb in the 'cabinet of talents' was a surprise to the outer world. Mr. Suhrawardy had been, as Iskander Mirza himself suggests, a leading light in the Opposition United Front. Mirza had no objection to his joining as he (Suhrawardy) promised to dissociate himself from extremists, such as Maulana Bhashani. Dr. Khan Saheb had been under a cloud since his Frontier government was dismissed at the time of Partition. In Mirza's opinion Dr. Khan Saheb and his brother Abdul Ghaffar Khan had been placed under arrest quite unnecessarily. Abdul Ghaffar Khan spent more than seven years in prison without any break and was only released in 1955. Iskander Mirza strongly urged the inclusion of Dr. Khan Saheb in the new cabinet, as this would reassure the Pakhtuns. There were only three of the old cabinet members in the second Bogra ministry. According to Iskander Mirza, it was really a new government.

Within a week, expounding the political philosophy of the new regime, the new Minister of the Interior, Major-General Iskander Mirza, giving the "Official" reasons for proclamation of a State of Emergency in a meeting with foreign correspondents on October 29, said: "The masses of this country are overwhelmingly illiterate. They are not interested in politics. They are bound to act foolishly sometimes, as they did in East Bengal and again their elected leaders did in the Constituent Assembly. It was thus necessary, in fact essential, that there should be somebody to rectify their blunders."

With the above thesis, as reported in *Dawn* (October 31, 1954), the Minister of the Interior went on to declare that the Governor-General was perfectly justified in the action he had taken. Somebody had to save the country from "political scalawags," he noted.

Mirza asserted that the people of Pakistan had little training in democracy. They could not be expected to run successfully political institutions and forms of democratic government evolved in a highly developed society like England. The attempt to work the democratic system in this state of affairs had led to disastrous results.

The administration had gone to pieces. "You cannot have the old British system of administration, and, at the same time, allow politicians to meddle with the civil service. In the British system the District Magistrate was the king-pin of administration. His authority was unquestioned. We have to restore that. I have done it in East Bengal and

you will see the results in the next three or four month," he went on. "Results can be seen even now."

Iskander Mirza expressed this view because he was always there to clean "the mess which the politicians had made of the country." "I believed that in order to clean up the mess and work towards real democracy, responsible democracy, we must have controlled democracy so that we don't run off the rails."

A few weeks later, on November 12, Iskander Mirza made another statement, in which he said that the country was being led into chaos and ruin by unscrupulous political groups who thought more of their factional interests than the good of Pakistan.

In an interview with Eric Downton of *The Daily Telegraph*, Iskander Mirza, who according to the reporter, was the new government's "strong man" said: "Of course, I shall be unpopular among our professional politicians by saying this but Pakistan is obviously not yet ripe for the practice of democracy as the term is understood in Britain or America. There must be some measure of control to prevent flagrant abuses."

In his memoirs, Iskander Mirza complains that the politicians did not take this without a protest they challenged Ghulam Mohammad's decision in the courts.

The battle in the courts, however is a very important episode in the whole drama. It was Maulvi Tamizuddin Khan, the then president of the constituent Assembly, who decided to challenge the Governor General's action. Strong and persistent pressure was put on Tamizuddin to continue as the President of the Assembly or to become a minister, both of which offers he rejected outright. As his son-in-law, Mr. M. N. Huda notes, there were two alternatives: the political one of defying the order and convening a meeting of the Assembly, or the legal one of challenging the decision in a court of law. He selected the second alternative.

For this, Maulvi Tamizuddin had to pay the price. His official residence in Bath Island, Karachi was kept under heavy guard, and he could leave only in disguise through the backdoor. He, somehow, managed to get to the court premises in a motor rickshaw – almost a miracle in view of the intense surveillance kept on his house and movements.

Before the act of dissolution, the Assembly had adjourned on September 21, 1954, but some committees continued holding their meetings, even after the dissolution. Tamizuddin tried to summon meetings of these committees in the Assembly premises. The new Minister of the Interior, Major-General Iskander Mirza sent directions to the watch and ward staff that they should not permit any member of the dissolved body to enter the building and eventually he had the building locked.

Now, in his capacity as President, Maulvi Tamizuddin decided to file a writ petition with the Sindh Chief Court, praying that the court would pass an order to stop the government and its functionaries from obstructing the work of the Assembly. Mr. M. N. Huda, in his detailed account, states that the case was filed on the morning of 7 November, 1954 by Advocate Manzar-e-Alam, and Maulvi Tamizuddin spent the whole day in the court library for fear of being picked up on the way. Before the filing of the case, the administration did all it could to persuade and threaten Maulvi Tamizuddin. But he adhered to his decision and went ahead with the case single-handedly- both politically and financially.

In his writ petition before the Sindh Chief Court, Maulvi Tamizuddin asserted:

- 1) that the Governor-General had no authority under any law either to issue the proclamation or to dissolve the Constituent Assembly;
- 2) that the constitutional machinery had not broken down, and the Constituent Assembly had not ceased to function;
- 3) that constitutional laws passed by the Constituent Assembly did not need the assent of the Governor- General; and
- 4) that only members of parliament could be appointed ministers on the recommendation of the prime minister. The writ prayed for were: Mandamus against the Government, and Quo Warranto against the new ministers including Iskander Mirza.

The Government responded by asserting that:

- 1) the proclamation of the Governor-General dissolving the Constituent Assembly was perfectly valid in law and facts;
- 2) all laws passed by the Constituent Assembly, including these relating to the Constitution, needed the assent of the Governor-General; and
- 3) the Sindh Chief Court was not empowered to issue writs in view of the violation of (2) above.

The Sindh Chief Court heard arguments from both sides in the case. A British lawyer advocated the views of Tamizuddin. After a long hearing the court resolved the case in favor of Tamizuddin.

The Sindh Chief Court had held the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly a nullity in law on the grounds that the prerogative of dissolution was not conferred on the

Governor-General by an express provision of the Constitution. Being a sovereign body, the Assembly was "subject to no agency or instrument outside itself to effect its dissolution or to give its laws validity, except such as it itself chose to create." (PLD 1955 FC 435). The Governor-General's action in dissolving the Assembly had vitiated with illegality the new government he had installed in office. According to the working constitution there could be no council of ministers without a legislature, under the Government of India Act. 1945; as adapted in Pakistan, and membership of the assembly was necessary for membership of the cabinet.

The court, as Mushtaq Ahmad notes, issued a writ of mandamus restoring the petitioner (Tamizuddin) in his office as president of the Constituent Assembly and restraining all respondents from obstructing or interfering with the exercise. The appointment of ministers was declared illegal. Under section 10 of the Government of India Act as amended on September 21, 1954, they were not qualified to hold ministerial offices, not being members of the Federal Legislature. (PLD 1955 Sindh 96).

The government appealed the decision to the Federal Court. The higher court admitted that there was no specific provision in the existing constitutional legislation which empowered the Governor-General to dissolve the Constituent Assembly and that such a provision was omitted from their texts on the assumption that the Assembly would perform its function within a reasonable period and dissolve itself. But even after eight years of its existence it had not given the country a constitution and had, in fact, tended to become a perpetual legislature of the Dominion, thereby rendering itself completely unrepresentative of and irresponsive to public opinion. The prerogative and right of the Crown to dissolve the Assembly, which had been in abeyance, could therefore be revived. It was an extraordinary power to be exercised in an extraordinary situation.

The judgment of the Sindh Chief Court was set aside by a majority judgment. The court also held that the dissolution of the Assembly was valid on the grounds of "State necessity" – a doctrine which was found controversial for more reasons than one. Commenting on the judgment, Mr. M. N. Huda remarked that the court debased its legal and constitutional expertise and image by refusing to call a spade a spade.

Judges in and outside Pakistan have widely criticized the invoking of the doctrine of necessity by the Federal Court. It is reported that Chief Justice Munir himself has privately admitted that he had to give a political judgment in this case.

The reaction of the country to the verdict of the Federal Court was quite interesting. On one side were the legal-intellectual elite who considered the act to be all wrong and were unhappy about this deterioration of the rule of law. They were also amazed and pleased by the tremendous public sympathy which was exhibited in favor of the president of the Constituent Assembly for his character, courage and love for the rule of law. On the other hand, there was the political problem of an ineffective Constituent

Assembly, changed beyond recognition, which had so far failed to deliver the goods. It is said that the legal Suhrawardy wanted to appear in the case, but the political Suhrawardy, after joining hands with Iskander Mirza, was not persuaded to this conflict since the legal and the political implications of the case were very real in all active minds.

## CHAPTER TWENTY EIGHT

### ONE UNIT

The Federal Court called upon the Governor General to arrange for elections to be held in the near future, so as to set up another constituent assembly for the purpose of framing a constitution. The government had to summon a new assembly duly elected by the members of the provincial legislatures, and only the new assembly could legalize the integration of West Pakistan and validate the invalid legislation. It was on May 28, 1955 that the Governor General signed Order No. 12 calling for elections to the new constituent assembly. Polling was to be held on June 20 and 21, 1955. Iskander Mirza notes that the elections "were a peculiar type of elections which I have not understood from that day to this (1967). I was elected by a Punjabi group to represent Sialkot, a place I had never been to."

Much earlier in November 1954, Iskander Mirza had started to explain the One Unit plan. He was of the view that there should be a unitary form of government for the whole of Pakistan, East and West. No proposal to this effect had been officially mooted, but he said, "I am trying to sell this idea as the Minister of the Interior." (Reported by *Dawn*). He was talking to pressmen at Amausi aerodrome on the outskirts of Lucknow where he had landed with the Governor-General from Lahore.

"We have to create one unit in West Pakistan. Whether we succeed or not is a different thing." Mirza expected no trouble in Sindh and the NWFP in opposition to the new move. "And if there is trouble I will meet it," he said.

The history of the idea of One Unit culminating in the establishment of the united province of West Pakistan, constitutes an important chapter in the political and economic history of Pakistan. This idea was as old as the state itself. Initially articulated in 1948, it was justified on grounds of administrative efficiency, greater economy and as a foil against provincialism.

In March 1949, as Ayesha Jalal points out, it was aired in the Constituent Assembly by Feroz Khan Noon, supported by Jahanara Shahnawaz, and endorsed by Yusuf Khattak, the Pakhtun general secretary of the Pakistan Muslim League. Speaking in the Constituent Assembly on March 2, 1949, Noon observed that at the moment the western wing of the country had four provinces and the legislature for each province was so small that it was almost impossible to have a stable government. Therefore, there were only two ways open for improvement. One was to increase the number of members in each province and the other course was to amalgamate the provinces.



"Amalgamate Sindh and Punjab and amalgamate the Frontier (NWFP) and Balochistan. I would not mind the capital of Punjab moving from Lahore to a more centrally placed area if you were to create one whole Western Pakistan out of all the provinces ... One big province with a good and strong machinery, where you will have one administrative service. In these small provinces you can never have administrative efficiency." (Constituent Assembly (Legislature) of Pakistan Debates, Vol. 1. No. 9, March 2, 1949, pp 295).

Expressing her agreement with Feroz Khan Noon, Begum Shahnawaz said, "If we amalgamate these four provinces into one, then we can make representation to the Lower House on population basis and in the Upper House on the basis of units." She said, "(In the cabinet) we ought to give Punjab a smaller number of ministers than all the other three provinces combined. If this is done then all these three provinces ought to be perfectly satisfied, as they would have a majority in the cabinet and I am sure that we can then handle the administration as it should be handled." (*Ibid.* March 3, 1949. pp. 330)

It is also reported by Rizwan Malik that both Jinnah and Liaquat Ali Khan had also favored the idea of integrating the various provinces of West Pakistan into one unified province as a counterpoise to a homogeneous East Bengal. "I learned from Liaquat Ali Khan," says Rushbrook Williams, "that Quaid-e-Azam had thought of this, but had died before he could do anything about it. Liaquat Ali Khan himself favored it but, daunted by the formidable vested interests which opposed it, put the idea aside for the time. He too died before he could tackle the problem." The Quaid's interest in the integration of various provinces of West Pakistan into, what later on came to be known as. One Unit, is further corroborated by the statement of Sardar Bahadur Khan. In July 1955, he is reported to have said that Jinnah wanted to implement a scheme on such lines by 1948.

On January 15, 1953, Dr. Abdur Rahim, senior advocate of Peshawar had proposed that the best solution to the prevailing constitutional crisis in the country, was that there should be only two units of Pakistan namely East and West Pakistan. He had no doubt in his mind that the Pakhtun community would "welcome the merger of the small provinces of the western wing of the country into one strong and solvent unit."

The One Unit proposal was made from time to time, but it was not taken seriously until 1954. The event that caused the plan to be put forward as a matter of urgency was the victory of the Jugto (United) Front in East Bengal. It was necessary to consider granting a substantial measure of autonomy to East, the eastern wing and to find some comparable organization in the West to receive similar powers.

The first suggestion, as Keith Callard reports, was that of a zonal federation — this would have involved a three-tier system of government, central, zonal and provincial. This scheme was laid aside when the Jugto Front government was dismissed. Further

discussion of integration took place before the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly but without firm agreement being reached. The Sindh government under Abdus Sattar Pirzada strongly opposed it.

When the Assembly was dissolved, the Centre had less need to worry about political opposition. The foremost objective before the new ministry, again under Bogra, was the integration of West Pakistan into a single unit. This was what the political leaders from Punjab, notably Chaudhri Mohammad Ali, Gurmani and Daultana had been pressing as a condition precedent to a constitutional settlement with East Bengal. General Ayub Khan had come to a similar conclusion. "This," he said in a cabinet meeting, "is my programme. This is what we have got to do. The first thing is to unify West Pakistan." For him, strategically and economically, West Pakistan was "destined to stand or fall as a whole," and he was prepared to weld it into One Unit, "regardless of any prejudices to the contrary, which are more the creation of politicians than real."

Iskander Mirza too was not averse to issuing such blunt admonishments, "One Unit is a steamroller. Have you seen a steamroller being stopped by small pebbles on a road? None can stop the formation of West Pakistan's One Unit. No doubts should be entertained in this connection..."

On February 15, 1955, Iskander Mirza once again stressed that the scheme to unify West Pakistan would be implemented as early as possible. The Interior Minister soon came into clash with nationalist forces in the NWFP and Sindh on this issue.

In Sindh, Balochistan and the NWFP, the opposition to One Unit was deep and widespread. They were fearful of losing their identity which was likely to be submerged in the larger unit in which Punjab would predominate. The strategy devised to carry out the scheme aggravated such fears. The implementation scheme was embodied in One Unit documents. The combination of force and cunning that the documents recommended should be used in integrating West Pakistan, suggests that the author must have modeled his plan on Machiavelli's discourses.

Bengalis became extremely suspicious because of these documents. Designed as a plan of strategy for the fulfillment of the unification scheme, these secret documents went into some detail about the political measures that would be required. These were said to have been composed by Mumtaz Daultana, and no denial of his authorship was forthcoming.

The scheme recommended that "all opposition of which we are morally convinced is motivated by evil must be made inoperative." It recommended, "the dismissal" of Pirzada Abdus Sattar, a "self-denying ordinance" on Feroz Khan Noon, unreserved support to Sardar Abdur Rashid (a former IG of police of the NWFP and then Chief

Minister of the province), "stilling his suspicion, following his nerve" and employment of various other means such as the use of the news media and the mullahs.

The session of the second Constituent Assembly at Murree (July 1955) will be long remembered not so much for the business transacted in the House, as for the intrigue that went on behind the scenes. The above mentioned secret documents were exchanged between the participant leaders. A copy of these documents was given to Sardar Rashid by Chaudhri Mohammad Ali.

The Constituent Assembly met on July 7. On July 6, a dinner was held at Government House at which Nawab Mushtaq Ahmad Gurmani, Interior Minister Iskander Mirza, Defence Minister General Ayub Khan Dr. Khan Saheb and Chaudhri Mohammad Ali were present. It was decided that "we should sit together and come to an agreement on the controversial points which were holding up the framing of the constitution. While the sessions of the Constituent Assembly were being held, negotiations proceeded side by side. On July 13, a 5-point agreement signed by the leaders of the various parties was negotiated. Prime Minister Bogra signed on behalf of the Muslim League. Nawab Gurmani, Dr. Khan Saheb and Chaudhri Mohammad Ali signed on behalf of West Pakistan. A. K. Fazlul Haq was to sign on behalf of East Pakistan, but Haq insisted on the signatures of Aatur Rahman Khan and Abul Mansur Ahmad also. After they had signed, Nawab Gurmani undertook to take Fazlul Haq's signature and reported that he had done so. As Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy reports, the five negotiated points were:

1. West Pakistan was to be integrated into One Unit.
2. East wing was to have full regional autonomy.
3. There would be parity between the two wings in all respects, not merely in representation.
4. Election would be through the medium of joint electorate.
5. Bengali and Urdu would be two state languages.

Ayub Khan claims that Suhrawardy, who had joined the cabinet under Bogra in December 1954, drafted the One Unit Bill which he was to pilot through the Assembly. It is noteworthy that he had accepted the idea on the principle of parity between the two wings which had earlier caused discontentment in East Bengal.

The secret documents, when passed on to Sardar Abdur Rashid, outraged him no end. Rashid, who had obtained the endorsement of the Frontier Assembly, was now in the forefront of those opposing the Bill. In a dramatic manner, he disclosed the whole game before the House and read excerpts from the documents. The documents clearly

showed that the whole One Unit scheme was simply a cover for Punjabi domination of West Pakistan. It was also disclosed that Punjabi leaders at the centre and in the province – had joined hands.

Syed Nur Ahmad, a spokesman of the Punjabi sentiments, however, claims that in fact there was little in the documents to cause a sensation. To him, these documents simply said that the Punjab would not lose its natural place in One Unit. Hence the Punjabis should not run after offices in a manner which might cause misgivings among their brethren from the smaller provinces. The One Unit plan could only succeed in a climate of mutual trust and brotherhood. Furthermore, the note said candidly, the failure of the One Unit plan would harm Punjab as East Pakistan would play "big brother" to the "smaller brothers" in the West. One can say frankly that the tone of the note was not diplomatic, but the true goal of the plan was that stated in the note that is, to bring about equality between East and West Pakistan while widening the area of provincial autonomy in each wing, a demand which was endorsed strongly by East Pakistan.

The following selections, on the contrary, indicate the real character of the said documents:

"Punjab must be kept quiet. The folly of our friends must be checked. At a later stage Punjab will have to take the lead. At that time I hope, an effective, intelligent Punjabi leadership will have been put in place both at the centre and at Lahore.

"In actual fact, however, One Unit will mean more effective power to the people of West Pakistan than they have hitherto enjoyed. The present position is that all real power lies with the Central Government in which Bengal has the dominating share."

The scheme, as Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan commented, was hatched to get control over the electricity of the Frontier Province, the mineral wealth of Baluchistan and the lands of Sindh. The documents stated:

"The Pakhtuns have electricity, Baluchistan has mineral wealth and Sindh has vast agricultural lands. It is necessary that Punjab should benefit from the electricity in the Frontier. Exploitation of the mineral wealth of Baluchistan and the tribal territory will bring equality in common life. The tribesmen can be settled on the agricultural lands in Sindh and Bahawalpur, and this is already being done. But, of course, there are difficulties also and it will require considerable time. This needs to be expedited in an organized way. And all this cannot be achieved unless the provinces are undone. The provinces are so formed that only one of them is self-sufficient and the rest depend on one another. It is a life-long connection like that of a money-lender and a debtor."

Interior Minister Iskander Mirza declared that the Government will not allow the revival of the Red Shirt movement which, he said, had seriously endangered the peace and order of the Frontier at the very inception of Pakistan, and may do it again in future. Addressing a news conference, Mirza added that by removing curbs on the movements of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the Government wanted to give him a chance of proving to the world that he was a Pakistani patriot. "But," the minister added, "so far the Government's hopes have been belied."

Iskander Mirza, who was leaving Peshawar for Karachi on the night of July 26, told newsmen that he was fully convinced that Ghaffar Khan would do all in his power to bring about a clash between "his deluded followers" and the government. He said:

"I had a discussion with Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan over the One Unit scheme and I regret to say that his approach to the problem is motivated by self-interest and intense provincialism, combined with dislike for his neighbors." In the circumstances, Mirza added, no reasonable approach to the problem was possible. The Khan had made up his mind to oppose the One Unit plan irrespective of the interests of the Pathans and the economic prosperity of the country as a whole. Mirza concluded that Ghaffar Khan's action led one to think that he was against the established order of things. His mental make-up was such that it made it impossible for him to direct his energies towards anything constructive.

D.G. Tendulkar reports that the week-long efforts of Iskander Mirza, the Interior Minister, and Dr. Khan Saheb to enlist the support of Abdul Ghaffar ended in failure at Peshawar on July 26. Replying to Iskander Mirza, Ghaffar Khan remarked, "It is an irony that those who turned the British out are dubbed as traitors by those who had been the henchmen of Englishmen for generations." He denied that the removal of restrictions on his movement had been a special favor.

On July 29, a joint conference of the Khudai Khidmatgars and the NWFP Awami League, gave authority to Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the Pir of Manki Sharif to take suitable steps to resist the implementation of the One Unit scheme. One of the six resolutions, passed by the conference said: "The One Unit proposal was not purely an administrative matter but basically a constitutional question, and a verdict on it should be given by the people. Besides, the people of the Frontier stand to lose both politically and economically by the proposed merger, Forcible implementation of the merger will create suspicion amongst the people of the smaller provinces and engender hatred."

On August 1, 1955, the Red Shirts and the NWFP Awami League collaborated to set up an "Anti-Unit Front" to resist the implementation of the merger scheme. Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the Pir of Manki Sharif toured the southern districts of their province and addressed public meetings to explain and clarify their stand against One Unit. The

Front expanded its base by attracting the Wrore Pakhtoon of Abdus Samad Khan Achakzai, the Astaman Gal of Prince Abdul Karim, the Sindh Awami Mahaz of G.M. Syed, the Sindh Hari Committee of Hyder Bakhsh Jatui and the Azad Pakistan Party of Mian Iftikharuddin into its fold.

After completing his tour of the NWFP, Abdul Ghaffar Khan initiated a campaign against One Unit in Balochistan. Abdus Samad Khan Achakzai had invited him for this purpose. Abdul Ghaffar Khan was told that the government had imposed a ban on his entry into Balochistan. He decided to defy the ban and on September 17, he was arrested for crossing into Balochistan along with his two associates. All three were taken to the Central Jail at Mach and were released on September 26.

On October 1, 1955, a convention of the Frontier Anti-Unit Front was held at Peshawar under the presidentship of Khan Samin Jan Khan, the deputy opposition leader of the NWFP Legislative Assembly. It reiterated the demand that "a referendum or general election be held in the smaller units of Pakistan before the establishment of One Unit." It asserted that "the people of the Frontier province will not accept the decision to form One Unit unless the people's wishes were ascertained." In a resolution, the "false propaganda," that Anti-Unit Front was creating hatred and discord between the Pashtuns and the Punjabis was condemned and it was declared that "all people in Punjab are our brethren and we shall serve our country shoulder to shoulder with the Punjabis."

On October 5, Iskander Mirza, who was now the acting Governor General, declared that on and from October 14, the province of West Pakistan will come into existence. This was notified in a Gazette Extraordinary issued by the Ministry of Law. On October 6, the Consultative Committee of Anti-One Unit Front declared to oppose the integration of West Pakistan "by all democratic and constitutional weapons at its command." Their efforts, however, were to no avail for on October 14, the new province of West Pakistan began its existence.

In his memoirs, Iskander Mirza noted that the Pathans of the Frontier were strong opponents to the scheme. Sardar Rashid and Mian Jafar Shah, ministers in the NWFP government, were very much against the Unit, "but we talked them round, and ultimately they accepted. Dr. Khan Saheb had an important hand in settling the matter. I had a lot of sympathy for the Pathans, and hoped that we might appoint a Lieutenant-Governor for the NWFP and Baluchistan, but I could not get this agreed, because the Punjabi element was very much against this," he concludes.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE

### EXIT GHULAM MOHAMMAD

During the eight-month tenure of this 'Cabinet of Talents', Iskander Mirza and his associates managed to get quite a lot done. It was a very mixed crowd, with very different backgrounds. "When we had a common problem to decide", notes Iskander Mirza, "we all gave our views bluntly. It seemed that the more strongly you expressed your views, the greater chance there was of getting acceptance."

Iskander Mirza's experience as a member of the second constitutional assembly, however, was of disappointment. When he came out during the lunch break at 1:00 pm on the first day the assembly met (in Murree on July 7), a prominent journalist Sultan Ahmad asked him how he found his first day as an assembly member. Mirza appeared rather disillusioned, for he was not familiar with parliamentary chaos as an officer. He said rather symbolically: "It's too hot inside, too hot. I don't think we will be able to get any work done inside." Some days later, Sultan Ahmad, again met him, this time in Peshawar, where Mirza had gone with Dr. Khan Saheb for the removal of Sardar Abdur Rashid as Chief Minister of the Frontier province and the installation of Sardar Bahadur, General Ayub Khan's brother. Sitting on the verandah of the Governor's House, Iskander Mirza told Sultan Ahmad: "I don't think that this Assembly can do anything. If you want a constitution, it should be framed by about 10 to 15 experts and jurists from Pakistan and the Muslim world. That is how you can get a good constitution and not the way the Assembly is going."

All this time, recalls Iskander Mirza, Ghulam Mohammad was a very sick man. Mirza seems full of praise for the turbulent old man: "I would like to recall that during these months, when I was snowed under with work, and delayed night after night at the office, the Governor-General used to drive out to my house in order to reassure my wife. He used to have a chair placed in the garden and though he had great difficulty in talking, he used to converse with my wife, apologizing for my absence and telling her that she must be patient for the benefit of the country,"

Eventually, Ghulam Mohammad became so ill that he could not exercise the functions of his office. In early August, 1955, the cabinet looked at a medical report and concluded that Ghulam Mohammad was too sick to do his job.

On August 4, 1955, in a full meeting of the cabinet, Iskander Mirza was asked to leave the room for a while. Then, the ministers, as Mirza was told, with one exception, unanimously decided that he should be installed as Acting Governor-General.

Chaudhri Mohammad Ali is supposed to have urged that Mirza should assume the post because, as he suggested, Mirza was the man who had prevented the army from taking over the government of the whole country the previous year (October 1954).

Chaudhri Mohammad Ali also got the resignation of Ghulam Mohammad signed, which was almost an impossible task. Altaf Gauhar states that, one evening, Iskander Mirza drove to the Governor-General's House, ordering the servants to wrap up the old man into a bundle and deposit him on the back seat of a car. The bundle was delivered at the house of the Governor General's son-in-law in Clifton. Mrs. Taj Imam, Iskander Mirza's daughter denies the blame and terms it the height of exaggeration.



## CHAPTER THIRTY

### AS GOVERNOR-GENERAL

The official press note announcing the appointment of Major-General Iskander Mirza as acting Governor-General said that Governor-General Ghulam Mohammad had taken two months' leave "on grounds of health." The press note declared:

"His Excellency the. Governor-General Mr. Ghulam Mohammad has taken two months, leave on grounds of health. It has been decided, with the approval of Her Majesty the Queen, that during this period the Hon'ble Major-General Iskander Mirza, now Minister of the Interior, will act as Governor-General." He was sworn in on August 7, at 11 a.m.

By 10.50 a.m. the Darbar Hall was filled to capacity. The distinguished gathering included the prime minister, the governors of Punjab and Sindh, ministers of the central cabinet, chief ministers of Punjab and Sindh, other ministers of Sindh, heads of diplomatic missions, some members of the Constituent Assembly, senior civil and military officials, Malik Bagh Ali, Mayor of Karachi and other notable citizens.

According to *Dawn*, as the acting Governor-General-designate entered the Darbar Hall, the commandant of the Governor-General's bodyguard announced his arrival and all the distinguished guests stood up. Mr. Aziz Ahmad, cabinet secretary, Government of Pakistan, read out the Royal Sign Manual from the Queen appointing Maj. Gen. Mirza as Acting Governor-General of Pakistan. Chief Justice Mohammad Munir administered the oath of allegiance. After the oath, the cabinet secretary obtained His Excellency's permission to issue the proclamation announcing the assumption of office by him, and the Governor-General's personal standard was broken at the mast at the Governor-General's House.

On the same day, Mohammad Ali Bogra resigned from the office of prime minister. Iskander Mirza noted:

"My troubles had begun. I asked him to continue, and looked for a new prime minister."

After a six-hour meeting of the Muslim League parliamentary party, as *Dawn* reports, the Central Finance Minister, Chaudhri Mohammad Ali was elected leader of the party with authority to negotiate with any of the groups in the Constituent Assembly. Later it was announced that the Muslim League Assembly party had decided to negotiate with the Awami League for a coalition at the centre. This was the climax of political activity in the capital on August 7, setting the stage for a change of government.

The leaders of the United Front had earlier in the morning, laid their cards on the table after a conference with Prime Minister Bogra and other Muslim League leaders from West Pakistan. Contact was at the, same time maintained by Mr. Hoseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy and his supporters with the Muslim League group later in the day, there were separate group meetings.

Bogra's resignation, as Mirza notes himself was the consequence of the new political situation, following the elections for the second constituent assembly. From Bengal, there were now only two Muslim League representatives: all the rest belonged to two opposition groups, the Awami League, led by H. S. Suhrawardy, and the United Front, Fazlul Haq's party. So the Muslim League was now, virtually a party of West Pakistan, and they rejected the leadership of a Bengali with no political following. A meeting at Murree elected Chaudhri Mohammad Ali as the new leader of the Muslim League. Mirza says that the exact state of the parties was not dear: Some members had stood for election as independents, and then accepted a party ticket later. But according to *Dawn*, at that time, the Muslim League numbered twenty seven in the constituent assembly, the United Front had twenty-three supporters, and the Awami League had thirteen members.

In his memories Mirza narrates the inner story of the drama:

"To my astonishment, Chaudhri Mohammad Ali came to see me, accompanied by Gurmani, and represented that it was the opinion of the Muslim League parliamentary party that Mr. Suhrawardy should be the prime minister. I said, "This is a very peculiar way of forming a new government, because, in any constitution, the largest party forms the government. I really cannot understand how I can override this obvious convention. I went on: 'I am going to ask you, Chaudhri Saheb, to form a government. If you are unsuccessful in this task, it is up to you to come back to me and tell me that you have failed. But you can't tell me to ask this man, or that, to be prime minister. Now it is for you to try to form a government, and come back to give me the names of your new ministry.' Mohammad Ali then said that he would like to be prime minister, and carry through the new constitution, on which he had already done a lot of hard work. He asked me to try to win over Mr. Suhrawardy to support him. I promised that I would do this."

Mirza further states that during the next few days, the newspapers were full of rumors: Suhrawardy was tipped as the next prime minister. The Muslim Leaguers were short of a majority in the assembly (with a total of eighty members). Suhrawardy refused to join the government, except on his own terms. So Mohammad Ali was compelled to look elsewhere for allies. He came to an understanding with the United Front.

On August 11, Chaudhri Mohammad Ali was sworn-in as prime minister. Five of the ministers had been members of the old government. These included Dr. Khan Saheb. Apart from Chaudhri Mohammad Ali, the League ministers were not very impressive. Fazlul Haq was now minister of the Interior. Mirza comments that considering his recent performance in Bengal, this was not a very promising appointment. Mian Iftikharuddin called the assembly a "House of Musical Chairs".

The most coveted position of all, that of interim governor-general, however, went to Iskander Mirza, who with the backing of Ayub, now out of the ministry was still the "final arbiter of the destiny of cabinets," as remarks Horace Hildreth, the then US Ambassador in Pakistan. He at least tacitly used the "threat of force (to) obtain (his) own position and ... to coerce ... (Chaudhri Mohammad Ali) into accepting (the) prime ministership." (Arthur Z. Gardinar, councilor, US Embassy, Karachi, to the department of state, telegram 19 September 1955).

Contrary to the earlier understanding between the two wings, remarks Ayesha Jalal, both the key positions had been farmed out to West Pakistanis. This was the price the United Front had to pay in order to prevent Suhrawardy from becoming prime minister since he could be relied upon to use his office to dethrone the United Front's Sarkar ministry in East Pakistan.

"Our new prime minister, Chaudhri Mohammad Ali, I personally hold him in great esteem", remarked Sir Feroz Khan Noon while speaking on the One Unit Bill in the constituent assembly on August 25, 1955. "Since the days of the Quaid-i-Azam, Chaudhri Mohammad Ali has ruled this country, in my opinion and in the opinions of many, from behind the curtain. His position in the past has been a very happy one because he had influenced the decisions of the government always, but whenever he has brought about good results naturally the government has benefited by this and also his reputation has gone high. But whenever his advice has been wrong and government have acted upon it, the responsibility of the results of the wrong advice have not recoiled upon him as much as it should have because he was behind the scenes. Today Ch. Mohammad Ali with all his excellent record stands in his political nakedness in the country." It is noteworthy that Chaudhri Mohammad Ali kept himself at the centre of things but only in alliance with Iskander Mirza.

## CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE

### ISKANDER MIRZA'S ERA

On September 16, 1955, Chaudhri Mohammad Ali declared passionately in the Constituent Assembly: "This country has been set firmly on the road of democracy." The first big measure passed by the new assembly was the Establishment of West Pakistan Act, on September 20, which came into force from October 14. As mentioned earlier, the whole of the West wing was merged into One Unit, with Lahore as its capital.

On September 19, it was officially announced that the Queen had appointed Iskander Mirza to be the permanent Governor-General of Pakistan, with effect from October 6, 1955, on the recommendation of the Government of Pakistan. Ghulam Mohammad, who had been ailing and on leave, had resigned the same day. In his message broadcast to the nation, he said that though he was making steady progress, he felt that his physical condition was not such as the arduous responsibilities of the office of Governor General required. He had therefore, decided to lay down office and join his nation as a common man.

Recalling his statement, as *The Pakistan Times* reported, "Who lives if Pakistan dies? Who dies if Pakistan lives?", Mr. Ghulam Mohammad made an earnest appeal to the nation to develop strength through unity, courage through loyalty and service through sacrifice. "We owe it," he said, "to our posterity to make our land a befitting symbol of traditions of our past and the hopes of our future."

Concluding his message, Ghulam Mohammad said: "As I bid you a sincere and heartfelt good-bye, I feel fortified by the belief that when, on the day of final reckoning, I appear before the throne of Divine Providence, I shall be able to say with all humility that I tried to serve my country honestly and to the last limit of my human energy." He would have had a lot to answer at any such appearance before the "Throne of Divine Providence" on the nature of his 'services' to the people of Pakistan.

The tea party given by Major General Iskander Mirza in honor of Ghulam Mohammad was attended by Prime Minister Chaudhri Mohammad Ali and his cabinet colleagues, the president of the Constituent Assembly, Mr. Abdul Wahab Khan, the Governors of Sindh and Punjab, Mr. A. T. Naqvi the Chief Commissioner of Karachi, members of the diplomatic corps, service chiefs and Ghulam Mohammad's relatives and friends.

Contrary to Altaf Gauhar's claims, as Mr. Ghulam Mohammad left the Governor General's house after bidding good-bye to the guests, he was escorted to the porch by Iskander Mirza and the prime minister. He was given a royal salute by a guard of honor

mounted by the Governor-General's bodyguard. He then drove to 'Nasheman', the Clifton residence of his son-in-law and daughter Mr. and Begum Hussain Malik. The route to 'Nasheman' was lined by units of the defence services. On arrival at the house, Ghulam Mohammad was given a royal salute by a guard of honor provided by the Royal Pakistan Navy. Later Major General Iskander Mirza called on Ghulam Mohammad. He lingered on in his Karachi home for several months. It is noteworthy that little notice was taken of his exit in the United States.

The era of Iskander Mirza began on October 7, 1955, he became the permanent head of state. In his speech at the swearing-in ceremony he tried to suggest that, "As we are drafting a new constitution, we should try to make a new start putting behind all the bickering and friction and division of the last years." He further said: "Democracy presupposes the existence of a national approach in solving our problems. We must cease to think in terms of the interest of the East and West wings of Pakistan and look at every problem from a national point of view. Democracy cannot function successfully and efficiently unless we place our allegiance to Pakistan above all local loyalties. The intelligentsia is the backbone of every society. This class, in our society, has become an unfortunate victim of frustration. This has impaired the flowering of our genius." In the tone of a reformer Mirza concluded: "Do not harp too much on the past. Mind the present, and look to the future with hope and resolution."

Iskander Mirza's appointment was greeted by the press in a very friendly style. *Dawn* emphasized that he was a "strong man", and that he was above party politics. As head of an Asian state one has to get used to flattery and to abuse, but as Mirza remarks himself, "*Dawn's* estimate was right. As regards being a 'strong man', all my training and experience had prepared me so that when a decision had to be taken I was ready to take it and when responsibility had to be carried, I was prepared to take responsibility. As regards party politics, when I became a member of the National Assembly I had to take a party label and so I took the Muslim League ticket. But I took no part in the affairs of the League (as Chaudhri Mohammad Ali was doing), and when I resigned from the Assembly, I resigned from the Muslim League, so that my membership lasted just about six weeks."

Iskander Mirza was quite aware of his new position. He was very clear in his mind that he was not left to occupy the position of an umpire. He was also conscious that he was now installed in the office which had been held by the Quaid-i-Azam and by the British Viceroy before him. They had not been just passive spectators of the political scene. In addition, he had to cope with a Constituent Assembly in which no party had a majority.

## CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO

### IN SIMPLE POLITICAL TERMS

With the problem of disproportion between the East wing and the smaller provinces in the West removed, the Constitution Bill was placed before the constituent assembly on January 8, 1956. A preamble based on the Objectives Resolution of 1949 defined Pakistan as an "Islamic Republic." Iskander Mirza was opposed to inserting Islamic provisions into the machinery of government. He was of the firm opinion that Liaquat Ali Khan's Objectives Resolution had encouraged the *ulema* who had gone on to almost destroying Pakistan in 1953. Mirza thought that the Muslim League never learnt anything from past experience. Despite Mirza's repeated warnings, Chaudhri Mohammad Ali deliberately created an 'Islamic Republic of Pakistan,' giving the *ulema* another invitation to interfere. Maulana Maudoodi and his party were given a heaven-sent opportunity to mess up the state.

Iskander Mirza was also worried about the absence of any firm, fixed element in the government. Mirza wanted to see a president as the head of the executive, in the American fashion. Chaudhri Mohammad Ali and others insisted on the Westminster model of democracy.

It is noteworthy that in a telegram from the US Embassy in Pakistan to the US Department of State, Gardinar also suggested that Prime Minister Ali and Governor General Mirza were principal leaders representing the two ruling groups with fundamentally different approaches to basic political problems confronting the nation. "Mirza thinks in simple political terms; PM Ali in complex. Mirza believes Pakistan requires a strong hand (even a mild fist) indefinitely, and with Ayub concurring, has used at least tacitly, the threat of force to obtain his own position and reportedly used it again to coerce PM Ali into accepting the prime ministership."

The actual draft of the Constitution Bill was based on 234 clauses divided into thirteen sections and six schedules. The members of the assembly were given a week to digest the document. After twelve days of general discussion, the assembly met seventeen times to consider the clauses in detail. As many as 670 amendments were proposed. On February 9, 1956, the constituent assembly adopted the clauses of the Constitution Bill dealing with the powers of the president to take over the administration of a province in case of a breakdown of constitutional machinery. It also laid down the condition under which the president could proclaim a financial emergency. The House also decided that the jurisdiction of the High Courts should extend to the issue of writs for

the enforcement of the fundamental rights of the citizens. Originally, this power was given only to the Supreme Court.

After two days of 'determined efforts', as *The Pakistan Times* (February 13) reported, the coalition party had not been able to make much headway. Out of a large number of remaining 'controversial' matters, only a few had been settled during these two days. The constituent assembly had to take up about 60 "controversial clauses." The party at its meeting on February 12 decided to amend the Bill so as to give power to the president to dismiss a prime minister and call upon someone else to take over, provided that within two months of this action, a session of the National Assembly is called to express its confidence in the new prime minister. In the Bill, it was stated that the prime minister will hold office during the pleasure of the president.

On February 18, taking advantage of the weekend adjournment of the constituent assembly various groups of the coalition party had been busy clearing up and finalizing their views on some of the matters that still remained to be incorporated in the constitution. The choice of a provisional president of the republic, who had to be elected within 30 days of the passage of the Constitution Bill, was also mooted and there was complete unanimity among members on conferring that distinction on the then Governor-General Major General Iskander Mirza. Since he became head of the state, his constitutional and democratic approach to all problems and his helpful guidance of the cabinet, whenever it had been sought, had profoundly impressed everyone. His election to the highest office in the republic was, therefore, now considered to be a certainty.

After heated discussion, lasting four and a half hours on February 20, the constituent assembly decided to name Pakistan as the "Islamic Republic of Pakistan." Voting was 47 to 22. Both the minority ministers, K. K. Dutta and A. K. Das, who had not yet dissociated themselves from the coalition party, voted against the clause with the opposition.

According to press reports, when the result of the division was announced, the coalition party benches welcomed it with shouts of *Naara-i-Takbir, Allah-o-Akbar*. Opposition members welcomed the announcement by thumping their desks. They were happy that their numbers had risen to 22. Awami League's Zahiruddin Ahmad shouted that East Bengal had voted against the clause. All the members voting against the clause were from East Bengal and none were from West Pakistan. The constituent assembly also decided that the head of state will be a Muslim.

Two minutes before midnight, on February 29, as reported in *The Pakistan Times*, the constituent assembly completed, what prime minister Mohammad Ali called, "a great task" when it adopted the Constitution Bill to provide a constitution for the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Amidst shouts of *Allah-o-Akbar* and scenes of jubilation, 52

members present in the house shouted full throated positive vote in favor of law minister 1.1. Chundrigar's bill which was introduced in the House on January 9, 1956.

Earlier, 21 members of the House had staged a walk-out as a protest against the passage of the Bill. They included 20 members from East Pakistan and one from West Pakistan, Mian Iftikharuddin. An element of comedy was introduced into the otherwise solemn scene, when the speaker, Mr. Abdul Wahab Khan read out a statement of thanks. It was a race against time as in the preamble, February 29 had been incorporated as the day of the passage of the Bill. Reading at a great speed, the Speaker concluded his statement two minutes before the deadline. He looked anxiously at the clock every now and then, and so did the members including the prime minister and the law minister.

*The Pakistan Times* (March 1, 1956) reported that the members did not walk-out "en bloc," but in groups, according to their turns. Much bitterness was created as the members walked-out and the coalition party benches shouted: "Get out". When the Hindu members left the House, there were shouts of "Walk out to India".

The constituent assembly of Pakistan, in a brief session of March 2, decided to hold the election of the president for the interim period, on March 5, 1956. The coalition party in the constituent assembly, comprising the Muslim League and the United Front, had decided that Iskander Mirza will be the unanimous choice for president. On the same day, Governor General Iskander Mirza gave his assent to the Constitution Bill at a special ceremony held in the Darbar Hall of the Governor General's House. Ayesha Jalal remarks that he did so after guaranteeing his nomination, if not his election as the provisional president.

Earlier, according to *Dawn*, members of the constituent assembly, headed by the Speaker and the Leader of the House had driven in a procession — amidst cheering crowds lining the route — from the Assembly building to the Governor General's of the attend the ceremony of consent to the Bill. Mounted bodyguards of the Governor-General stood at the main entrance to the Governor-General's House and lined the route to the Darbar Hall. The Speaker, profusely garlanded and wearing the ceremonial gold-brocaded green velvet robe, led the members into the hall. The Prime Minister Chaudhri Mohammad Ali was on his right.

After some moments, the Governor-General arrived in a procession, two ADCs in front and the Military Secretary and Assistant Private Secretary forming the rear, amidst a fanfare of trumpets. The ceremony of the signing of the Constitution Bill began with recitation from the Holy Quran by the Speaker. He recited Sura Fatiha. He then presented the Bill to the Governor-General.

Iskander Mirza in a radio broadcast told the nation to give "complete allegiance" to the Constitution and "endow it with solemnity. He said: "Whatever its imperfections,



whatever its shortcomings — and these are capable of rectification — the Constitution must be respected and revered by the nation. It must be remembered as a sacred document. He pointed out that the constitution "enshrines our ideals. The constitution, in fact, sets out our ideals in clear terms." Its emergence, he remarked, marks the fulfillment of a sacred trust — a trust that the people placed in me and my Government not many months ago."

It is noteworthy that on the very same day, the Government of Pakistan sent an approved draft of the Pakistan Constitutional Provision Bill for the consideration of the British House of Commons. The draft had been sent by the British Government for the approval of the Government of Pakistan. It was returned to London shortly after Iskander Mirza gave his assent to the Bill. So much for independence.

## CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE

### THE FIRST PRESIDENT OF PAKISTAN

The main provisions of the 1956 Constitution, as Louis D. Hayes summarizes, are as below: Under the constitution a strong executive type of regime was established. The president, who had to be a Muslim at least 40 years of age, served a five-year term and could be re-elected once. The president was not to be chosen directly by the voters but rather by an electoral college consisting of members of the National and provincial assemblies. The president could be impeached by a three-fourths vote of the National Assembly.

The prime minister, who held the real power, and other ministers of the cabinet, were appointed by the president from among members of the National Assembly. The independence of the president was restricted by the requirement that he act in accordance with the advice of the cabinet. He possesses veto power over legislation which could be overridden by a two-thirds vote of the members of the National Assembly present and voting. Alternatively, he could suggest amendments to bills which required a majority of the total membership of the Assembly for approval. No money bills could be introduced in the Assembly except on the recommendation of the president.

When the Assembly was not in session, the president was authorized to issue ordinances which carried the force of law. However, these ordinances expired after six weeks from the beginning of the Assembly session. The president possessed the authority to issue a proclamation of emergency if the security or the economic life of the country were threatened or if internal disturbances proved to be beyond the capacity of provincial governments to control. Under an emergency proclamation the president could suspend fundamental rights. Such proclamations had to be laid before the National Assembly after two months but could be extended for up to four months by the Assembly.

The powers of the president far exceeded those normally bestowed upon a ceremonial head of state in a parliamentary system, and this despite the opposition's success in providing certain curbs. Although governor-general had been subject to recall by London upon a simple request by parliament, the president was practically irremovable. There was nothing unusual about investing the president with far-reaching powers. The Indian Constitution of 1950, as Ayesha Jalal notes, made similar allowances.

Ms Jalal further remarks, "But the experience of the last nine years had shown that the chronic instability of party government in Pakistan had as much to do with inveterate meddling by the head of state, largely at the behest of interest groups within as well as outside the state apparatus, as with the lack of a grassroots political organization.

She suggests that having had to forego a presidential form of government based on the American pattern, the framers of the constitution had ingeniously superimposed it on a distorted version of the British parliamentary system; unlike a candidate for the White House, the president of the Islamic Republic was not nominated by an organized political machinery; nor did he require a direct mandate from the people. He was also immune from many of the established conventions that served to check the powers of the British head of state.

The Islamic Republic formally came into existence on March 23, when President Mirza took the oath of office in Karachi from the Chief Justice, Mr. Mohammad Munir. The celebrations, parade and pageant on the day of the inauguration of the republic excelled all celebrations held ever before. According to press reports almost every minute of the day was devoted to ceremonies, thanksgiving prayers and buoyant jubilations that were rare in their spirit of gaiety and enthusiasm.

*Dawn* reported that at 7.05 am the proclamation declaring the inauguration of the Republic, was read out to the nation from the President House at a ceremony that was unique in its solemnity and impressiveness. That was the last proclamation made by the Governor-General of Pakistan. Minutes later, Maj-General Iskander Mirza was sworn-in as the first president of the republic by the Chief Justice of Pakistan.

The paper further notes that a reverent hush prevailed right through the ceremony that included recitation of appropriate verses from the Holy Quran — relating to the duties, obligations and privileges of the head of state and reading out of the proclamation. He took his oath standing on a red-carpeted dais while Begum Naheed Iskander Mirza sat in one of the two golden chairs on the dais. She wore a light blue *sari*. The president was in formal morning coat with a Jinnah cap. A guard of honor standing a few paces away gave the president's salute to President Iskander Mirza and the President's Flag was broken at the mast on top of the President's House amidst a boom of 31 guns. He immediately afterwards administered oaths of office to prime minister Chaudhri Mohammad Ali and his cabinet under the Constitution.

As the newspapers report, a soul-stirring ceremonial march past of the Armed Forces was the next Republic Day event. The president took the salute. Earlier, the president and Begum Naheed arrived at the parade in a state-coach-and-six, escorted by 32 of the president's mounted bodyguards clad in scarlet and gold. He made his first public speech at the parade, addressing the armed forces as the Commander-in-Chief of the three services. He told the Armed Forces:

"This is a democratic country and as your Commander-in-Chief, I have sworn to ensure that in accordance with the Constitution the will of the people shall prevail."

Karachi streets were full with people who had come out to see the illuminated government buildings. The building of the Constituent Assembly was profusely lit from top to bottom. The trees in the compound were strewn with multi-colored bulbs attracting men, women and children from far and near.

A. K. Fazlul Haq at Dhaka and Mushtaq Ahmad Gurmani at Lahore were sworn-in as Governors. The cabinets of chief ministers Dr. Khan Saheb and Abu Hussain Sarkar were also sworn-in.

In a message to President Mirza, Queen Elizabeth II expressed her warmest wishes for the peace and prosperity of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, and her satisfaction that Pakistan intended to remain within the Commonwealth.

The National Assembly of Pakistan met for the first time on March 24, under the chairmanship of Speaker Abdul Wahab Khan. After the members had been sworn-in, the House adjourned for 10 minutes. When the House re-assembled, President Mirza addressed the National Assembly. He said Pakistan will continue to pursue the policy of promoting world peace and security. He made it clear that Pakistan, though anxious to maintain friendly relations with all the countries including India, would defend her integrity to the utmost of her capacity. In the economic field, the president said, his Government aimed at the establishment of a welfare state. He pledged himself to defend the Constitution and said it provided for a "democratic, dynamic and progressive policy." He also assured early general elections under the new constitution.

## CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR

### INTRIGUE IN THE MUSLIM LEAGUE

The stage was set for a new political drama; the Muslim League members of the West Pakistan Legislature met on April 3, to consider the endorsement of Dr. Khan Saheb as chief minister. Although this was Chaudhry Mohammad Ali's plan, most of his supporters were opposed to the idea. As Mirza reveals himself, they still regarded Dr. Khan Saheb as their enemy. They wanted a Leaguer at the head of the ministry. Mumtaz Daultana, always ready to go with the tide, encouraged the revolt.

Iskander Mirza was touring Azad Kashmir at the time, when he received a telephonic call from Dr. Khan Saheb that the League had refused to support him, and intimating that he (Dr. Khan) was thinking of resigning. Mirza told him not to do anything hastily. "I promised I would come to Lahore immediately and contact Nawab Gurmani as Governor. In Lahore, Gurmani advised Khan Saheb to hang on," reveals Mirza.

As Iskander Mirza arrived in Lahore, he immediately issued the following statement to the press:

"On reaching Lahore, I find a great deal of speculation as to why I have returned so quickly and what action I am going to take in view of the decision of the Muslim League Assembly Party. I wish to make it dear that as President of Pakistan, I belong to no party and am not interested in political squabbles or maneuvering."

*The Pakistan Times* (April 6), however, reported that the League's challenge to Dr. Khan Saheb's right to the chief ministership immediately roused President Mirza's ire; he lashed out at the "opponents of One Unit" asking them to quit Pakistan.

It is generally understood that President Mirza had a hand in the creation of the Republican Party, in order to save Dr. Khan Saheb. Masarrat Hussain Zubairi claims that Iskander Mirza helped his old friend, Dr. Khan Saheb to form the Republican Party at the centre, by weaning away the Muslim Leaguers. Kazi Fazlullah, who held his seat in the National Assembly took the lead in organizing it. Zuberi further remarks that the earlier renegades, Feroz Khan Noon and Nawab Muzaffar Ali Qizilbash, joined it, and with the President's patronage and persuasion the number of members increased to twenty-two and was claimed by some to be the single largest Party in the House.

In his memoirs, Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy noted that the party was composed of those members of the Muslim League who felt that the bond given by Chaudhry Mohammad Ali should be honored and that Dr. Khan Saheb should be supported. The Muslim League Party thus split into two. The new Party was called the Republican Party.

In fact, during Mirza's stay in Lahore, in early April, there was no talk of forming a new Party, but he could see that Dr. Khan Saheb was in a very angry frame of mind. Mirza returned to Karachi. Nawab Gurmani was an old hand at this game, a wily politician, infinitely better qualified than Mirza was to settle the affair.

In Karachi, after a week or so Mirza received a telephonic call from Dr. Khan Saheb to say that he was forming a new Party. Mirza said, "What party?" He replied "I've formed the Republican Party." Mirza asked "why?" He said "Because I cannot trust the Muslim League. They have done me down and I have formed the new Party. Mirza asked: "who has joined your party?" He replied "Most of the members of the Muslim League."

Iskander Mirza says he expressed his surprise and said that he personally was against the fragmentation of the Muslim League in this manner and he did not understand why this had been done. He further asked: 'Have you consulted Nawab Gurmani?' Mirza then asked 'Have you spoken to the Prime Minister, Chaudhri Mohammad Ali?' Dr Khan replied "No, why should I?" Mirza said, "When you are breaking a party, you might have talked to the Prime Minister, who after all, is the head of the Muslim League party". The reply was "No, we have not talked to him."

In his memoirs Mirza noted:

"I know it is generally believed that I had a hand in the formation of the Republican Party. But this simply is not true. I backed up Dr. Khan Saheb. But I was never his master, and really I had no desire to see yet another party join in the struggle for power."

In the meantime, Chaudhri Mohammad Ali had also heard of this and he came to see Mirza, looking very sad and glum, and said "This is what they have done." Mirza said: 'I have no hand in it; Mohammad Ali. This is the hand of your great friend Gurmani. I am told that the whole conception is his. I have nothing to do with it and whatever anybody might say, I have nothing to do with it. I can't tell them to break the party; just as I couldn't tell them not to form the party. I cannot tell them to break it. It is for your good as the Prime Minister that this thing dies in its infancy'

But Chaudhri Mohammad Ali did not take any action and also the Muslim League members of the Punjab Assembly joined the Republican Party and when the vote of confidence in Dr. Khan Saheb came, he won by the casting vote of the Speaker who has

also become a member of the Republican Party and had been the Chief Minister of Khairpur state, Mumtaz Qizilbash.

In January 1956, Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar had become President of the Muslim League. When Chaudhri Mohammad Ali decided that he (Mohammad Ali) would not remain President of the League but would make Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar its President, Mirza sent for Chaudhri Mohammad Ali and said look, you know Nishtar, perhaps, for ten years. I have known him for 25 years. Please listen to me and do not make him president of the League or you will be in trouble. He is a religious fanatic and he will work against you behind your back and he will try and control the whole government as president of the Muslim League because he seems to think that he is no less a man than the Quaid-i-Azam."

Chaudhri Mohammad Ali hemmed and heaved and gave Mirza no direct answer. When Mirza was touring East Bengal as Governor-General, the Prime Minister allowed Nishtar to become the Muslim League's Chief, all against Mirza's advice. Mirza was still in East Pakistan when he got a telegram from Chaudhri Mohammad Ali requesting him to return to Karachi as early as possible as things were not going as well as they should and there was a Muslim League agitation on minor points.

Iskander Mirza returned to Karachi as quickly as he could, cancelling his tour to the Sunderbans. He had talks with Chaudhri Mohammad Ali, who said, "You were absolutely right about Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar and now I am having all sorts of troubles." Mirza said "This will increase; these troubles will increase because I know Nishtar. Liaquat Ali Khan was a clever politician, why did he take the job of President of the Muslim League when the Quaid-i-Azam died? Because he knew that if somebody else, whoever he may be, is appointed will try and control the party through this organization. He was a wise man and he kept that up and this was also kept up by his successors as Prime Ministers and you had no reason whatever to divest yourself of a very strong position in the country."

Iskander Mirza further told the Prime Minister that there was very little that he could do help to him. However, Mirza said, "We will have to go on."

The agitation started. The Prime Minister's house picketed. Ayub Khan claims that one day he saw Chaudhri Mohammad Ali in an almost helpless state in his office. "He also held the defence portfolio and I had gone to see him with some defence problem. He said to me, 'My party has deserted me. It is all over.' I uttered some words of encouragement but he would not be comforted. 'No, no, this is far too serious. Why don't you take over and save me from this business?' I said 'Don't talk about these things to me. Talk to your President and try to find some sensible way out of this mess' If Ayub's statement is correct, it indicated the Prime Minister's own level of commitment to democracy.

In this same state of mind, one day Chaudhri Mohammad Ali visited Mirza's office and said "Please shoot me. I have made too many mistakes." Now when a Prime Minister of a country comes to the President and asks him to shoot him because he had made too many mistakes, and is almost weeping, the only conclusion the President can arrive at is that the man has lost his nerve and is no longer able to continue as Prime Minister.

In an interview to M. H. Ispahani, Mirza has narrated the whole episode. The drama goes on: Just about then Nawab Gurmani also came from Lahore to see Mirza on some problem and, talking about Chaudhri Mohammad Ali, the President said: "Things are not too good. This man who has brought the constitution has lost his nerve within a year and I do not think that it is fair on the country that he should continue as the Prime Minister."

Nawab Gurmani agreed. So Mirza then sent for Chaudhri Mohammad Ali and spoke to him. Mirza said: "Don't you think, you should resign and go to England for treatment?" Mohammad Ali said: "I have no money to go to England for treatment." Mirza said "That can be arranged by the Government and I shall see that you get enough to have a proper treatment in London."

According to some earlier stories, Prime Minister Mohammad Ali received a vote of confidence on August 27 from a meeting of 40 Republican and United Front members of the National Assembly. The meeting was boycotted, however, by most of the Muslim League members of the Assembly, who maintained that the Republicans were not entitled to attend. Moreover, Chundrigar (Law Minister) and Pir Ali Mohammad Rashidi (Minister of Information) had tendered their resignation from the government before the meeting, while two more ministers, Kayani (Communications) and Sardar Amir Azam Khan (Refugees) resigned on September 6 from the Muslim League, which they described as a "Cesspool of intrigue" and joined the Republican Party.

Mohammad Ali, who, as a result of these resignations, was left as the only Muslim League member of the Cabinet, announced on September 8 that he had resigned both the Premiership and his membership of the Muslim League.

In his statement Mr. Mohammad Ali said that he had "Come to this agonizing decision after deep thought and after a close study of the course of events in the country during the past few months." Describing his relations with the leaders of the Muslim League, he observed that "Even so signal an achievement as the passing of the constitution, for which the Muslim League may well have taken credit, drew largely adverse comments from its leadership." On the advice of prominent Muslim League members he had announced in March that Dr. Khan should continue as Chief Minister of West Pakistan, yet in April the same leaders had refused to accept Dr. Khan Saheb as Chief Minister.



After the meeting on August 27, Mr. Mohammad Ali continued, it had become increasingly clear to me that a section of the League leadership was determined to block all avenues of service that I could render to the country.... I have suffered all this in silence, hoping that wiser counsels would prevail, but the campaign of vilification and slander against me has continued with unabated fury. At the meeting on August 27 the majority of the coalition party members, an absolute majority in the National Assembly, expressed their confidence in me.... I consider it a point of honor that, having decided to resign from the Muslim League, I must resign also from the Premiership."

Mr. Mohammad Ali concluded: "It is my conviction that if democratic institutions are to be worked successfully, the leadership of the country must be vested in Parliament. In a parliamentary democracy it is the representatives of the people in Parliament who are primarily charged with the duty of managing the affairs of the country. If parliamentary leadership is continually subjected to the caprice of personal and power politics by elements external to it, democratic concepts and constitutional practices will have lost all their relevance."

Iskander Mirza says that this was the first installment he had of trying to run the 1956 constitution which he, from the very beginning, had told Chaudhri Mohammad Ali, "will not work in this country."

## CHAPTER THIRTY-FIVE

### RELATIONS WITH AFGHANISTAN

As far as Pakistan's relations with Afghanistan was concerned, Iskander Mirza tried his best to improve them. Ever since the establishment of Pakistan, these relations had been unpleasant and complicated, because of the Pashtoonistan question. There came a point of open conflict in 1954, when the Pakistan Embassy in Kabul was burnt and General Ayub Khan, the Commander-in-Chief of the Pakistan Army threatened to march upon the city. Relations between the two countries were broken off and almost all trade came to a halt.

"I had tried to understand the Afghan point of view ever since the days when I was Political Agent, Khyber, and Deputy Commissioner, Peshawar, and Political Agent, Mohmands," Mirza writes in his memoirs. "I came to the conclusion that the Afghans suffered from being land-locked, and had developed a phobia about control of their outlets to the Indian Ocean. I believed that it was necessary to give them direct access to the sea. It was also necessary to secure their co-operation in the affairs of the tribal areas of the North West Frontier. The latter proposal would, I knew, be considered dangerous by the officers of the old Indian Political Service. But Afghan interference among the tribes of the Frontier was always a fact from the early days of British rule, and before. The British had always had to accept, in practice, though not in principle, the existence of an Afghan Party among the Mohmands, the Wazirs, the Afridis, the Mahsuds and in Malakand and Bajaur.

Iskander Mirza further claims that from the inception of Pakistan, its leaders tried to kill the Pashtoonistan demand by pretending that it did not exist. But Pakistan could not afford to alienate Afghanistan. Pakistan did not have the might of the old British Empire to draw upon, and its leaders had to take into account the increasing animosity of India, which had much larger resources, and armed forces, at least three times larger than those of Pakistan. "A belligerent and uncompromising attitude to Afghanistan might throw that country into the arms of India, and perhaps give Russia a chance to gain influence," notes Mirza. He saw no sense in following this negative policy.

In a meeting with US leaders at Karachi, on July 9, 1956, Iskander Mirza told US Vice President Nixon that he would leave no stone unturned to come to an arrangement with the Afghans when he visits the King [Zahir Shah]. He would try to keep Pashtoonistan in cold storage for a five or ten year period in agreement with the Afghans. He would try to establish a joint border commission to settle cases of difficulties between the tribes. Mirza assured the Vice President that he would make every effort for a peaceful settlement.

According to President Mirza, approaches were made to the King of Afghanistan but it proved difficult to fix up a meeting. At last Pakistan's President received a firm invitation to visit Kabul in August 1956. He left for Kabul on August 7, in an atmosphere still bedeviled by the incidents of 1954. He received a cordial reception from His Majesty, though the Prime Minister, Sardar Daud, did not look very cheerful. There were large crowds by the road side. They looked friendly and the threat given out by Afridi malcontents to make trouble en route did not materialize. The whole atmosphere heightened after the banquet given by the King at the Dilkusha palace on August 8. In his speech at the banquet, His Majesty said that Afghanistan had no territorial claims on Pakistan, and was looking forward to a period of cooperation and friendship between the two countries. In his reply, Mirza welcomed the King's declaration that there were no territorial problems, and reciprocated his desire for friendship and cooperation.

Iskander Mirza also met Sardar Daud. In a quiet fifteen minutes with him, however, Mirza found him to be a man of great wisdom, and an Afghan patriot. The Pakistani President was confident of removing his suspicions, given time. "I knew that I would be able to get on well with him, as he was honest and blunt with the shrewdness of a real statesman."

On August 9, there was a formal meeting, presided over by the King, and attended by all the important Afghan ministers. Mirza was satisfied that the Afghan demand for Pashtoonistan was no more than a desire to ensure for the Pashtoons equal rights with the other peoples of Pakistan (Punjabis, Sindhis, etc.) and with the Pashto-speaking tribes within Afghanistan. Iskander Mirza expressed his great relief that Afghanistan did not mean to try to separate the N.W.F.P. from Pakistan, as this would mean the destruction of Pakistan's national unity. Mirza went on to put up some draft proposals for consideration, namely the railway from Landi Khana, which connected the Khyber pass with the Pakistan rail system, to be extended for some miles into Afghanistan; an import enclave, under Afghan control to be constructed at the port of Karachi, and sealed goods wagons to be available for Afghan imports and exports through Pakistan. The president also hinted that he had a plan for introducing an Afghan voice into the affairs of the Pakhtoon tribes of the N.W.F.P. which he would raise later.

Iskander Mirza had arranged for a further private meeting with Sardar Daud. The Afghan leader wanted to expand Mirza's proposals for Afghan participation in tribal councils, and try to get his definite consent. Unfortunately Sardar Daud had an accident; he slipped in the bathroom, and fractured three ribs. Mirza's last interview with Daud at Kabul took place at the latter's sick bed. The matters, however, were not finalized.

In February 1958, Zahir Shah and Daud visited Pakistan. In connection with the tribal affairs Pakistani President suggested the following to the Afghan King as a skeleton programme: a grand tribal assembly, a *jirga* of all the tribes, to be called at Peshawar, and to be attended by the King of Afghanistan and the President of Pakistan, with some of their ministers. In this *jirga*, the tribes could express their satisfaction that Afghanistan and Pakistan were again friends, and the hope that this friendship would always remain.

During this meeting, the king invited Iskander Mirza to visit Afghanistan for a shoot during the winter of 1958, and it was intended to settle the details of their joint meeting at the *jirga*. King Zahir Shah left Karachi for Rawalpindi en route to Kabul on February 6. "After I had to leave Pakistan, the idea remained stillborn," noted Iskander Mirza. Thereafter, relations between the two countries deteriorated, and once again diplomatic relations were broken off, and even all the consulates were closed.

## CHAPTER THIRTY-SIX

### ISKANDER MIRZA AND SUHRAWARDY

Two days after the resignation of Chaudhry Muhammad Ali, on September 10, 1956, a presidential announcement was issued as follows: "The President today requested Mr. Muhammad Ali to come back as Prime Minister, as in his judgment he still commands the confidence of a majority in the National Assembly, but Mr. Muhammad Ali declined the offer. The President, has therefore called upon Mr. Suhrawardy to help him form a ministry."

Suhrawardy formed a government with the support of thirteen members of the Awami League, his own party, and twenty-nine members of the Republican Party. Shaista Ikramullah suggests that it was an uneasy alliance. Suhrawardy, in fact, was an easy prey for Iskander Mirza. Ayesha Jalal notes that he qualified for office only after accepting all three of Mirza's conditions: (1) that he would not alter Pakistan's pro-Western foreign policy (2) that he would not meddle with the army, and (3) that he would keep the left-wing of the Awami League led by Maulana Bhashani firmly in harness. Mirza told his American friends, as US Ambassador Hildreth's telegram to the US State Department (dated 24 September 1956) reveals: "If the Prime Minister plays tricks so can I. If he tries to tamper with our stand.... I shall show him that he will have a revolution on his hands."

At the time of Suhrawardy's assuming office, a crisis came in the field of international relations. A few days earlier Iskander Mirza had to proceed on a state visit to Iran. Mr. Suhrawardy was in China at that time, and was due to return to Pakistan the day after Mirza left. On the eve of his departure from Karachi, he received a call from the Deputy High Commissioner for the United Kingdom, bringing a cable from Mr. Harold Macmillan, then British Foreign Secretary. This informed Mirza that a Franco-British attack on Port Said was imminent, in order to secure the Suez Canal. Mirza expressed his surprise that, as the head of a commonwealth country, he had not been informed until he was faced with a fait accompli. As he was about to go to Iran, he said that he would send a telex message to the Shahinshah, requesting him to invite the prime ministers of Turkey and Iraq (Pakistan's partners in the Baghdad Pact) to come to Tehran to discuss the situation and formulate a plan for joint action.

Before he left, he received an answer from the Shah, informing Mirza that the prime ministers would come to Tehran during the period of his visit. After reaching Tehran, there was a state banquet at the Gulistan Palace that night, and next day things began to move. Mirza recalls:

"It was not an easy situation. As Muslims, our sympathies were with Egypt: and we knew that public opinion would react violently to the Franco-British invasion. But as members of the Baghdad Pact we did not wish to take action which might disrupt the pact. We could only await developments."

That night Mirza was approached by the British Ambassador. He arrived at 4.00 a.m. to tell Mirza that the British Government had passed on the information that the Prime Minister of Pakistan had declared to a mass meeting in Karachi that he was going to take Pakistan out of the Commonwealth. Mirza told the Ambassador that all this was a complete surprise to him. Mirza added that he could assure the British Government that so long as he was President of Pakistan, they would not leave the commonwealth so easily. Iskander Mirza further recalls:

"When the Ambassador left, I tried to get some sleep; but I could not rest, because I was so worried. I sent for my Military Secretary, gave him a letter for Suhrawardy, and sent him back to Karachi in the presidential aeroplane, with instructions to see the Prime Minister immediately, holding the plane in readiness to leave again. In my letter I informed Suhrawardy of the presence of the other Prime Ministers of the Baghdad Pact countries, and asked him to attend. He arrived the next day. At first he was very anti-British (having, at an earlier time, been noticeably anti-Nasser). However, the tact and firmness of the Shahanshah began to have effect. Mr. Suhrawardy saw the necessity to keep calm. We returned to Karachi, and he played his part in defending our foreign policy, notably in a speech at Dacca in December. This got him into trouble with a faction of the Awami League led by Bhashani (who had been responsible for so much of the trouble in East Bengal in 1954), The "pro-Western" foreign policy was challenged at conferences of the party, but Suhrawardy managed to secure a victory over the Bashani group."

Electoral issue was another explosion that occurred in Pakistan. The controversy over the appropriate electoral system for Pakistan, whether joint or separate, as Ayesha Jalal notes, revived itself almost as soon as Suhrawardy completed muttering the oath of office. Attempts to link the electorate issue with Islam were embarrassing for him. Not only his own party, but a majority opinion in East Pakistan vehemently supported joint electorates. This brought Mirza flying to Dhaka where the National Assembly was to meet to decide the matter. Presidential instructions were given to the Republicans; they were not to oppose the East wingers, much less question his fantastic proposal that the two parts of the country be allowed to choose different electoral systems. On October 10, the electorate amendment act recommending separate electorates for West Pakistan and joint electorates for East Pakistan was passed in the National Assembly by forty-eight to nineteen votes. In his words Iskander Mirza says:

"The Awami League was in favor of joint electorates. The Republican Party was in favor of separate electorates. In my own opinion, Suhrawardy and his party were absolutely right. I went to Dacca [Dhaka] and sat on a platform at a meeting in order to demonstrate my support for Suhrawardy. He told me that if he had to give way on this issue, his own party would renounce him. A compromise was agreed upon, whereby East Pakistan was to have joint electorates and West Pakistan was to have separate electorates.."

During its April 1957 session the National Assembly of Pakistan considered several Bills relating to preparation for general elections throughout the country in March 1958. The most important of these measures being the Electorate Amendment Bill, which introduced a system of joint electorates for both West and East Pakistan.

President Iskander Mirza suspended the assembly of West Pakistan on March 21, at Mr. Suhrawardy's request. Presidential rule was imposed after Dr. Khan Saheb's Ministry had lost its majority in the provincial assembly. The President's action was approved by the National Assembly on April 13 by 47 votes to 21, and on April 16, the Assembly agreed to extend President's rule in West Pakistan for another four months i.e. until September 30, 1957.

The crisis was caused by the decision of the Muslim League party in the Provincial Assembly to demand the breaking-up of West Pakistan into fully autonomous provinces. When a resolution on this matter was debated in the Assembly on March 20, about 30 members of the ruling Republican Party crossed the floor and joined the Opposition; in consequence, the Government (which had previously been supported by 164 of the 305 members) lost its majority. The Speaker, however, refused to allow a vote to be taken on a motion of censure on the Government which had been moved by Sardar Bahadur Khan, leader of the Muslim League.

Iskander Mirza felt that the time had come for some plain speaking. Soon, he made a speech in which he suggested that any further pressure for more local autonomy would mean the complete dismemberment of Pakistan. Mirza went on:

"Another malaise from which we have been suffering for the last ten years is the peculiar working of our parliamentary system. We have adopted it from the British system, which was evolved in England over the course of centuries, and is suited to the peculiar genius of the British people. But, in its application to our own conditions, we find that - our ministers when in power have to devote all their energy and ingenuity to keep the parliamentarians happy, even at the cost of elementary requirements of administration. The removal of this malaise requires serious consideration. I commend to your consideration a careful study of the American system of administration, with necessary modifications, to suit

our own conditions. But here again, the will of the people must prevail; and if you are happy with the present state of affairs, I have nothing more to say."

Iskander Mirza complains that the politicians were so intoxicated with their notion of democracy that they refused to consider any modification, "while all my enemies (of which there was no shortage) screamed that I was plotting to create a system of personal power for myself."

"In the meanwhile, Mirza" notes Ayesha Jalal, "once again exceeding his presidential brief, began exploring the possibilities of bringing the Republicans back to power." Parliamentary government was restored in West Pakistan in July 1957, and almost at once the weakness of Dr. Khan Saheb's position was exposed. Although a count of the Republican members showed 148 Republicans in an assembly of 300, they were not united behind Dr. Khan Saheb. He resigned from the leadership of the province, and another Pathan, Sardar Abdur Rashid, became Chief Minister in August 1957.

In July 1957, the National Awami Party (NAP) was formed. It underlined Suhrawardy's dispensability to the custodians of national imperatives. Ayesha Jalal is of the opinion that consisting of Awami League dissidents led by Bhashani, the Gantantri Dal and the anti-One Unit Pakistan National Party, the NAP's populist rhetoric and anti-American propaganda was a menace to the bureaucratic and military, axis at the centre. The NAP was equally dangerous for the Republicans. On September 14, the West Pakistan assembly was scheduled to meet to give a vote of confidence to the Republican ministry. Sensing defeat, the Republican stalwarts decided to negotiate an agreement with NAP. According to the terms, the Republicans would support the move to substitute one Unit with a zonal federation of linguistically and culturally autonomous units; in return NAP would give its vote of confidence to the ministry.

The West Pakistan assembly adopted on September 17 a resolution in favor of the reconstitution of the province as a sub-federation with four or more autonomous provinces. The text of the resolution which was moved by the leader of the NAP (Mr. G. M. Bhurgari) was as follows:

"This Assembly recommends the Government to communicate the views of this assembly to the National Assembly that the province of West Pakistan be reconstituted as a sub-federation with four or more fully autonomous provinces."

Iskander Mirza and Suhrawardy, supposedly at Ayub's insistence, publicly denounced the anti-One Unit resolution. Commenting on the West Pakistan Assembly's resolution to undo one unit. Mirza said, "There should be no tampering with the constitution on such an important issue at the present juncture." He added: "The integrity of Pakistan can only be maintained if we have stability, and we can have stability only if we have



general elections. The general elections must, therefore, be held in 1958; and as a corollary to this these elections must be held under the present constitution."

Prime Minister Suhrawardy, dealing with the resolution, declared: "I am not prepared for any measures which may delay the general elections which must be held as early as possible in 1958." He further said: "I am indeed happy that the President and I hold the same view on the subject; and the President, not less than myself, is determined to see that the elections are held as early as possible and in the year 1958 on the basis of the present constitution. "Suhrawardy was now the running dog of military headquarters and the central bureaucracy in the fight to save One Unit." Seizing the moment, the Republicans informed Mirza of their decision to withdraw support for the coalition at the centre.

According to Iskander Mirza's own version, "Suhrawardy went on tour of West Pakistan in which he defended the One Unit principle and thereby opened up an attack on the Republicans. Dr. Khan Saheb and others came to me with complaints about the Prime Minister's speech-making tour. Another cause for complaint was that both the economic portfolios those for industries and commerce were held by Bengali (Awami League) ministers. Mirza tried to bring the two parts of the coalition back into harness. He convened a meeting, with Dr. Khan Saheb and two other Republicans to meet Mr. Suhrawardy. The meeting went on for four hours and was very exhausting. But by the end it seemed that the differences had been cleared up. Mirza arranged for a final meeting the next day, when both sides would put their signatures to an agreement that one of the economic portfolios would go to the West, and one to the East.

Next morning, while Iskander Mirza was still in bed, Naheed, his second wife, drew his attention to a newspaper, where it was stated that the Prime Minister was demanding that the National Assembly be summoned so that the government should receive a vote of confidence. Mirza thought that this was another example of newspaper sensationalism, but a few minutes later a letter arrived from the Prime Minister (sent by special messenger) making the demand that parliament be summoned. Mirza was furious. In his opinion this was not an honest way for a Prime Minister to proceed. "I phoned Suhrawardy," Mirza recalls, "and accused him of double-crossing me." Mirza reminded that they had made a definite agreement, involving the departure of one Bengali minister Mr. Abul Mansur; yet now he was appealing to the Assembly, publishing his decision in the newspapers before he even had the courtesy to consult the president.

Ayesha Jalal traces out another cause of this situation: With big business groups in Karachi lobbying against Suhrawardy's decision to distribute the better part of \$10 million of ICA aid (the international administration agency set up to manage American foreign aid) to East Pakistani and new industrialists, and to establish a national shipping corporation despite fierce opposition from the ship-owners association and the

Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry. Iskander Mirza notes in his memoirs:

"I issued an ultimatum: He must resign within two hours, or I would dismiss him. Suhrawardy came round to see me, and actually wept. He pleaded for reconsideration, but I replied: 'Nothing doing'. And so he put in his resignation." Mirza further reveals that the cause of this volte-face was Suhrawardy's private secretary, an officer of the Indian civil service, Aftab Ahmad, who egged him on to demonstrate that he was the boss. So Suhrawardy fell a victim to bad advice. Khalid B. Sayeed suggests that had Mirza agreed to Suhrawardy's request to summon the National Assembly, it would have meant that the National Assembly, not the President, would have become the maker and unmaker of ministries. Secondly, Suhrawardy was trying to disrupt the Republican Party and this would have undermined the President's influence.

## CHAPTER THIRTY-SEVEN

### TOWARDS THE COUP D'ÉTAT OF 1958

After Suhrawardy, President Iskander Mirza again had to look around for a prime minister. The new man was I. I. Chundrigar, the then leader of the Muslim League parliamentary party. The League had now come out in favor of one unit. Chundrigar gained the support of the Republicans (or some of them). He also brought in Fazl-ul-Haq's Krishak Sramik Party, and some Hindu leaders. Six days after Suhrawardy's departure, Chundrigar was sworn in as Prime Minister. His ministry, as Ayesha Jalal suggests, deserves a special place in Pakistani history. Ousted before many had registered its existence, the ministry's brief stay in office was simply another episode in the unsightly muddles parading under the appellation of national politics. The leader of the Muslim League Party in the National Assembly, Chundrigar had served the state in various capacities. A close friend of Mirza with known sympathies for West Pakistani big business, Chundrigar qualified easily for the job of Prime Minister. So, once Mirza invited him to form the Government, the Republicans wisely dropped their claim to be the largest single party in the national assembly and formed a coalition with the Muslim League. While refusing to accept Chundrigar's humiliating suggestion that they merge with the League, the Republican bosses agreed to support his party's line on One Unit and separate electorates. With Chaudhri Mohammad Ali's Nizam-i- Islam and one faction of the Krishak Sramik pitching in, Chundrigar had no problems making his way into office.

Ayesha Jalal further reveals that seeing that his days might be numbered, Chundrigar lost no time in reversing Suhrawardy's decision on the allocation of the \$ 10 million of ICA aid; the creation of a national shipping corporation was also put into cold storage. The West Pakistani industrial magnates were understandably relieved. East Pakistani business circles for their part reacted by giving unqualified support to the demand for provincial autonomy. The rift between the two wings of the country was now complete. Iskander Mirza thought that Chundrigar was able and honest; absolutely straight, though not brilliant. The cleverest man in the new ministry, however, was Mumtaz Daultana, who had a first class brain. Mirza hoped that this new government could survive until the general elections, to be held in February 1959. At the same time, he was worried that the ministry had to rely upon Republican support and, according to Mirza, the Republicans had turned out to be an unprincipled lot.

When Iskander Mirza was on a state visit in Portugal, he started, getting telegrams from Prime Minister Chundrigar, complaining that the Republicans were up to the old game of intrigue. Mirza, however, went ahead with the visit as already planned. When he

returned to Karachi, he found Chundrigar at the airport. He was very much upset and told the President that due to the intrigues of the Republicans, the coalition had almost broken down. Mirza burst out:

"Look: on the one hand you people say that the President is only for show. On the other hand you make him do all the dirty work. Why should I come into this?"

Mirza recalls: "Chundrigar insisted that the situation required my help and guidance So once again I sent for Dr. Khan Sahib and demanded to know what the trouble was about this time. Dr. Khan produced a few newspaper cuttings and said they proved that Chundrigar and Daultana were damaging the interests of the Republican Party in order to further the Muslim League. I read the speeches through carefully, and could see no harm in them. I said: 'Look, the Muslim league has been in existence for umpteen years. You only have a two-year old show. Why shouldn't they try to gain support for their party? why can't you do the same?' The Republican contention was that during the period of coalition there was an understanding that neither the Republicans nor the Muslim League should speak in support of their own party. To my mind this was absurd. I told Khan Sahib that it was high time he and his party stopped behaving like children. The whole affair would have been laughable, except that unending pranks were making the existence of any government impossible and doing terrible damage to Pakistan. But the Republicans had made up their minds to break off relations with the Muslim league."

With his party fighting street battles against the proponents of joint electorates, Chundrigar had to try and modify the electoral amendment act; Declaring that his government would not be cowed down by the threat of bloodshed in the event of a change in the electoral law, was tantamount to equating the issue with a vote of confidence for the coalition ministry. Called upon to ratify their understanding with the Muslim League, the Republicans dithered but finally refused to reopen the electoral issue. Chundrigar under the circumstances had to resign. He did so one day after approving the Prevention of Smuggling (Special Powers) Ordinance which gave the army absolute powers to conduct the anti-smuggling drive — popularly known as "operation close door" — in East Pakistan.

Chundrigar was given another chance. Iskander Mirza notes: "I asked him to continue for another month, in the hope that I might be able to do something. I just could not understand why it was that Dr. Khan Saheb and Suhrawardy were now as thick as thieves. I said to the former, "One day you are kicking each other, and the next day you are blood brothers." He replied: "This is politics." Chundrigar failed to form a government, because no major group in the National Assembly was prepared to form a coalition on the issue of separate electorates alone.

Iskander Mirza was determined to keep Suhrawardy and Dr. Khan Saheb out of office. He sent for Sir Firoz Khan Noon, who was in London at that time, and came back in a hurry. Mirza recalls: 'I had realized for some time that Republican tactics were designed to get them back into power. I had to have a government, and I knew that the Republicans would have the support of the Krishak Sramik party' (Suhrawardy was also supporting them without wanting to come into the ministry.) According to Ayesha Jalal, the leader of the twenty-one member Republican group in the National Assembly, Noon proved his majority by forging alliances of convenience with as many as five different political groupings: the Awami League, the National Awami party, the Krishak Sramik Party, the National Congress and Scheduled Caste Federation. A coalition dependent upon the support of a motley half a dozen parliamentary blocs was not likely to throw up a stable government. Mirza also suggests that though Noon was a great gentleman, absolutely honest and well-meaning, he did not have the capacity to be the prime minister of an impossible country, as Pakistan had become. He was not up to all the intrigues that were rampant everywhere. He had lost his toughness, and things continued in a very slipshod manner.

When Firoz Khan had become Prime Minister, as Khalid B. Sayeed suggests, the President found that his control over the Republicans was diminishing and that the new Prime Minister had come to an understanding with Suhrawardy. It was believed that Suhrawardy had assured Firoz Khan Noon that, after the general elections, he would support Noon for the President's post. Suhrawardy also once disclosed that he had the names of a couple of candidates for the presidency in his pocket. President Mirza, perhaps rightly, suspected that Suhrawardy was planning to build an alliance between major groups in East and West Pakistan.

President Mirza saw clearly that if Suhrawardy were to succeed in carrying out his plans, there was no possibility of his being re-elected as President.

Ayesha Jalal claims that having repeatedly failed in his efforts to create a 'national government', Mirza after December 1957 began trying to bring the Muslim League and the Republicans into an electoral coalition. Among the terms laid down by him was an undertaking by the Muslim League to support the Republican ministry in West Pakistan through the budget session in March 1958. In addition, the two parties were to agree to hold joint meetings during the election campaign and, most problematic of all, draw up a combined list of candidates. Towards the end of February 1958, Daultana formally responded to the President's suggestion. The Muslim League was ready to form a coalition with the Republicans at the centre as well as in the West Pakistan assembly. But Daultana, who once reportedly declared that 'intrigue is in my blood' carefully avoided committing himself to the point which, all said and done, was the nub of Mirza's proposal - namely that both parties agree on a common list of candidates. Daultana simply left it to a special committee to take all the final decisions.

In his memoirs, Mirza gives his version saying that in February 1958, Daultana and Chundrigar conceived the idea of bringing about a merger of the political groups in West Pakistan. He received a letter from Daultana. Attached to this letter was the draft outline of a programme "to consolidate patriotic forces in the country." There was also a list of those who would be the candidates of this coalition in an election. The first name of the list was that of Sardar Bahadur Khan, brother of General Ayub Khan who had welcomed Dr. Khan Saheb at the gates of the jail on his release, calling him 'uncle' and had then turned against him in the West Pakistan Assembly. Nothing came of this plan. By March the two parties had failed to find common ground. Mirza notes: "I mention this as an example of the way in which the politicians continuously sought to involve me in party politics."

And so the game went on. The Muslim League, under the fiery leadership of Khan Abdul Qayum Khan, signed a vague sixteen-point socio-economic programme with the National Awami Party in the hope of toppling the Republican ministry. Just what Mirza dreaded the most.

He led the circus, enthralling his audience by hitting home some plain truths. For instance dubbing the central coalition as "an employment exchange for unemployed politicians."

In West Pakistan, the Chief Minister, Sardar Abdur Rashid, resigned and joined the central government. Muzaffar Ali Qizilbash became the new Chief Minister. In May Dr. Khan Sahib, the Chief Minister of West Pakistan had been murdered in Lahore. With all his faults," Mirza noted," he was a fine man and a loveable character; above all he was in his own way, a patriotic Pakistani.". Mussarrat Hussain Zuberi records that next day arrived the mourning caravan of ministers central and provincial, led by President Iskander Mirza himself. The President looked pale and shaken. "Seeing how shaken Iskander Mirza was, I arranged, with General Rana, to have his car escorted by two armed vehicles and the procession threaded its way through the black flagged streets. He offered a brief *fateha* at the grave, mumbled his condolences to Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Hidayatullah the son of Dr. Khan Sahib. He was seen returning before the last car in the long line even reached the village."

In East Pakistan, there was a continual struggle between the Awami League and the Krishak Sramik Party. Fazlul Huq the Governor of East Pakistan since 1956, dismissed the Awami League Ministry on March 31, 1958. Awami League leader Suhrawardy responded by threatening to withdraw support from the coalition at the centre. So within twelve hours of the news of the ministerial change reaching Karachi, Huq had been replaced by a new governor who, predictably enough, dismissed Sarkar and brought back Ataur Rahman. Two ministries went out of office within one week. "It was clear to me" Mirza noted, "that things could not go on like this much longer." The tragic fight in the East Pakistan Assembly and the death of Deputy Speaker Shahid Ali Khan

in September 1958, was pictured as a puppet show with the President pulling the strings. The New Statesman (London, September, 18, 1958) pointed out that it was true that most of the politicians deserved to be stoned but it was not for President Mirza to cast the stones.

In fact, as we will see in the next chapter, President Mirza was trapped by Ayub Khan in proclaiming martial law on October 7, 1958. It is also true that the Americans were backing Ayub as their best man. The State Department and the Joint Chiefs of Staff had not been seeing eye to eye on who was their best man, Mirza or Ayub. The State Department thought Mirza was more competent, than Ayub, a view generally shared by the British, while the Joint Chiefs of Staff thought 'Mirza was no match for Ayub.'

Mirza, however, was assured by Ayub Khan, that the armed forces were behind him ready to back him up if necessary. Mirza regarded Ayub Khan as a reliable and trustworthy friend. In April 1954, Ayub Khan spent a few days in the President's House during "Important military planning discussions." When Ayub left for Rawalpindi, He wrote to the President the following note:

My dear President,

Please allow me to congratulate you on the decision you gave on the higher control set-up-for the defence. In doing so you have shown tremendous courage and wisdom and have done the defence forces and the country a great service. History will have cause to be proud of you. (*Italics mine*). I personally, am indebted to you for choosing me to shoulder this responsibility. Let us hope that I shall come up to your expectations. I can promise my very best effort. Once again I thank you and the Khanum (Naheed Iskander Mirza) for your kind hospitality during my stay here. As usual, I have been very comfortable.

With respects.

Yours sincerely  
M.A. Khan

The political and economic situation of the country was getting worse day by day. Mirza notes that "during the summer months our economic situation deteriorated. In the Punjab there were guerrillas and feuds between Quizilbash and his economic. Abdul Qayyum Khan (former chief Minister of the N.W.F.P.) had become the leader of the Muslim League after the death of Nishtar, and spent his time making violent and irresponsible speeches .... We had reached a point where public meetings were being held outside the President's House, at which politicians shouted abuses and threats at me personally, while the loud speakers directed the speech straight at my house."

Qayum demanded a review of Pakistan's foreign policy in the National Assembly and threatened to launch 'direct action', notes Ayesha Jalal, if the government refused to announce a firm date for elections. Short of elections, Qayum announced publicly, nothing could save Pakistan from a military takeover similar to the July 1958 *coup* by Iraqi junior officers.

Frequent references to the anti-Western Iraqi *coup*, the revival of public debate on Kashmir and bitter attacks on foreign policy by all the opposition parties, not to mention the strong-arm tactics of the Muslim League's national guards, as Ayesha Jalal further suggests, inflamed an already deeply embittered military high command. Ever since the Noon ministry had succumbed to political pressures and weakened the army's control over the anti-smuggling operations in East Pakistan, the military command was on red alert. While it had succeeded in getting an increase in the military budget for 1958-59, the strident demands for provincial autonomy in east Pakistan was cause enough to view the prospect of a general election with apprehension. On 20 September, the central government's ban on all paramilitary organization led to dashes between Muslim League workers and the police in Karachi. Three days later the facade of parliamentary democracy in east Pakistan came crashing down. Mindful of the effects of these events on army discipline-intelligence reports indicated that a group of younger officers was planning to stage a *coup* - the military high command was ready to take decisive measures.

Khalid B. Sayeed also confirms that there were signs that the younger officers might stage a *coup*. Pressure was also being brought to bear upon Ayub by the senior generals that the time for drastic action had come. There is evidence to suggest that "a broad tactical outline" to impose Martial Law in the country was being prepared, and that it received the final approval of General Ayub Khan on the last day to September, 1958.

Soon after the murder of Dr. Khan Sahib, the political clouds of the country were over - hanging. When one of the senior civilian officers had said to Ayub Khan. "Sir why don't you take over. The country is going to the dogs and you just watch" reveals Masarrat Zuberi, "When he repeated it, I walked up to him. By then General Mohammad Ayub Khan had made up his mind to say something: And that was: 'I assure you; when it comes to choosing between the constitution and the country I will choose the country.'" Next night at the Government House dinner, Faridullah Shah was putting the same plea to Iskandar Mirza – "Why don't you take over". His response was different: "Once you put the Army in, how could you turn it out"?

It is suggested by Ayesha Jalal that the military high command's growing resolve to take over the state apparatus was communicated to Washington between mid-May and mid-September, 1958.



In the words of Iskander Mirza "There were two courses open to me. I could suspend the constitution, as Ghulam Mohammad had done, or I could abrogate it finally. If I took the first course this would mean having one court case after another, as had happened in 1954. I said to myself: why go through all that again? I decided that my best course would be to abolish the constitution, and immediately to ask the Chief Justice, Mohammad Munir, to set to work drafting a new constitution. I proposed to follow the American system of a presidential executive and a legislature. Considering the peculiar situation in Pakistan, I would have preferred some kind of indirect election of the President. As regards the politicians : after Khan Sahib's death, about three months before, the Republican Party was virtually finished. It had no other real leaders. Suhrawardy was probably the only alternative; he was a very good parliamentarian. I knew that I could not trust him; but still he was the best man. I would get the backing of Daultana and Qizilbash though most of the Muslim Leaguers were after my blood because they erroneously supposed that I had a hand in creating the Republican Party. But for the interim period it was best to exclude the politicians from the government, and function with a cabinet of civilians and army leaders. For I supposed that I could rely on the support of the army after Ayub Khan's assurances. In addition, General Musa swore that he would shed his last drop of blood for me, and General Burki made a similar promise of loyalty, which he repeated to my wife. About mid-September I informed General Ayub that I was contemplating action. General Ayub concurred; and he then disappeared to Gilgit, a place where there were no troops. Perhaps his idea was to show that he had no hand in the coming revolution."

Mirza further reveals:

"I prepared for the event by writing out a long proclamation, explaining why martial law was necessary. I called General Yahya, the Chief of the General Staff, and ordered him to show it to General Ayub. When Ayub saw that I had named him as Chief Martial Law Administrator, it brought him back to Karachi. He arrived on 5th October and came to see me. I said that the country had to be saved, and we all had to work very hard. Ayub replied that his loyalty was with me, and he would do anything I asked."

It is noteworthy that the immediate cause of the skirmishes was the decision of the central authorities to build in Balochistan military bases, air fields and oil reservoirs. To carry out these plans, many Balochis had to be moved from their homes, which called forth strong resistance on their part. The situation in Balochistan was further complicated in the beginning of October 1958, after Iskander Mirza ordered the arrest of the Khan of Kalat, who had come out for the independence of his state. On October 6, the revolt was scotched; the army had made its point loudly and clearly. "Fortunately, we were prepared", notes Mirza. "I ordered military action to be taken, and the Khan was deposed and placed in confinement."

Ayub Khan, the first military dictator of Pakistan, later claimed that his *coup* was a revolution which took place 'without shedding a single drop of blood,' and it was a "blessing of God". However, in truth, blood had been shed in the days leading up to the *coup*.

It was a bloody dawn of October 6, when waking up for their morning prayers, people in Kalat were stunned to hear the roaring of guns amidst the din of moving trucks. Heavy vehicles surrounded Kalat from three sides. Every inch of the ninety-six mile long road leading from Kalat to Quetta airport was occupied by heavily armed soldiers, and the neighboring hillocks had gun fixed on them.

The stage was set for the bloodshed that took place later in the day. As the Khan of Kalat later remarked, he could not bear watching the ruthless massacre of the innocent Baloch masses. "Carrying the Holy Quran in my hand," says the Khan of Kalat "I rushed out of my chamber where I had the honor of entertaining the founder of Pakistan on several occasions."

The Khan gave himself up to the army which proceeded to parade him on the roads and streets of Kalat. He witnessed several of his men being shot dead by indiscriminate firing by the army. "My heart was bleeding ... When my people saw me, they rushed with tearful eyes towards me to bid farewell, but they opened fire at them. I shut my eyes in agony; and knew nothing of what happened there till I found myself in the Lahore jail."

It was the very first scene of a "bloodless revolution", It was a rampage, which, as the Khan puts it, even surpassed the looting by the Tartars of bygone days. Five thousand soldiers camped in the Khan's palace. His wife and children were locked up in a room, and the whole palace was ransacked. The royal treasury of the Khan's ancestors was taken under military control.

The drama was not yet over. On October 8, the very next morning of the "revolution", the army entered Jhalawan for further military action. On October 9, the army advanced towards Wad, where it was confronted by a united force of the Baloch tribesmen. The tribal chief of Jhalawan, Nawab Nauroz Khan, who was then ninety years old emerged as the leader of hastily assembled guerilla force numbering about 100 men. His house was bombarded and razed to the ground; his property was confiscated. The army operation, however, failed to achieve anything.

The cabinet crisis was another immediate cause for the proclamation of martial law.

In order to widen the basis of his Government, as recorded in Keating's Contemporary Archives (Oct 25 - Nov. 1, 1958) Feroz Khan Noon had discussions during September

with Suhrawardy and Hamidul Huq Choudhury, the respective leaders of the Awami League and the Krishak Sramik party. Choudhury was sworn in as a minister on Sept. 16, and acted as Finance Minister during the absence of Syed Amjad Ali, who was attending the Commonwealth economic conference in Montreal. Although Suhrawardy refused to join the Government himself, three members of the Awami League (Zahiruddin, Dildar Ahmad, and Nuru Rehman) took office as ministers on Oct. 2, and three others (Peter Paul Gomez, Abdul Rehman Khan, and Adiuddin) as Ministers of State. Two Republicans, Chaudhry Abdus Salam and Sardar Mohammed Akbar Khan Bugti, had previously been sworn in as Ministers of State on Sept. 20. These changes increased the size of the Government to 17 Ministers and nine Ministers of State (eight Ministers and four Ministers of State from West Pakistan, nine Ministers and five Ministers of State from East Pakistan), out of a National Assembly of 80 members.

The reallocation of portfolios in the enlarged Cabinet gave rise to intense controversy. On returning to Karachi on Oct. 1 Syed Amjad Ali refused to relinquish the Finance Ministry in Hamidul Haq Choudhury's favor, and threatened to leave the Republican Party with 10 other deputies, including a number of Ministers. At midday on Oct. 7. Noon announced a Cabinet reshuffle whereby he himself relinquished the Foreign Ministry to Sardar Abdur Rashid (formerly Minister of Commerce and Industries); Syed Amjad Ali retained the Finance Ministry: Choudhury became Minister of Commerce; and Messrs Zahiruddin, Ahmed, and Rehman became Ministers of Communications, Irrigation and Power, and Education respectively. Immediately these appointments were announced, the Awami League decided to recall its six representatives in the Government as a protest against the allocation of portfolios. It stated that Noon was facing grave difficulties inside the Republican Party over the distribution of portfolios between East and West Pakistan, and that these difficulties were "Of such a nature that the very purpose of the Awami League's entry into the Cabinet-to ensure the holding of free and fair elections on the appointed date of Feb. 15 - may be thwarted." Noon subsequently reshuffled his Cabinet a second time to exclude the Awami League representatives.

In the words of Mirza himself "Sir Firoze Khan Noon needed to strengthen the Bengali element in his Cabinet. He selected two new ministers, and brought them along to my office, where they were sworn in during the morning of 7th October. In the evening, Sir Firoze informed me that they had resigned. I inquired what had happened. He replied that both men had asked for the ministries of Industries and Commerce. He was not prepared to hand over both these portfolios to the newcomers, so they had resigned. I observed that we could draw the obvious conclusion: they wanted to make money, and were not interested in working for the country. I was very glad that their resignations had been accepted. We could not go on working in the manner."

The President concluded that this was the end of the road, so far as parliamentary democracy in Pakistan was concerned. That evening, at 10.30 p.m. my proclamation

was issued to the public and the press. Orders were Issued to the troops the same evening. We ordered an additional infantry brigade and an armored regiment into Karachi. That was more than enough, together with the troops already on hand. In fact there was no disturbance whatsoever."

By a proclamation issued on October 7 President Mirza of Pakistan abrogated the Constitution, dismissed the Central and Provincial Governments, dissolved the National and Provincial Assemblies, abolished all political parties, proclaimed martial law, and appointed General Ayub Khan (C.-in-C. of the Army) as Chief Martial Law Administrator.

"There was no pressure on me from the army to declare martial law. The proclamation was written by me, in my own handwriting, without the help of anyone. It was typed out only a few hours before it was issued," declares Iskander Mirza.

## CHAPTER THIRTY-EIGHT

### ISKANDER MIRZA: A KNOCK AT NIGHT

On October 8, President Iskander Mirza wrote to the heads of friendly governments, informing them that the martial law would be of a short duration. He claimed that his intention was to lift martial law after one month, and then proceed to introduce a new Constitution. On October 15, he repeated that martial law would run for the shortest duration possible; censorship would be lifted, and constitutional debate would be made open.

Ayub Khan did not like these announcements. On October 17, he said in a statement: "There seems to be a fear in the minds of people that if martial law is lifted soon the old order will return ... Let me assure everyone that, whereas martial law will not be retained a minute longer than is necessary, it will not be lifted a minute earlier than the purpose for which it has been imposed has been fulfilled." *The Times* in London interpreted the statement with the headline: MARTIAL LAW TO BE RETAINED (October 18, 1958). The newspaper noted that "The President's assurances were welcomed with relief by the more liberal-minded"; but went on to suggest that a majority would like General Ayub Khan and the army to stay in control of the job of 'clearing up the mess.'

In the very first week after the imposition of martial law, the differences between the President and the Army Chief came out in the open. They were friends of twenty year's standing, but there were rumors that Ayub Khan was considering whether he could get rid of Iskander Mirza. He knew that the President was consulting with Chief Justice Munir on the form of a new Constitution. He knew that if Iskander Mirza had his way, the army would soon march back to its barracks. Such was the situation when Ayub Khan left for East Pakistan.

In his memoirs, the General reveals that when he returned from Dhaka, he was met at the airport by Major General Sher Bahadur with a report that President Mirza had contacted Air Commodore Rabb over the telephone and tried to persuade him to arrest three generals. "I never spoke to Rabb over the telephone at this time or any other time," clarified Iskander Mirza. "Of the three generals I was supposed to arrest, two of them were seven hundred miles away from Karachi in Rawalpindi: the third was in Karachi, and was head of Intelligence. How on earth was an Air Commodore supposed to be able to carry out this assignment, even supposed I had wanted the arrests, made?"

It is also noteworthy, as American embassy's dispatch to the Department of State reveals that the newly appointed commerce minister, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, thought the

greatest credence should be given to the report that the immediate cause of Mirza's downfall was his ... attempt to work out some type of alliance with General Musa.' (American embassy, Karachi, to the Department of State, dispatch dated 14 November 1958)

The facts, as Iskander Mirza claimed, were hidden from him. He continued to leave the day-to-day management of affairs to General Ayub. The name of the new cabinet, including four generals and a rising politician new to office, Z. A. Bhutto, were announced on October 25th. Ayub Khan was appointed Prime Minister.

Retired Air Marshal Asghar Khan recalls a reception at the President's House in Karachi, where the Canadian High Commissioner, on meeting Ayub Khan had asked him 'Well Mr. Prime Minister, when do you take the next step? "What do you mean"? Ayub had retorted. The High Commissioner had smiled without uttering a word but everybody around, including Ayub Khan, had known very well what he had meant.

At this stage, the hidden factor of the game surfaced. On October 23, US Defence Secretary Neil McElroy arrived in Karachi on a four-day visit. The timing of the visit was, of course, most interesting. The visitor had separate meetings with President Iskander Mirza and General Ayub Khan.

During those days, as Vankataramani reveals, Ayub Khan was in the process of making up his mind on a very interesting constitutional point that his "friends" had raised: whether the office of President of Pakistan had not become redundant! According to Ayub Khan, these "friends" had also warned him that President Mirza was "thoroughly disloyal" and that he had replied, "All right, give me a couple of days to think it over". If Ayub Khan's chronology is correct, these developments took place during the very days when he was hosting the American "guests".

These dramatic events continued. On the evening of October 24, at a colorful ceremony, Neil McElroy was made an honorary member of the President's Bodyguard — the crack cavalry unit of the Pakistani Army.

With the President's Bodyguard reinforced by the introduction of so powerful a member as the US Secretary of Defence, President Iskander Mirza was only two days away from downfall and disgrace.

On the morning of October 27, the 12-member cabinet, took the oath of office with Ayub Khan as Prime Minister. On the same day the American guests left. Later in the evening, General Ayub and Burki, came to see Iskander Mirza and they had drinks together in the garden. "He seemed perfectly normal to me and friendly and so did General Burki." Iskander Mirza told Ispahani in 1967." I do not think even Machiavelli could have improved on the action of General Ayub Khan that evening."

At about 10 p.m., three generals — Sheikh, Azam Khan, Burki - and Major General Sher Bahadur entered the President House. One of the bearers knocked at the door and told the President that some generals were waiting below to see him. He immediately put on his dressing gown and came out. He was astonished to see a large number of troops, in the garden and verandah, brandishing sten guns and revolvers. The generals announced that he had to resign and to leave Pakistan.

"Why?" he asked.

"It would be in the interest of the country," they replied. He would have liked to tell them to go to hell, but he had no private army. He was forced to agree. Next morning, in the newspapers, along with the announcement of the new cabinet, in which General Ayub Khan accepted office as Prime Minister, there also appeared a notice to the effect that the President had resigned and Ayub Khan was the new president. The world was left to make what it could of the situation. According to another version by the President's son Humayun Mirza the generals "wanted him (Iskander Mirza) to retaliate physically so that they could get a chance to eliminate him. They wanted an excuse to shoot him. Yet my father was a different man. He knew what they wanted and so he did not react. Then they told him that they had orders from the CMLA to get his resignation and if he was not ready to do that they were to shoot him. My father asked for time to make two telephone calls. He was allowed to do that but there was no response from the other side.

Humayun Mirza reveals that his father had rang up the American and British ambassadors. On not getting a response he'd realized that his time was over. He had no choice but to sign the resignation letter which the generals had brought with them. But till the last minute he was defiant. He told the generals "You don't know how to write English" and he corrected the letter and finally put his signature on it.

When the generals returned, Ayub Khan looked excited and tense, as Asghar Khan states. They told Ayub Khan that even before they had spoken to Iskander Mirza, he had asked them whether they had brought the paper for him to sign and that when it was produced, he'd promptly signed it. Ayub Khan was visibly relieved and said that Iskander Mirza was to be treated well.

## CHAPTER THIRTY-NINE

### BANISHED WITH A PRISONERS ESCORT

Our "national historians" describe with great satisfaction that after being dislodged from his office by Ayub Khan, Iskander Mirza was treated well. This claim, having repeated itself for the last 35 years, however, is a far cry from what really happened. In his yet unpublished memoirs, Iskander Mirza revealed the fact that having gained his resignation at gunpoint, the three generals left the subsequent dirty work to the ill-mannered Major-General Sher Bahadur. He tried to stamped the former president and his wife into leaving the President's House immediately. Sher Bahadur and his men brandished sten guns and revolvers in an attempt to frighten Begum Naheed Mirza, who, according to her husband, refused to be frightened. They packed up their things in an hour or so, and made ready to leave, Humayun Mirza reports that his father, in his *pyjamas*, was driven to the airport where he was flown to Quetta.

It was about the same time, that Ayub Khan called a meeting of the ambassadors of foreign countries and members of his cabinet. He told them of the action that he had taken and explained briefly the reasons that necessitated his doing so. There was no reaction from any of them except the United States Ambassador and the High Commissioner from Australia. Air Marshal Asghar Khan who was also present in the meeting, noted that the U.S. Ambassador reacted sharply to the news and asked Ayub Khan some sense of humor had replied that he had been selected by both Iskander Mirza and Ayub Khan.

When Asghar Khan arrived at the VIP room at Mauripur airfield to see the former president off, he found Iskander Mirza and his wife, sitting on a sofa and a junior army officer occupying an adjacent chair, with his legs stretched on the table in front of the former President. Asghar Khan told the officer that this was the height of insolence and totally unnecessary and ordered him out of the room.

In Quetta Mirza and his wife were in the house of the Agent to the Governor-General, which was completely full of troops. They were put in a small room and there were officers posted all round with revolvers and sten guns. Iskander Mirza was not spared their vigilance for a single minute, not even when he went to the bathroom. For three days he did not know whether he would live or be murdered.

Iskander Mirza himself confirms that he and his wife stayed there for five or six days, surrounded by army officers with weapons. "My wife became so furious by this display of arms," writes Iskander Mirza, "that she rebuked Sher Bahadur for threatening us, and



reminded him that her Persian ancestors had been through there before – as conquerors. After that, the guns were less in evidence."

In his last exclusive interview given to M. H. Ispahani in late 1967, Iskander Mirza told him that one day Sher Bahadur came to him and said: "you are leaving for Karachi tomorrow as arrangements have been made for you to go to England but you will have to buy your own ticket and also pay for your passports". Iskander Mirza complied and they were taken to Mauripur where he was kept waiting for about four hours and then sent by plane to Drigh Road Airport. There he had to wait over seven hours in the VIP room. Before leaving Quetta, he had asked Sher Bahadur, if he could see two persons at the airport, his son-in-law pointed questions about the action that he had taken and the safety of Iskander Mirza. He enquired about the plans he had for the former president and how he would be treated. Ayub Khan appeared upset at the manner in which the United States Ambassador had spoken and said that Iskander Mirza would be treated well and was being sent to Quetta early the next morning where he would stay for a few days. The Australian High Commissioner Major-General Cawthorn, who had served in the British Indian Army and later the Pakistan Army was a personal friend of Iskander Mirza and he too expressed anxiety about his safety.

Humayun Mirza also confirms that the junta was debating whether his father should be murdered or spared. This part of the story was told to Humayun Mirza by the Australian High Commissioner. He (Humayun) thinks that the United States made it clear to Ayub that they would not support him if the former President was killed. "I am sure that without the United States my father's life would have never been spared," tells Humayun Mirza.

A cavalcade of military vehicles drove Iskander Mirza and his wife to the airport. There Mirza met the American Ambassador, Mr. Langley. Langley looked very disturbed and unhappy. His reaction to Ayub Khan's move suggested that the United States had more than a normal interest in the matter. Asghar Khan thinks that knowing Iskander Mirza and Ayub Khan's strong leanings towards the United States and Great Britain, the *coup* of 7 October was carried out with the knowledge of, if not the encouragement from the governments of these two countries. "This was, however, not in my opinion, true of the action taken by Ayub Khan three weeks later," Asghar Khan notes. He recalls that the ministers when told of this action had been bewildered and that after the meeting some of them asked one another whether their selection had been made by Iskander Mirza or by Ayub Khan. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto with his characteristic Mahmood Mirza and Ispahani (the interviewer); Sher Bahadur said it would be arranged. But they arranged nothing. His son-in-law met him by accident as he was walking along in that area (he was an officer in the PIA) and Ispahani had gone there with his wife to receive his daughter who was arriving from London by the same BOAC aircraft which was to take Mirza and Naheed away from Pakistan.

Ispahani and his wife managed to find their way to the VIP room. Besides them there was the Australian High Commissioner and the Portuguese Ambassador and a Greek friend called Den Darino. "There must have been at least a battalion of infantry all round the airport and God knows how many police and CID men were on duty." said Iskander Mirza.

These people did not leave the VIP room until Iskander Mirza and his wife were taken away to board the aircraft. According to Altaf Gouhar the plane took off but returned to the airport after a while. Begum Mirza became hysterical. She was assured that the plane had returned because of some mechanical defects and not for any sinister reason. A little later, anyhow, they left in a KLM plane. From Amsterdam they came to London, where they stayed for some days in the Hyde Park hotel before finding their own accommodation. "If it had not been for the kindness of friends," Mirza notes in his memoirs, "We would have been in difficulties, as our money and valuables were confiscated before we left Pakistan, as were all my private papers and diaries."

When he was in London, for a few days, he heard reports that Ayub Khan was spreading rumors in Karachi and other places in Pakistan that he had been thoroughly searched and had been made to sign a cheque of an enormous amount before he was allowed to go. This Iskander Mirza categorically denied. "In the first place if there was a cheque of this description signed by me, would not (Ayub Khan) have been glad to publish a photographic copy of that cheque in every newspaper in the world to damn me?".

In his interview to Yehia M. Syed, he revealed that he received only 300 a month, simply not enough to make two ends meet. His wife had to cook their meals and they could not afford a car. The flat they occupied belonged to Ispahani.

Concluded Iskander Mirza., "And so I ended my service to my country: banished, without warning. The army, which I had helped to make into such a fine force, sent me off, not with a guard of honor but with a prisoner's escort. My only satisfaction was to feel that I had done what I had to do."

## CHAPTER FORTY

### LAST DAYS

On the 13 of November 1969, Pakistan's first President and last Governor General died at the age of 70. He was born on the 13 of November 1899 in Bombay. After being removed from power he was sent off, on the 2 of November, to London to spend the rest of His days in exile. He passed these eleven difficult years of his life in silence and with dignity. About Pakistan he remained silent, with never a word of complaint or despair crossing his lips.

President Iskander Mirza had started compiling his memoirs before the publication of President Ayub's book. This process continued till early November 1968. Before his death he had reviewed his memoirs as well. I have taken a look at his memoirs written in a beautiful and articulate style. Though I cherished the experience of going through his memoirs, I was disappointed at his reserve. This was more obvious in the instances when one expected him to write more than a half-sentence in self-defence. He did not write anything about himself, which says a lot about his personality. He had spent the last eleven years of his life in isolation and misery, but one cannot see that in his memoirs. There is no complaint of the fact that the government withheld one of his two pensions. There are no complaints of hardship, no reflections on the fact that towards the end his friends stopped meeting him.

Iskander Mirza was a man of dignity and pride. When he fell sick for the first time in London, according to Syed Amjad Ali, the Shah of Iran had him treated. The second time he fell ill, the Iranian government through its embassy in London, made an offer to have him treated again. But his pride did not allow him and he chose death over someone else funding his treatment.

Ayub Khan after grabbing power started a malicious campaign against Iskander Mirza. He used every possible means to slander President Mirza's name. In the initial days of President Mirza's exile, he made it known that a famous smuggler Qasim Bhatti, had gifted a diamond necklace to Begum Naheed Mirza. This is contrary to President Mirza's character and principles. Syed Amjad Ali notes that if this were true, Iskander Mirza would not be travelling on buses, and it would have been possible for him to have himself medically treated. He used to go himself to get groceries from shops which were quite far from his house.

Some months after his exile, his daughter Fakhir Jehan got married to Syed Amjad Ali, son Asad Ali. The two had got engaged a month before the imposition of Martial Law.

Now that Iskander Mirza was not in power this engagement could have been called off. Maybe that is why when in January 1959, M. H. Ispahani asked Syed Amjad Ali about this, the latter replied that the boy had expressed his liking for the girl, so why should there be any hitch? The two got married in February 1959. Even then some people claimed that Syed Amjad Ali tried his best to call off the marriage but could not do much in the face of his son's determination.

There is another story about this engagement and subsequent marriage. Air Marshal Asghar Khan says that immediately after Martial Law, Syed Amjad Ali called up the President to set a date for the wedding. President Mirza replied that the next couple of days were very hectic for him. Once things normalize, one can set wedding dates. To this Amjad Ali replied that it would take quite a while before matters normalize. President Mirza commented that he'll fix Ayub Khan in a couple of days. Military Intelligence tapped this conversation.

Firstly one needs to consider the validity of Asghar Khan's statement, then secondly Syed Amjad Ali claims his ignorance of any such conversation taking place. Thirdly if perchance such a thought crossed Iskander Mirza's mind, he would not have been irresponsible enough to conduct such a conversation on the telephone. He happened to be a very responsible and cautious person.

In November 1958, Iskander Mirza and his wife Naheed settled in London, where Mirza, to earn his livelihood and feed his small family, got a job at a London restaurant as an Assistant Manager. Naheed showed her mettle and remained steadfast and loyal to her husband when the chips were down for the family. While working in a restaurant Mirza used to buy grocery and other items from shops and markets for the restaurant. Though a controversial figure during his governance he never indulged in money-making or financial malpractices. If he had cared for making money to save his future and that of his family, he would never have accepted a small job in London. Iskander Mirza's interference in democratic government and its merits may be questioned but not his financial integrity. When he died in London he left 148 pounds, which at the prevailing cost of living, would have sustain him for a week or two only.

Iskander Mirza was a patriot as well. When Malik Ghulam Jilani, his old friend, who was in London in 1965, met him on September 4 that year, Mirza invited him over the next day.

On the 5 of September they discussed for two hours different issues. There was accelerated warfare in Kashmir in those days. This topic came up in the course of conversation as well. The next day on the 6 of September Malik Saheb was sleeping when the telephone bell rang. It was Iskander Mirza on the other end." You're a strange man to be still sleeping. Didn't you get to know? It's in the BBC news that the Indians have captured Lahore." Malik Saheb remembers his astonishment. Iskander Mirza

chided him on his ignorance and asked him to come over to his place immediately. When he got there, he found a number of Iskander Mirza's friends present. One of them was Mr. Edward Heath from the Tory party, who became Britain's Prime Minister after some time. The moment Jilani stepped inside the flat, Iskander Mirza embraced him and burst into tears. He kept on lamenting that the Indians had captured Lahore.

Ghulam Jilani remembers that it was justified if he had got worried himself. He had his children to think about, his friends. But he kept on repeating that God's grace was with them. But Mirza kept on wailing. His worry had to be seen, even his friends were dismayed to see him in this state. When most of the people had left, Mirza kept on expressing his sorrow at signing the treaties with America. Considering the international situation Pakistan had to side with the US, but when the US started to pressurize Pakistan to sign a mutual defence pact with India, President Mirza was not in favor of signing any such treaty. As a result he was removed from power.

Iskander Mirza talked on these matters till late. He expressed his gratitude that the Americans were not able to materialize their hopes through him. But the moment Ayub Khan got hold of power, he offered, a mutual defence treaty to the Indians. To this Nehru replied that we might have mutual defence, but against whom? Malik Saheb spent the whole of 6 September in Mirza's apartment. Later in the afternoon when BBC contradicted stories of Lahore's fall, one had to see Iskander Mirza's happiness. He was laughing and hugging Malik Jilani all at once. This says a lot about the patriotism of a person who had been accused of dictatorship and treason, not only at the time of his exile but even today he is accused with such slander.

In September of 1967, certain extracts from Ayub Khan's autobiography were published in *The Times*, London. Iskander Mirza could not tolerate the blatant lies published in them, and he spoke out on a national level for the first time. Iskander Mirza wrote a letter to the editor of *The Times* on the 13 of September and disclosed the lies written by Ayub Khan. Ayub Khan claimed that a couple of days after the imposition of Martial Law, (and when Ayub himself was in Dhaka), Iskander Mirza ordered Air Commodore Rab to arrest Generals Yahya, Hameed and Sher Bahadur, Iskander Mirza wrote in reply:

"There were four Generals in the Cabinet at the time, Ayub, Sheikh, Azaz and Burki, three very close to Ayub. I would ask any reasonable man to consider what I could hope to achieve by the arrest of the three Generals Yahya, Hamid and Sher Bahadur? Yahya and Hamid were on the General Staff and should have been in Rawalpindi at the time I am supposed to have ordered or requested their arrest. Sher Bahadur was in Karachi as Director of Military Intelligence and at that time country was under Martial Law. A person possessing average wit would regard a request or order to an Air Force Officer to arrest two Generals in Rawalpindi about 700 miles from Karachi, or a General in Karachi in the midst of

an area in which at least one Infantry Brigade was deployed within immediate striking distance, as an act of a deranged mind, or consider it to be a Fakir's Fairy Tale."

This letter was an explanation from a person who had kept quiet for nine long years in the face of all the lies uttered about his person. What was surprising was the fact that a number of those politicians sided with Ayub who had accused Mirza of imposing military dictatorship.

In 1966 Mirza suffered two heart attacks. In those days his first wife Begum Riffat was in London. She left later to be with her son Humayun in Washington. At that time Iskander Mirza was busy compiling his memoirs, but he could not carry on because of ill health. In September when Ayub Khan's book came out he had to break his silence, even then these accusations hurt him badly. He had spent a long period in solitude and exile. Some time before, on the 13 of March 1967, his first wife Begum Riffat passed away in Washington. The plane with his wife's body on board made a stopover in London on its way to Karachi. Iskander Mirza wanted to go to the airport to see his wife for the last time, but Begum Naheed Mirza did not allow him to go and he had to make do with sending flowers. Begum Riffat was buried in Bagh Khurasan, a graveyard in Karachi. This tragedy was a great set back to the silent, lonely President Mirza.

His daughter Begum Shah Taj Imam visited him in London in 1968. Even she noted that he had become very forlorn after two heart attacks. "I asked him to come to Pakistan. To stay with us. He had never seen my children. I was very keen on him coming to Pakistan, but he made it very clear that until Ayub stayed in power he will never come back."

The last year of his life was spent in solitude and misery. He used to be overjoyed to receive visitors, but these same visitors used to go back exaggerating their visits. For example his flat had golden wallpaper. These visitors used to tell people that Iskander Mirza had gold on his walls. These incidents made him reduce his social callers.

When Ayub Khan's rule was over, the desire to come back home gripped President Mirza's heart. He got in touch with General Yahya and his daughter Begum Taj tried her best as well, but in both cases there was no success. He wanted to come back home and see his children, grand-children, close friends. He conveyed his wish to General Yahya through one of Yahya's relatives. During this period Iskander Mirza had the chance to go to Teheran and talk to Yahya Khan on the phone.

Yahya asked him, "Do you want to come back?"

"Yes," he replied.

"I'll think it over." Yahya answered.

Begum Imam contradicts this telephone call taking place, but she does recall talking to her father on the phone. She conveyed a message to General Yahya through a relative of his Begum Nayyer Agha. After some days the lady replied that General Yahya was ready to welcome her father. Begum Taj conveyed this good news to her father, who impatiently started preparing for his journey home. However considering all his life he had adhered to the proper rules and formalities, he asked his daughter to write to Yahya to get written permission. His daughter immediately wrote the following letter.

"I am the youngest daughter of Maj. General Iskander Mirza and ever since his departure from this country did not have a chance to see him. Last year, after ten years, I was fortunate enough to go to London to see my father. It was a great shock for me to see that his heart attacks had made him old and weak physically. My other sisters and I felt that our father was in a most uncertain and doubtful health. We have therefore, been trying to persuade him to come to Pakistan, so that in his old age he should have a few peaceful and happy moments with his children and grand-children. He has now agreed to visit us; for a short while, provided he is allowed to come.

"Since you have already set a noble precedent by giving protection to the ex-President Mohammad Ayub Khan and upholding the prestige dignity of the office, we sincerely request that our father may also kindly be allowed to visit Pakistan."

Now Iskander Mirza wrote himself to Yahya, he got a reply from Yahya's staff officer General Pirzada. It stated that Yahya would not be able to welcome him to Pakistan. This refusal saddened Iskander Mirza. On the 24 of September he wrote to his daughter Begum Shah Taj:

"I heard from a General Pirzada, Staff Officer to General Yahya, to the effect that my presence in Pakistan will not be welcome.

"I was only anxious to come to see you and the grand-children and as this is not possible I hope you all will be able to pay me a visit next summer. Winter you won't like. Don't try to see General Yahya or any of the Armed Forces Coterie in respect of anything to do with me. All that talk of my being free to come is pure bunkum."

He started getting pain in his chest — he was a heart patient — nearly every night after getting that letter from Pirzada.

His letter to Begum Shah Taj was his last contact with his children. He died one and a half month later on November 13, 1969 on his 70th birthday. He did not want his body to be brought back to Pakistan as he was not allowed to come here when he was alive. It is difficult to say where he would have been buried if he had not been given a state funeral by the Shah of Iran and being buried in Tehran.

The rulers of today need to learn two lessons from the life of Iskander Mirza. First, personal honesty; Second, tolerate no nonsense in enforcing public order. And for the politicians there is just one lesson: an external force invited to intervene in civil affairs will take its orders neither from the politicians nor from the bureaucrats but from its own Commanders.



## APPENDIX-I

### EXCERPTS FROM REPORT OF THE COURT OF INQUIRY

#### Account of Disturbances

The members of the Action Committee were arrested in Karachi on 27th February. On instructions received over the telephone in Lahore from the leaders of the movement who were in Karachi, some batches of volunteers had already left Lahore for Karachi. The one that left on 27th February under the leadership of Ghazi Ilm-ud-Din was intercepted and detained by the Punjab Police at Railway Station Lodhran, while the other two, one of which had left on the 25th under Miraj-ud-Din Salar and the other on the 26th under Sahibzada Faiz-ul-Hasan, succeeded in reaching Karachi and were arrested there.

Action decided upon in Karachi on the night of 26th/27th February was taken by the Punjab Government and persons whose list had been prepared by the Inspector-General of Police on his return from Karachi were arrested. These arrests generated a wave of resentment and lawlessness throughout the Province, more especially in Lahore and the district towns of Sialkot, Gujranwala, Rawalpindi, Lyallpur and Montgomery. The mounting wave of disorder became so uncontrollable in Lahore that on 6th March the military had to step in and put the town under Martial Law.

#### Lahore

27th February, 1953 — In compliance with the decision arrived at in Karachi a warrant for the arrest of Maulana Akhtar Ali Khan was issued but when it was shown to him by the police officer who had been entrusted with its execution, the Maulana offered to give an undertaking that he would sever his connection with the agitation if he were not arrested. He was taken to the Civil Lines Police Station where he wrote out the following apology: —

"I consider the turn taken by the present movement harmful for the integrity of Pakistan and think that if this movement continues like this, the enemies of Pakistan would take undue advantage of it and every Pakistani would disapprove any such movement as jeopardizes the integrity of Pakistan. The present trend of this movement tends to engender discord and chaos in the country. If, God forbid, disturbances increase and the Government is compelled to use force, it shall be highly derogatory for both sides. In my opinion, even a single drop of a Musalman's blood is more valuable than the whole of the Universe. We should, therefore, further consider the matter in order to straighten the situation. I am not connected with the present 'direct action'. I have never advocated violence, nor was I in favor of reproaching and abusing the Governor-

General, the Prime Minister and other dignitaries of Pakistan or taking out their (mock) funeral processions or picketing their houses. What to say of doing such things, in my view, even to think of such things is not right for a right thinking Pakistani. In order to stabilize the inner administration of our country and to enhance its prestige and dignity in the eyes of foreign countries, we should abstain from committing any such act as might result in making us an object of ridicule in the eyes of the world."

According to this document one drop of a Musalman's blood was more precious to the Maulana than the entire creation; the Maulana had nothing to do with 'direct action'; the shape that the movement had taken carried in it a threat to the solidarity of Pakistan; the Maulana was against violence and disorder of every sort; he could not possibly think of putting up with such things as mock funerals of the Prime Minister and other leaders or picketing of their houses; and he was against everything which was calculated to expose Pakistan and her people to the ridicule of the world. In view of this abject apology, Maulana Akhtar Ali Khan was not arrested and no action was taken against his paper, the '*Zamindar*,' until it misbehaved again on 28th February.

28th February, 1953 — With the arrest of the leaders in Karachi on the 27th and in the Punjab on the night of 27th/28th February, shops were closed in Lahore and small remonstrative parties walked in the streets forcing unwilling shopkeepers to close their shops. In the afternoon a public meeting was held in the garden outside Delhi Gate where some volunteers who had prepared themselves for arrest were garlanded and taken in procession towards the Civil Secretariat. On the way, however, the crowd changed its mind and marched on The Mall with Government House as its objective. The crowd numbered five to six thousand but there was no apparent tendency to violence, the processionists contenting themselves with shouting anti- Government, anti-Police and anti-Ahmadi slogans. The procession was stopped and asked to disperse near the Charing Cross where the Commissioner, the Inspector- General of Police, the Deputy Inspector-General of Police, the District Magistrate and the Senior Superintendent of Police had arrived. The garlanded volunteers came out and offered themselves for arrest. They were, however, told that since there was no ban on public assemblies or processions, they had committed no offence and could not be arrested. The volunteers, however, insisted on their being arrested and in order to clear the road for traffic, thirty-four persons were arrested under Section 107/151 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, put in a truck, driven away and dropped at some distance from the town. The crowd then dispersed and scattered in different directions.

Shortly after this the Commissioner, the Home Secretary, the Inspector-General of Police, the District Magistrate and the Senior Superintendent of Police conferred together in the Civil Lines Police Station and after discussing the situation decided against the banning of public meetings and processions.

1st March - This was a day of processions and arrests.

The news that Maulana Akhtar Ali Khan had apologized went round the whole town. The public became furious and besieged his house on the McLeod Road. A posse of police, however, arrived and on an assurance by the Maulana's son that he was in his village in Karamabad in the Gujranwala district, the mob dispersed. At about the same time Maulana Ahmad Ali organized a big procession outside the Delhi Gate. The crowd appeared to be in a violent mood and damaged a police vehicle by throwing brickbats. Maulana Ahmad Ali was arrested under Section 3 of the Punjab Public Safety Act and thirty-two other persons were arrested under Section 107/151 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. Another procession appeared near the High Court building, intent on marching on the Government House. It was stopped and twenty-nine persons were put under arrest by the Additional Superintendent of Police. The same officer faced another procession on the Mall where he arrested twenty-three more persons. In the afternoon a large procession set out from the Delhi Gate for the Government House but was stopped near the Charing Cross in the presence of the Commissioner, the Home Secretary, the Inspector-General of Police, the Deputy Inspector-General of Police and the District Magistrate. Many men came out and offered themselves for arrest. They were put into trucks and, as on the previous day, dropped away from Lahore. The crowd then dispersed without showing any signs of violence.

2nd March — It appears that on hearing that Maulana Akhtar Ali Khan had deserted the cause and closeted himself in his house in Karamabad, some local men went to him there and taunted him with cowardice. The Maulana denied the accusation and came to Lahore on the evening of the 1st or the morning of the 2nd March. He went to Wazir Khan Mosque where he attempted to explain his position to the public and asserted that he was still as true to the movement as he had been before. He also announced that he would offer himself for arrest in the afternoon. Accordingly a procession, 10,000 strong, set out from the mosque in the evening. This time the crowd was hostile and rowdy. The procession was stopped near the Charing Cross, where the Commissioner, the Home Secretary the Inspector-General of Police, the D.I.G. Police and the S.S.P. were present, and declared an unlawful assembly. The Maulana and some others were arrested and collected in a place which was cordoned by the police. Suddenly a crowd of about 1,000 attacked the police cordon with brickbats, tins, bottles and other odd missiles. In the attack eleven police officers, including two Superintendents of Police, namely, Mr. Zulqarnain Khan and Mr. Taylor, were injured and the crowd had to be lathi-charged. The Maulana was removed to the jail and forty-one persons were arrested for assault and rioting. The persons who had been arrested earlier with Maulana Akhtar Ali Khan were taken away from Lahore and released as before. The crowd thereupon dispersed. After the mob had cleared off, the Commissioner, the Home Secretary, the Inspector-General of Police, the Deputy Inspector-General of Police, the District Magistrate, the Senior Superintendent of Police and the Superintendent of Police, C.I.D. held a conference at the Civil Lines Police Station. As the situation had been rapidly worsening, it was decided to inform the General Officer

Commanding, the 10th Division, and to request him to come over and stand-by with troops in aid of civil power. The General did not come himself but sent his G.S.O.I (Lt. Col. Sheereen Khan) and two other officers who explained that if military aid was needed a requisition from the Provincial Government was necessary. This led to some argument, the civil authorities contending that the District Magistrate, without any reference to Government, was competent to ask for aid from the army and the military officers sticking to the position that as the question of the cost of troops was involved, requisition for military aid should formally come from the Provincial Government. During the argument the Inspector-General of Police offered to make a written requisition on behalf of the Punjab Government. A letter was, therefore, drafted which was signed and handed over to the military officers by the Home Secretary. The letter stated that as an outbreak of serious disorder was apprehended in Lahore and it was felt that civil authorities may not be able to cope with the situation, the Home Secretary was desired by the Provincial Government to request for the aid of troops to help the District Magistrate in the prevention and suppression of disorder. The written requisition left the number of troops, the period for which they were to be employed and the manner in which they were to be posted, to be communicated in due course to the G.O.C. by the District Magistrate, Lahore. At the conference a decision was also taken to promulgate an order under Section 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, prohibiting processions in specified parts of the Lahore Corporation. The same evening a meeting of the Cabinet was held at the Chief Minister's residence which was attended by the officers who had met at the Civil Lines Police Station and by the Chief Secretary. The steps taken at the Civil Lines Police Station were approved by the Cabinet and a little after midnight the District Magistrate issued an order under Section 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, prohibiting an assembly of five or more persons from collecting within the Corporation limits of the City of Lahore 'excluding the area surrounded by the Circular Road.'

3rd March – This was comparatively an uneventful day. The military moved to the Jinnah Garden and in the morning started patrolling the Civil Lines and the city area of the Corporation except the walled city. The Border Police also moved about. Some unimportant processions were taken out in the walled city and other areas covered by the order under Section 144. Thirty-one persons were arrested in Anarkali for defying the order under Section 144 and a defiant procession coming from Nila Gumbad to the Mall was dispersed near the Tollinton Market by a lathi-charge ordered by Mr. M.A.K. Chaudhri, Assistant Superintendent of Police. Two other crowds were halted and dispersed by lathi-charge by a police party led by the Inspector-General of Police himself. The only serious incident that occurred on this day was the stoning of a police party led by Inspector Agha Sultan Ahmad of Naulaklia by a mob of about a hundred persons which was moving from the McLeod Road towards the Charing Cross via Montgomery Road. The police fired three rounds without causing any casualty.

In the evening it was noticed that the troops had ceased patrolling.

4th March — On 4th March a meeting of the Cabinet was held which was attended by the Chief Secretary, the Home Secretary, the Inspector-General of Police and the Deputy Inspector-General of Police. The Inspector-General of Police read out the report of a speech delivered on the preceding night by Maulana Abdus Sattar Khan Niazi at the Wazir Khan Mosque. The speech was highly inflammatory, and an order of his arrest under Section 3 of the Punjab Public Safety Act was passed by the Home Secretary but it could not be executed because the mosque where Niazi had enthroned himself had become an impregnable stronghold of the agitators.

The military, apparently under orders from headquarters, stopped patrolling, and one or two Companies even returned to the Cantonment from the Jinnah Garden. Several processions were taken out and dispersed. One of these surrounded the Ahmadiya Buildings and was dispersed by a mild lathi-charge by A.S.I. Muhammad Akram. Streams of volunteers had now started pouring into Lahore by rail and by road. A batch of volunteers from Sargodha was dispersed by Sub-Inspector Muhammad Hamid near the Naulakia Police Station. Another batch of 110 Ahrar volunteers on the Brandreth Road was met by Sayyad Hasanat Ahmad, City Magistrate, Malik Khan Bahadur, Superintendent of Police and Sayyad Firdaus Shah, Deputy Superintendent of Police. The volunteers refused to disperse and reached Chowk Dalgaran where they were tear-gassed. They would still not disperse and sat on the ground. A lathi-charge proving ineffective, they were lifted bodily, put into trucks and taken away. False rumors about this incident began at once to be circulated. It was given out that the police, in dispersing the volunteers, had profaned the Holy Qur'an by kicking and tearing it, and killed a small boy. At a meeting held outside Delhi Gate a boy was produced, holding in his hand some torn leaves of the Holy Book, who said that he was an eye witness of the sacrilegious incident. A maulvi, probably Maulvi Muhammad Yusuf, took these leaves of the Book in hand, held them out to the audience and made a violent speech, infuriating the already excited crowd. The faked incident became a public topic for excited crowds and spread like wild fire throughout the city within a few hours, creating feeling of anger and hatred against the police.

The above-mentioned account of the Dalgaran incident has been taken by us from the written statements and the evidence of officers. The version given of this incident by the Ahrar and the Majlis-i-Amal, however, is entirely different, and it is alleged that during that incident a police officer did kick at the Holy Qur'an, and beat to death a young boy, and in support of this allegation Muhammad Nazir witness No. -32, Muhammad Hanif witness No. 33, Sheikh Muhammad Rafiq witness No. 34 and Siraj Din witness No. 37 have been examined. The Court also examined Sayyad Hasanat Ahmad, City Magistrate, Lahore, and Malik Khan Bahadur Khan, Superintendent of Police, Punjab Constabulary, who were present on the occasion. According to the non-official witnesses, a batch of volunteers was coming from Chowk Dalgaran side towards the railway station when it was stopped by the police. The volunteers were asked to

disperse but they sat down and when an attempt was made to remove them to some trucks which were standing nearby, they laid themselves on the ground and had to be dragged. Among the men who were so dragged was an old man who had on his person a hama'il. When he was being dragged, the hama'il came off his person and a police officer of short stature and with a goitre in his neck kicked at it. The witnesses differ whether the hama'il was pushed into the drain or remained lying on the ground and whether it was in a cover or without a cover. The man who was wearing it has not been called and his particulars have not been given; nor have the particulars of the boy who is said to have been beaten to death been given. We cannot imagine that a Musalman police officer, however irreligious he may be, would kick at the Holy Book, and thus be guilty of the grossest blasphemy. This is conceded in the arguments before us but it is suggested that the Book might have been trampled upon unintentionally. Sayyad Hasanat Ahmad and Malik Khan Bahadur Khan have both denied the allegation and since non-official evidence about it is hopelessly discrepant, we cannot hold that anyone kicked at the Holy Book or beat any boy to death.

Other tactics resorted to by the agitators to spread hatred of authority were:

- (1) circulation of leaflets to the effect that more than a thousand persons had been shot down in Jhang and Sargodha whereas the truth was that not a single bullet had been fired that day in either of these places;
- (2) spreading the rumor that Ahmadis were going about in cars shooting down people indiscriminately;
- (3) announcement from the Wazir Khan Mosque that Government servants had struck work and joined the movement; and
- (4) spreading reports that the district police had refused to fire and that it was the Border Police and the Constabulary Police alone who were firing.

The allegation that some Ahmadis clad in military uniform went about in a jeep indiscriminately shooting people has been made the subject-matter of proof before us and several witnesses have been called in support of it. But though some mysterious vehicle with some unidentified men in it seems to have moved about on this day, there is no evidence before us that the occupants of this vehicle were Ahmadis or that the vehicle itself was the property of an Ahmadi.

At 4-30 p.m. a public meeting was held outside Delhi Gate with an audience of about 5,000 where references to a child having been shot and the Holy Qur'an having been trampled underfoot by the police in Chowk Dalgaran were made. After the meeting a procession was formed which moved towards the Wazir Khan Mosque. The crowd was stopped by Assistant Sub-Inspectors Manzur-ul-Haq and Muhammad Sadiq near the

mosque. Information was received over the telephone by Sayyad Firdaus Shah, Deputy Superintendent of Police, that these two Assistant Sub-Inspectors had been kidnapped and taken inside the mosque where they had either been killed or were on the point of being killed. The Deputy Superintendent of Police took an armed reserve led by S.I. Muzaffar Khan of Police Station Kotwali and marched towards the mosque. Just outside the mosque he was met by a furious mob and when he inquired about the whereabouts of the two police officers, he was surrounded and attacked by the rioters with knives and sticks and killed on the spot. He had as many as fifty- two injuries on his person. His own revolver and two muskets of the policemen who were accompanying him, were snatched and Sub-Inspector Muzaffar Khan was injured. The D.S.P's body was conveyed by someone to the Kotwali where the Home Secretary, the Inspector-General of Police, the District Magistrate and the Senior Superintendent of Police were present. Col. Alam, Officer Commanding 1st Baluch Regiment, also arrived with some other officers and the General Officer Commanding joined a little later. While these officers were reviewing the situation, the District Magistrate disclosed that on hearing the news of the murder of the D.S.P. he had decided to hand over the town to the military and communicated his desire to the military officers. This action was not approved by the Inspector-General of Police who thought that there was no necessity of surrendering control to the army at that stage. If the District Magistrate had in fact handed over control to the army we would have considered him as having acted sensibly and wisely, but that officer himself is not willing to take the credit for any such action and in his evidence before us he has completely denied having ever decided to hand over to the military.

The officers present decided to impose the curfew and the necessary order was promulgated by the District Magistrate. The police patrolled the town and came across several crowds which were dispersed by firing. Thus a mob which was defying the curfew was contacted near the Bhati Gate and it dispersed on a few rounds having been fired. Firing was also opened at a crowd in the Naulaklia Bazar who had come out of their houses in contravention of the curfew. A mob of Ahrar volunteers which had collected on the Circular Road near the Ahrar office, began to advance towards the Kotwali and after being given the necessary warning, was fired upon, one of them having been killed and another wounded. Another crowd was dispersed by Chaudhri Muhammad Husain, Superintendent of Police, at the McLeod Road by rifle fire which resulted in some casualties. Firing was also resorted to on the Nisbet Road by Inspector Agha Sultan Ahmad who fired four rounds; twice in Gowalmandi by the Sub-Inspector; by the Inspector-General himself at a crowd which was heading towards the Kotwali, causing some casualties; and by Assistant Sub-Inspector of Police, Police Post Mochi Gate, on rioters who were brick batting the Police Post. The whole city was literally in a state of tumult and throughout the night weird and dreadful noises could be heard over long distances.

A little after midnight a meeting was held at the residence of the Chief Minister which was attended by the Home Secretary, the Inspector-General of Police, the Deputy Inspector-General of Police, the District Magistrate, the Senior Superintendent of Police and the General Officer Commanding and some other military officers and continued till 3 a.m. The Inspector-General of Police apprised the General Officer Commanding of the events that had happened and were expected to happen so that it might be decided how the military could be effectively employed.

5th March — The events that occurred after the murder of Sayyad Firdaus Shah, Deputy Superintendent of Police, and the awful eerie noises that were heard on the night of 4th proved to be ominous portents for the dawning day. Though everyone was guessing what would happen, the events when they came were beyond all prediction. That the order under Section 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure prohibiting assemblies in public was not made applicable to the walled city and none of the responsible officers could go to Wazir Khan Mosque where the Deputy Superintendent of Police had been murdered, was a tacit admission of the fact that the city had become out of bounds for the authorities responsible for the maintenance of order.

At 9 o'clock on the morning of 5th March the District Magistrate called a meeting of notables of the city with a view to persuading them to issue an appeal to the public to remain peaceful and to use their personal influence with the masses, but none agreed to be a party to any such course of action, and only a few women offered to go to the Wazir Khan Mosque. As the day advanced, incident after incident began to happen, involving attacks on the police and the Ahmadis and the looting and burning of property belonging to Government or to the Ahmadis. The order issued under Section 144 prohibiting the gathering of five or more persons in public places was defied throughout the town and mobs collected everywhere, threatening and abusing persons in vehicles and in some cases pulling them out. Manzur Ahmad, an Ahmadi teacher of Baghbanpura, was stabbed to death and this was followed by some more murders and general loot and arson. Some Government omnibuses were completely burnt and two post offices were first looted and then burnt. One police vehicle was set on fire and six others damaged. Several private concerns were also looted. A police party which was taking some dead bodies for post-mortem examination to the Mayo Hospital, was met by a mob which attempted to seize the bodies in order to parade them before the public, and two constables received injuries in the fracas. Police were brick batted in several and fired upon in two places, one head-constable having been wounded with a bullet. A military patrol was also brick batted outside Lohari Gate and it had to open fire. The police had to fire in several places during the day. Clerks of several offices including the Secretariat stopped work and came out. The Islamia College students also left their classes and marched to the Dyal Singh College where they persuaded the students of that College to come out and join them. They threw brickbats, breaking windows and panes and damaging the principal's car. From the Dyal Singh College they went to the University Hall and from there to the Government College. No attempt was made to



disperse them by force because the police appeared to be anxious to avoid a dash with students.

Cyclostyled posters appeared on the walls calling upon policemen to lay down their arms because the struggle against the Government was a jihad in which no Muslim could fire upon another Muslim.

Curfew was imposed by the District Magistrate prohibiting people from appearing on any road, street, lane, by-lane, thoroughfare or any other public place between 3-30 p.m. and 6 a.m. on 5th-6th March and between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m. from 6th to 11th March, 1953. This order applied to the whole town with the exception of a portion of the Civil Lines. The assembling of five or more persons in any public place and the carrying of arms at any time of the day or night within the aforesaid area were also prohibited in the aforesaid area for a period of two months.

In the morning the Governor called a meeting of the Cabinet to which the Chief Secretary, the Home Secretary, the General Officer Commanding the 10th Division and some Staff Officers, the Inspector-General of Police, the Deputy Inspector-General of Police, the District Magistrate and the Senior Superintendent of Police were also summoned. To the Ministers and officers present at the meeting the Governor suggested use of force in strong measure as his experience in Bombay showed that if in the early stages of a disturbance a large number of rioters was killed, the trouble was nipped in the bud. After prolonged discussion the following decisions were reached at the meeting:-

- (1) "In view of the deterioration of the situation in Lahore and a general flare-up in the city, in the first instance the police should take very strong action using any amount of force that may be necessary to quell disturbances. Police patrols will be supported by military contingents under their own Commanders."
- (2) "If the police cannot cope with any particular sector, the senior police officer present should hand over charge of the situation in that sector to the army Commander accompanying him."
- (3) "if the above measures fail to restore law and order and the police cannot keep the general situation under control with this partial aid by the military, the military will be asked to take over charge of the city."
- (4) "All steps should be taken to keep the morale of the Police Force high. They should be told that suitable awards will be given for gallantry and distinguished and conscientious discharge of duty. They should also be informed that in case of casualty while on duty, adequate compensation

will be given to the next- of-kin. In the case of the late Sayyad Firdaus Shah, Government will award two squares of land in a colony district to his heirs."

- (5) "Efforts should be made, as far as possible, to isolate the students from the rioters."
- (6) "The public-spirited citizens representing all political parties will be addressed by His Excellency the Governor today and exhorted to use their influence to restore sanity in the city."

The Chief Secretary was asked to draft a statement for issue over the signatures of the prominent citizens summoned to the afternoon meeting, but as he was called to the Secretariat where clerks had gone on strike, the statement was drafted by the Home Secretary. The draft prepared by the Home Secretary was considered by the Governor to be too condemnatory of the demands to have any chance of acceptance by the representatives of the public. On return from the Secretariat the Chief Secretary also attempted a draft but then the idea was given up.

At the afternoon meeting the Inspector-General of Police as desired by the Governor and the Chief Minister gave a detailed account of the situation. He was followed by two more speakers, namely, Maulana Abul Ala Maudoodi and Mr. Ahmad Saeed Kirmani, M.L.A. The Maulana described the situation as a civil war between the public and the Government and asserted that unless the Government expressed its willingness to consider the demands of the people, he would not subscribe to any appeal. Mr. Kirmani said that the movement was being led largely by hooligans and other irresponsible persons and that the intelligentsia were not with it. After Mr. Kirmani had finished his speech, the Chief Secretary, the Home Secretary, and the Inspector- General of Police were requested to go out. The meeting, however, continued and Maulana Abul Ala Maudoodi busied himself in the preparation of a draft appeal, but the production was not approved by the Governor and the Chief Minister.

Another meeting was held at the Government House in the evening which was attended by the Ministers, the General Officer Commanding and Brigadiers Haq Nawaz and F. R. Kallu, the Chief Secretary, the Home Secretary, the Inspector-General of Police, the Deputy Inspector-General of Police and Malik Habib Ullah, Superintendent of Police, C.I.D. The situation was reviewed at 2-30 p.m., namely, an attack on a police party and the burning of a police vehicle, firing should be avoided as much as possible. The Governor desired that cases of ordinary violations of the curfew should not be taken notice of and one of the officers or the Governor himself also proposed a 'let-up' in the firing. The decision to relax firing created considerable confusion among the police officers who were engaged in controlling the situation. According to the orders of the morning, the police was to take strong measures, and police patrols under the

command of Mr. S. N. Alam and Malik Habib Ullah had been sent out with these instructions. When the orders of the evening were conveyed to the Kotwali control and were in turn communicated to the officers engaged in active operations, they were completely bewildered and could not decide what to do. The scattered Police Force was left in utter confusion and firing was resorted to during the night only on one occasion, i.e. at a crowd of Railway employees who had struck work and were engaged in damaging a signal and a train.

There are two events of 5th March, which have been the subject matter of some dispute and argument before us. The first of these relates to the firing in Gowalmandi at about mid-day, in which several persons including Abdul Aziz, Mudi, Nizam Din and Muhammad Habib are said to have been killed. The allegation by the Ahrar and the Majlis-i-Amal is that these men were killed by Malik Khan Bahadur Khan, Superintendent of Police, Punjab Constabulary, and A.S.I. Abdul Karim who was attached in those days to Police Station Gowalmandi. Abdul Aziz and Mudi are said to have been shot by Abdul Karim with rifle bullets and Nizam Din and Muhammad Habib with the same bullet fired by Malik Khan Bahadur Khan. The witnesses who have been called to prove this allegation are Hidayat Ullah No. 45, Husain Baklish No. 46, Ghulam Ahmad No. 48, Chiragh Din No. 49, Abdur Rauf No. 50, Master Abdul Majid No. 51, Hakim Muhammad Jamil No. 53, Mehr Din No. 54, Siraj Din No. 55, Muhammad Hanif No. 56, Ghulam Husain No. 57, Taj Din No. 58, Ala-ud-Din No. 59, Sardar Muhammad No. 60 and Maqbul Ahmad No. 61. The incident was the subject matter of separate inquiries by Mr. Ata Muhammad Khan Noon, D.I.G. Mr. Abdul Haye, Magistrate, and a military officer. Nothing was proved in these inquiries against either of the two officers who in the evidence before us have been accused of shooting innocent men in cold-blood. This firing seems to be traceable to an earlier incident which was reported in F.I.R. No. 70 of Police Station Gowalmandi. According to that report, information was received that several hundred men were setting fire to a house in Gowalmandi, which was occupied by A.S.I. Abdul Karim who on that very day had done some firing near the Mayo Hospital. On receiving this information A.S.I. Faiz Ahmad, A.S.I. Sultan Ahmad and Head-Constable Abdul Qadir with a party of police rushed to the spot. They attempted to disperse the mob but were fired at from the roof of a house and Head-Constable Abdul Qadir was hit. One of the constables was beaten with a stick.

The incident in dispute very probably occurred a little later after this, and it is quite possible that the police fired vindictively to avenge the injuries caused to Head-Constable Abdul Qadir and a foot-constable. A.S.I. Abdul Karim totally denies having been present at this firing. He says that on that day he fired only three rounds from his revolver, one near Ganda Engine, the other near Chowk Amir Ali, and the third near his own house but killed nobody. He, however, admits that on that day there was some other firing in Gowalmandi under the order of Malik Khan Bahadur Khan, Superintendent of Police, Punjab Constabulary, which had nothing to do with the

incident in dispute. We refrain from giving any finding about this incident because by our terms of reference we are required to report only on the adequacy or otherwise of the measures, and excessive firing is not within the scope of these terms unless such firing contributed to or accentuated the disturbances.

The other issue in dispute in regard to the events of 5th March is the meeting of the Cabinet alleged to have been held in the Government House at 6-30 p.m. which is said to have been presided over by the Governor and attended by Major-General Muhammad Azam Khan, G.O.C., Brigadiers Haq Nawaz and Kallu, the Chief Secretary, the Home Secretary, the Inspector-General of Police and Malik Habib Ullah, D.I.G., C.I.D. One of the decisions taken in this meeting is stated to have been that there should be relaxation in the firing. The Governor and the G.O.C. both deny that there was any such meeting but the Chief Minister, the Home Secretary, the Inspector-General of Police and Malik Habib Ullah are definite that such meeting did take place. The proceedings of the meeting were scribbled by Malik Habib Ullah on a piece of paper, Ex. D. E. 231 which he handed over sometime after the meeting to the Home Secretary who produced it in Court with his written statement. This document contains in itself inherent evidence of its being genuine inasmuch as its contents appear to have been written in a hurry and some of the sentences in it are obviously incomplete. It gives the time of the meeting as 6-30 p.m. and mentions the names of the persons present and the decisions taken which are five in number, one of which is: "H.E. said that in case of ordinary technical violations of curfew no action should be taken." Neither the words "relaxation in firing" nor the word "let-up" appears in the document. It is quite possible that neither Mr. Chundrigar nor Major-General Muhammad Azam Khan can now distinctly recall what transpired in the hustle-bustle which must have then prevailed. It may equally well be that what the officers have described as a formal meeting was no more than consultation and discussion in the course of which those present expressed certain views which were generally agreed to, and Malik Habib Ullah considered them as decisions taken in a formal meeting. The point is not of much importance because Mr. Chundrigar himself admits that the suggestion not to take action in cases of technical violations of the curfew was made in the course of discussions on that day. But what is of importance is that some alteration in the decisions of the morning was suggested and accepted and this alteration was taken by the police, though we cannot say how, as a direction not to use force to the extent they were doing to suppress disorder in accordance with the decisions of the morning. The fact that after this meeting there was no firing at all by the police anywhere except near the Ik Moria Bridge, shows almost conclusively that the police must have been directed to relax the firing.

6th March — 6th March was a Friday and since early morning processions from all sides began to pour into the Wazir Khan Mosque. Government offices suspended work, Loco and Carriage Shops closed down, and labor came out in full strength in sympathy with the movement. The Kotwali was besieged by angry crowds who were throwing

stones at the building and demanding that senior police officers who had resorted to firing should be handed over to them. As the latest orders were that firing was to be avoided as far as possible, tear-gas shells were fired from the roof of the Kotwali to keep off the mob, but as soon as the tear-gas blew over, the crowds closed in again. While the Inspector-General of Police was on his way to the kotwali, his car was stopped near the Railway Station by a mob which was stopping all persons in cars or *tongas* or on bicycles. Near Police Station Naulakha he saw an uncordoned tank with some troops and people walking all round it. Near the underbridge on the Circular Road, he was again stopped by another mob headed by a bearded man but managed to go on. Another mob he saw was chasing a horse-cart with lathis. The cart was overtaken and the horse unyoked. On coming near the Kotwali he heard the crowd shouting '*Shahi Police zindabad*', '*Pakistan Army zindabad*', '*Police Constabulary and Border Police murdabad*'. At the Kotwali he met the Senior Superintendent of Police, Mirza Naeem-ud-Din, and both talked things over and exchanged views. There is a serious discrepancy between Mr. Anwar Ali, the Inspector-General of Police, and Mirza Naeem-ud-Din, the Senior Superintendent of Police, as to what the latter said in the course of their conversation. Mr. Anwar Ali, evidence on the point is as follows:-

"He (Mirza Naeem-ud-Din) said that the people were somehow under the impression that Government was in the wrong and that it was not only unsympathetic but actively hostile. In this context the use of force was exasperating feelings further and increasing the chagrin. He said that so far the Government had not defined its attitude on the demands; nor was there any indication that the Government had any intention of deliberating over them. This according to Naeem-ud-Din was making the situation more difficult. He wanted to be put up before the Chief Minister and to suggest that mere repression was not likely to bring the situation under control. He wanted the Punjab Government to assure the public that it was not as unsympathetic and callous as was being made out and to add that it was doing all it could to expedite a decision on the demands. He felt that such an appeal would mitigate the bitterness and hostility against the Government which was distinctly mounting. (On reaching the Government House) I put the S.S.P. before the C.M. and he repeated what he had told me."

Mirza Naeem-ud-Din's version of the talk, however, is as follows:-

"I arrived at Kotwali at about 7 a.m. and was followed by the Inspector-General of Police after about half an hour. I discussed the situation with the Inspector-General and told him that the situation was desperate and the weak-kneed, policy of the Government was demoralizing even the Police Force which was the only part of the Government machinery standing by it. I, therefore, urged him to explain this to His Excellency and the Hon'ble Chief Minister. I told him that if Government did not revise its policy I would resign. The Inspector-General agreed with me and we both went to Government House."

On a comparison of the two statements it will be apparent that while according to Mr. Anwar Ali, Mirza Naeem-ud-Din was against the use of force and would have the Government define its attitude on the demands and to declare that it was not unsympathetic and callous to the feelings of the people and was doing all it could to expedite a decision on the issue, according to Mirza Naeem-ud-Din himself what he said was that Government was following a weak-kneed policy which was demoralizing the police and that if that policy were not changed he would prefer to resign. Further Mirza Naeem-ud-Din makes no reference to his being called before the Chief Minister at the Government House and to what he said to the Chief Minister. That Mirza Naeem-ud-Din did say some such thing as is mentioned by Mr. Anwar Ali seems to be true because though denied by Mirza Naeem-ud-Din it is confirmed by the evidence of Mr. Chundrigar and Mr. Daultana.

To continue the narrative, the Inspector-General and the Senior Superintendent of Police proceeded from the Kotwali to the Chief Minister's House where they learnt that he had left for the Government House. On the way they found all shops shut and small batches of men intent on mischief moving everywhere. From the Chief Minister's House they both went to the Government House. On reaching the Government House they found all the Ministers including the Chief Minister, present. There were also present three members of the Lahore Corporation, including some women, e.g., Begum Tasaddaq Husain and Begum G. A. Khan, and the Mayor and Nawab Muzaffar Ali Khan Qizilbash. Ata Ullah Jahanian was also there with some student workers.

The Chief Secretary and the Home Secretary had gone in the morning to the Secretariat where they found the officials of the Secretariat collected in the compound and loudly demanding cessation of firing and acceptance of the demands. Mr. Alam, Deputy Inspector-General of Police, had also arrived there. All three attempted to talk to the clerks but no one would listen to them, every attempt to argue with them being met with the demand that their view point, namely, that the firing should stop and the popular demands be accepted, be conveyed over the telephone to the Governor and the Chief Minister. It was only when the Chief Secretary gave an undertaking that he would do his best to represent their case to Government and the Home Secretary held out the threat that if they were not permitted to go out the military and the police would come and take action, that the Secretaries' car, which had been surrounded and held up, was permitted to move. When the Secretaries arrived at the Government House, they found it all in a state of turmoil. The following is a graphic description by the Home Secretary of what -was going on there: —

"A large number of people including the Councilors of Lahore were present there and the usual decorum that prevails in the Governor's House was lacking. H. E. the Governor, the Chief Minister and the Cabinet were assembled in H.E's office. I went in and briefly told them what had happened in the Secretariat. Then information started coming in regarding the various incidents that were taking place in the city. The electric

current of the Governor's House was cut off and information was received by someone on the telephone from Mr. S. S. Jafri, C.S.P., that some shops in Anarkali were ablaze. The Telegraph Office and the Telephone Exchange were reported to have struck. The Inspector-General of Police and the Senior Superintendent of Police who had come from the Kotwali said that the Kotwali was more or less besieged and that the situation was alarming. The Inspector-General of Police told me that the Senior Superintendent of Police was of the opinion that the city could not be held with the mere use of force and that there should be some public appeasement also and the Government should issue a statement. The Inspector-General of Police added that he had brought this to the notice of H.E. Chief Minister. The Deputy Inspector-General of Police, Lahore Range also reached the Governor's House a little later."

The situation was fast reaching a climax in the town. The Railway workers had entered the Engine Shed and taken possession of it, not allowing any engine to move out. The Railway track between Lahore and Moghalpura had been cut and a train coming from the Shahdara side stopped on the way. The automatic traffic signal near the Y.M.C.A. building was burnt by a mob which was about to loot the Commercial Buildings. Some more Government buses had been burnt. The Chief Engineer, Electricity, had been served by the workers with a formal notice that unless the Government House, the Ministers and officers residing in the G.O.R. Estate voluntarily cut off electricity the city would be blacked out. This information from the Chief Engineer was brought to the Government House by a man who demanded that an immediate reply should be given to the notice. Just then the electricity in the Government House was cut and the scrophone ceased to work.

On going into the room of the Governor's Secretary, the Home Secretary found the Governor, the Chief Minister and some Ministers attempting to telephone to Karachi. The Home Secretary talked to those present in the room and suggested that the situation could be brought under control only if the following action was taken:-

- (1) that Majlis-i-Ahrar, Pakistan, and Jama'at-i-Islami should be declared unlawful associations;
- (2) that the *ulema* and the *maulvis* who were amenable to reason and prepared to support Government in the restoration of law and order should be induced to come out and publicly condemn the lawlessness that had spread in the name of Khatm-i-Nubuwwat;
- (3) that the Central Cabinet should be requested to send one of the Ministers immediately to Lahore; and
- (4) that the city should be made over wholly to the army.

The Home Secretary advised that the Centre should be immediately contacted as the telephone might go out of action at any time. He successfully put through a telephone call to Karachi over the Military Trunk Line, but shortly afterwards it ended abruptly. The Home Secretary and the Inspector-General of Police who had also come into the room, then went out. Shortly afterwards the Chief Minister called in the Home Secretary and asked him to draft in Urdu a statement on the lines indicated to him in English. The Home Secretary replied that he was not well-versed in drafting statements in Urdu and suggested that the job be entrusted to Mr. Zulqarnain Khan, Superintendent of Police. Accordingly the substance of the Chief Minister's instructions was communicated by the Home Secretary to Mr. Zulqarnain Khan in the presence of the Governor and the Chief Minister. The Chief Minister required the draft to be put up immediately as he was talking on the telephone to Karachi. The statement which was originally drafted by Mr. Zulqarnain Khan was as follows:-

*"Wazir-i-Ala Punjab apni aur apni wazarat ki janib se yeh i'lan karte hain keh un ki hukumat 'Tahaffuz-i-khatm-i-nubuwwat ke lidran se fauri guft-o-shanid ke liye taiyar hai aur woh awatn se darkhast karte hain keh mulk men amn-o- aman qaim karne men woh un ka hath batain. Woh awam ko itm'nan dilate hain keh police aur fauj koi mutashaddidana karwa'i bilkhasus firing nahin karenge ta waqte-keh un ko kisi ke jan-o-mal ki hifazat ke liye aisa kama na pare. Suba'i hukumat markazi hukutnat se guft-o-shanid kar rehi hai aur Mian Mumtaz Muhammad Khan Daultana ba-haisiyat Sadr Suba Muslim League, Pakistan ke Sadr ke samne Punjab ke awam ki taraf se yeh mutalibat fauri tawajjah ke liye pesh kar rahe hain".*

When the Chief Minister looked at this statement, he said that it would prove completely ineffective and ordered the following words to be added:

The words "*apni ta'yid ke sath,*" after the words "*Punjab ke awam ki taraf se*" and the words "*kyunkeh yeh qaum ke muttafiqa mutalibat hain*" at the end.

The statement was being cyclostyled when the Chief Minister again desired that the following words should be further added to it:—

*"Suba'i hukumat ka ek Wazir taiyare ke zari'e in mutalibat aur hamari ta'yid ke sath aj hi Karachi bheja ja raha hai aur hamari purzor sifarash hai keh Chaudhri Zafrullah ko wazarat se musta'fi hone par fauran majbur kiya ja'e."*

The Governor and the Chief Minister were both anxious that the statement should be dropped into the mosques from the air before the *Juma* prayers. The Governor also asked the Home Secretary in the presence of the Chief Minister and the Cabinet to read the statement on the telephone to Khalifa Shuja-ud-Din, who had been named as the fourth dictator of the Majlis-i-Amal in a leaflet issued on that day or a day earlier. The Home Secretary complied with the order and read over the statement to Khalifa Shuja-



ud-Din and also had copies of the statement sent to Khalifa Sahib's house as desired by the Governor. The Governor seemed to be very anxious to satisfy the Khalifa Sahib because he made repeated inquiries whether his orders regarding the furnishing of copies of the statement to Khalifa Sahib had been complied with or not. The Governor also directed the Inspector-General of Police to broadcast the statement from loudspeaker vans in the city. Translations of the statement were immediately flashed to the districts under the orders of the Governor and the Chief Minister.

The day was reminiscent of, and was about to develop into a St. Bartholomew Day when Martial Law was declared at 1-30 p.m. We have already mentioned that an Ahmadi teacher had been killed on the preceding day. On the 6th March, Muhammad Shafi Burmawala, an Ahmadi, was murdered in Moghalpura, and Jamil Ahmad, an Ahmadi college student, was fatally stabbed inside Bhati Gate. Mirza Karim Beg, another Ahmadi or a supposed Ahmadi, was stabbed on the Flemming Road, and his body thrown on a burning pyre made from some furniture. Property of the Ahmadis that was looted or burnt that day included Pak Rays, Shafa Medico, Orsuko, Musa and Sons' shop, the Rajput Cycle Works, the godowns and timber yards of Malik Muhammad Tufail and Malik Barkat Ali, the house of Malik Abdur Rahman on Mason Road, Five Ahmadi houses on Mozang and Temple Roads, including that of Sheikh Nur Ahmad, Advocate. The house of Mr. Bashir Ahmad, a leading advocate and Amir-i-Jama'at of the Ahmadiya community in Lahore, was besieged in the afternoon and the mob was about to enter the house when Mr. Bashir Ahmad fired some rounds in self-defence. He was tried for this act by a special Military Court and acquitted. On the night of 6th/7th March the house of Abdul Hakim, proprietor, Pioneer Electric and Battery Station, McLeod Road, was raided and his old mother murdered.

### **Mr. Daultana's Lead Followed by Mofussil Leagues**

After the Chief Minister's statement of 6th March several Muslim League organizations in the Province passed resolutions in support of the demands. Thus, on 6th March the Muslim League, Mian Channu, passed a resolution that a law should be passed to the effect that no person shall use the word *nabi* in respect of himself and that if he did so, he would be guilty of an offence. On 7th March, 1953, the City Muslim League, Wazirabad passed two resolutions, one of which enjoined every councilor to offer financial help to the local Majlis-i-Amal and to lay down his life, if necessary, in support of the khatm-i-nubuwwat movement. The resolution further declared that the City Muslim League as a body shall not interfere with the programme or activities of Majlis-i-Amal. By the second resolution it was decided to inform the Prime Minister of Pakistan and the Chief Minister of the Punjab by telegram that the demands of the Majlis-i-Amal should be accepted within three days and that failing that members of the City Muslim League would resign en bloc and would request M.L.As from their constituencies to start a movement to canvass support for a no-confidence motion against Chaudhri Zafrullah Khan. By the same resolution the measures taken by Government forcibly to suppress the religious demands of the Musalmans were

strongly disapproved. On the same day the City Muslim League, Jalalpur Jattan, passed a resolution supporting the khatm-i-nubuwwat movement without any reservation and the statement made by the Chief Minister on 6th March, and in the light of that statement offered its support to any step taken by him. The resolution stated further that members of the League were waiting for instructions from the high command to take practical steps to achieve their object. The second resolution called upon the Government to accept the demands of the Majlis-i-Amal as early as possible. On 8th March, 1953 the Muslim League, Gakhar, passed three resolutions; the first to the effect that in order to maintain the dignity of the League it was necessary for its members to side with the people and to take part in the khatm-i-nubuwwat movement' the second expressing the gratitude of the League to Mir Muhammad Bashir, its President who had offered himself for arrest and had appealed to all councilors to do likewise; and the third appointing Hakim Ali contractor as President who would make necessary arrangements to provide volunteers for arrest after the arrest of Mir Muhammad Bashir. The City Muslim League, Kamoke, on 10th March, 1953, expressed itself in favor of the demand for the declaration of Ahmadis as a minority and for the removal of Chaudhri Zafrullah Khan.

#### **Mr. Daultana Withdraws 6th March Statement**

On 10th March, 1953, Mr. Daultana made the following announcement:—

"On the 6th of this month, I appealed on behalf of my Ministry and myself, to the people of the Province to help in the maintenance of law and order.

I assured them that my Government would be prepared to open immediate negotiations with the leaders of the Tahafuz-i-khatm-i-nubuwwat movement, and that my Ministers would place their demands before the Central Government with a recommendation that they should be accepted.

The appeal was made at a time when in Lahore lawless elements were indulging in loot, arson, and dislocation of essential services. The Tahaffuz-i-khatm-i-nubuwwat movement was being exploited by disruptive groups inimical to Pakistan in order to subvert authority, to create dissensions among Muslims and to promote disorder with a view to injuring the safety and stability of Pakistan.

The object of my appeal was to ensure that the people of this Province exert themselves in the maintenance of law and order so that the enemies of Pakistan are no longer able, under the cloak of a religious movement, to foment internecine dissensions and create lawlessness in order to damage the security of Pakistan. In actual fact, unfortunately, lawlessness has continued in spite of my appeal, and in Lahore Martial Law had to be introduced in order to bring the situation under control.

Under the present circumstances, there can be no question of any negotiations with, or of consideration of the demands of the leaders of the Tahaffuz-i-khatm-i-nubuwwat movement. It is the foremost duty of any Government to ensure that law is obeyed and the lives and property of its citizens are fully protected.

Both the Central and Provincial Governments are resolved to suppress lawlessness wherever it should occur and to maintain law and order in the Province. The Government must suppress the present threat to the safety and integrity of the country by every means at their disposal.

I appeal to the people of this Province to co-operate with the Government in restoring law and order wherever it should be threatened and in ensuring that the enemies of Pakistan are not able to exploit the khatm-i-nubuwwat question in order to injure the integrity or safety of the country."

The statement was endorsed by the Working Committee of the Punjab Muslim League which in its meeting held on 11th March, 1953, declared that the Committee wholeheartedly supported the appeal made to the patriotic people of the Punjab and further directed every worker of the Muslim League in the Punjab to follow faithfully the directions contained in that statement.

### **Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din's Reaction to Demands**

We have stated in earlier parts of the Report how the three demands in respect of the Ahmadis came to be formulated and presented to Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din under the threat of direct action. In view of the long and frequent discussions Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din had with the *ulema*, the correctness and justification of the demands on theological grounds must have been discussed. Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din is a devoutly religious man, and since he did not straight away reject the demands, he must have been impressed by their plausibility. At the same time, he must have realized that the demands were merely a thin end of the wedge and that if the principle that such religious matters were to be discussed and determined by the State were conceded, he might be confronted with some more awkward demands. He must also have thought of the possible repercussions of the acceptance of demands not only on the Islamic World but also on the international world. The essential assumption underlying the demands was that in an Islamic State there is a fundamental difference between the rights of the Muslims and non-Muslims and that in such State it is one of the ordinary duties of the State to decide whether a community or an individual is or is not Muslim. The demand relating to the removal of Chaudhri Zafrullah Khan and the other Ahmadis, who occupied public posts of importance in the State, presented a still more complicated problem. Chaudhri Zafrullah Khan was widely known and respected in the international world. His removal was bound to be widely publicized and to lead to international comment, and an explanation which would have satisfied the international conscience, would have been difficult to discover. Under the Constitution Act, neither Chaudhri Zafrullah

Khan nor any of the Ahmadis occupying a public position could be removed from his office on the ground of his religious belief and the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan had, as early as 6th October, 1950, adopted an interim report on fundamental rights of the citizen's of Pakistan, by which every duly qualified citizen was declared to be eligible to appointment in the service of the State, irrespective of religion, race, caste, sex, descent or place of birth and every citizens right to freedom of conscience and to profess, practice and propagate religion was guaranteed. The Draft International Covenant on Human Rights prepared by a Commission on Human Rights appointed by the General Assembly of the United Nations Organization, of which Pakistan is a member had provided by Article 13 that every person shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, including the freedom to change one's religion or belief and to manifest such religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance. The acceptance of the demands would, therefore, have created a flutter in international dovecots and the attention of the international world would have been drawn in one way or another to what was happening in Pakistan, because the acceptance of the demands would have amounted to a public commitment that Pakistan was basing its citizenship on grounds basically different from those observed by other nations and that non- Muslims were debarred from holding public offices in Pakistan merely for their religious beliefs. India never misses an opportunity to revile and ridicule Pakistan and she would not have let this opportunity go unveiled. She also has a communal problem and would certainly have charged Pakistan of going back on the agreement, which was concluded between the Government of India and the Government of Pakistan on 8th April, 1950 according to which members of the minorities were guaranteed by both States equal opportunity with members of the majority community to participate in the public life of their country, to hold political or other offices and to serve in their countries civil and armed forces, rights which that agreement recognized to be fundamental. While concluding that agreement, the Prime Minister of Pakistan had pointed to the Objectives Resolution adopted by the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan as guaranteeing to the minorities the right to hold public posts and offices in civil and armed forces, but now this very Objectives Resolution was being used by the *ulema* as an irrefutable argument in support of their claim that the distinction between the Muslim and non-Muslim subjects of an Islamic State was, according to the injunctions of the Qur'an and Sunna, fundamental and that neither according to the Qur'an nor according to the Sunna the Ahmadis, who were alleged to be non-Muslims, could be permitted to hold any important post. India was not interested in Ahmadi religion or the Ahmadis; nor with such religious squabbles of which she had steered dear. But she must have immediately realized the implications of the acceptance of the demands and rightly contended that if Ahmadis could not be permitted to hold public offices in the State, a fortiori the Hindu community in which India was interested, could not. These implications must obviously have been present to the mind of Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din and he must have felt a troublesome conflict between his own religious convictions and the implications resulting from the acceptance of the demands. He, therefore, protracted his negotiations with the *ulema*,

hoping against hope that they would abandon the demands or that some unexpected event would solve the issue or human ingenuity discover some solution of the problem. He hardly expected that the *ulema*, who had had long conversations with him and his colleagues on this theological topic, would revolt against his Government and start what was nothing short of a rebellion.

Eventually Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din rejected the demands and gave reasons for the rejection. Simultaneously he ordered the *ulema* to be arrested. The arrests led to demonstrations, processions, public meetings and disorders which we have described in full in Part III of the Report. Sayyad Firdaus Shall, D.S.P., was murdered on the evening of 4th March in or just outside the Wazir Khan Mosque where Maulana Abdus Sattar Khan Niazi had virtually made himself the sole director of the agitation. On 5th March incidents of loot, arson and murders began to be reported and the police had to do a lot of shooting. The military could do nothing, the arrangement with it being that it was there in aid of the civil power and was merely to accompany the police and not to do anything independently unless a particular situation was handed over to it. Despite repeated firing, the situation not only showed no signs of improvement but it went on deteriorating. In the meeting of citizens at the Government House on the afternoon of 5th March no leader, politician or citizen was willing to incur the risk of becoming unpopular or marked by signing an appeal to the good sense of the citizen. The Kotwali was beleaguered by riotous mobs and the decisions taken in a meeting of Ministers and officers on the evening of 5th March were taken by the police as a direction to stop all firing. The Kotwali therefore remained besieged by riotous mobs and the machinery of Government showed signs of a total collapse on the morning of 6th March when the Government publicly announced its surrender to anarchy. The Chief Minister's statement of that morning was intended to be a piece of mere Machiavellianism, but the trick had hardly been tried when the situation went completely out of control and the citizen realized the imminence of the danger to his life and property. The military could wait no longer and took over.

To sum up. The circumstances that led to the proclamation of Martial Law were:-

- (1) The complete breakdown of administrative machinery and total collapse of civil power, resulting in the Punjab Government's statement of 6th March that it accepted the demands.
- (2) The magnitude and intensity of the disorder, which led to this breakdown.
- (3) The magnitude and intensity of the disorder was directly attributable to the circumstance that Government had lost all respect and that a religious complexion had been given to the demands and widespread belief sedulously

inculcated in the masses that Ahmadis were detracting from the status of the Holy Prophet and impairing a basic doctrine in Islam.

(4) That nobody realized the implications of the demands, and if any one did so, he was not, out of fear of unpopularity or loss of political support, willing to explain these implications to the public.

(5) That the demands were presented in such a plausible form that in view of the emphasis that had come to be laid on anything that could even be remotely related to Islam or Islamic State, nobody dared oppose them, not even the Central Government which, for the several months during which the agitation had, with all its implications, been manifesting itself, did not make even a single public pronouncement on the subject.

### **Central and Provincial Governments**

Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din

v.

Mr. Daultana

The Central and Provincial Governments headed by Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din and Mr. Daultana respectively have both been brought in by parties for a share in the responsibility. Against Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din it is alleged that he took no cognizance of the demands and no action thereon though they had been formally placed before him as early as August 1952 and that even after the ultimatum was delivered to him on 22nd January he did not feel concerned till he came to know on 26th February, 1952 of the decision to picket his house on the following morning. Indeed Mr. Daultana contends that Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din's silence and indecision, his wavering attitude and his long and frequent parleys with the *ulema* were the main cause of the disturbances. The parties are, however, not agreed as to what Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din's attitude should have been. While the Ahmadis allege that there would have been no disturbances if the Central Government had immediately and publicly rejected the demands and given a clear and mandatory directive to the Province firmly to deal with, and use all legal machinery against those who were agitating for the demands, the non-Ahmadis parties unanimously contend that there would have been no unrest or disorder if agreement with the demands had been announced earlier and necessary steps taken or promised in recognition of the demands; Mr. Daultana does not suggest what action should have been taken by Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din on the demands. His complaint is limited to Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din's not having decided upon and announced a policy, whatever that policy might have been.

Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din was confronted with a peculiarly difficult and personal problem. There is every indication that he was impressed by the religious aspect of the demand which required the declaration of Ahmadis as non-Muslims, and it is perfectly

clear that he did not wish to offend the *ulema* by a categorical rejection of the demands. Straight and sincere as he is in his religious convictions, he held the *ulema* in deep veneration. He was also conscious of the great influence the *ulema* had come to exert on the affairs of the country. Their high position was implicit in the Objectives Resolution, and some of them who had associated themselves with the movement were members of the Ta'limat-i-Islami Board, attached to the Constituent Assembly. A head-on-clash with them was, therefore, unthinkable. Of course he could have accepted or promised his personal support to the demands. In that case there would have been no fuss, except possibly when the matter came up before the Constituent Assembly. Disturbances in that event there would have been none, and Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din would have been a popular hero in Pakistan. The Ahmadis were a small community and could not have possibly offered any resistance or created any disorder. There might have been some stir in international circles over Chaudhri Zafrullah Khan's removal but the populace of Pakistan would have acclaimed the step.

Why did not, then, Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din take this obvious step? Not merely because, as he says, that such declaration would not have been effective in other Muslim countries but because of the far-reaching consequences of that step, which have been mentioned elsewhere in this report. If the demands had been accepted, Pakistan would have been ostracized from International Society.

Between the alternatives of a head-on clash with the *ulema* and the excommunication of Pakistan, the only course left for Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din was an appeal for mercy to the *ulema* — appeal in the name of the country, in the name of the people who were faced with imminent starvation. But what are profane considerations such as country, people and hunger against the wish and command of Allah, and it is with that wish and command that the *ulema* had come to Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din. They were, therefore, adamant, inexorable. Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din reminded them that Chaudhri Zafrullah Khan had been appointed to his office by the Quaid-i-Azam himself, and would they not respect the judgment of the deceased founder of the State? But though everything else in the world may change, the *ulema's* views, once formed, do not, and the argument failed to convince them. According to the evidence, Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din also attempted to create a split among them and offered a Ministry to one of the parties. Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din is an honorable man, too honorable to resort to such tricks, but he was also a politician and in politics the man not infrequently is lost in the politician. And among the *ulema* too there are men of honor, men who have the strength and courage of their convictions and cannot be lured by any worldly attraction. The attempt to divide and bribe, therefore, failed. Thereafter Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din began to temporize, and once even thought of calling religious divines of the entire Muslim world to help him out of the difficulty. But the *ulema* had already waited too long and would wait no longer. They decided on a direct action programme.

Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din had now no course left open to him except that of accepting the challenge or abdicating. He chose the first and arrested the *ulema*. During the general discussion on the budget several weeks later, while explaining in Parliament how proclamation of Martial Law had become inevitable in Lahore, he described the act of the *ulema* as undemocratic and anti-Islamic. He attempted to make out that most of the *ulema* were against the direct action and that the Ahrar group of *ulema* alone had started that action. He does not seem to have been right in this because the direct action resolution had been unanimously passed as early as 18th January in the All Pakistan All Muslim Parties Convention in which the *ulema* of all schools of thought were present, though the form of direct action was decided upon later, and the point is that if Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din was clear in his mind that direct action was undemocratic and un-Islamic and against the best interests of the country, why did he not publicly say so earlier when the ultimatum to resort to that action was given to him by a deputation of the *ulema* that waited on him on 22nd January. His long continued parleys with the *ulema* were advertised in almost all the papers and created among the people the impression that he appreciated the view point of the *ulema*. And even when he decided on the 27th of February to reject the demands and arrest the *ulema*, the reasons that he stated for the action taken by him were not made public. In fact the Punjab Government were expressly directed not to disclose that the views they were directed to publicize were the views of the Central Government. Now what is the inference to be drawn from the direction that the views of the Central Government were not sure of their ground or they did not wish to be associated with a step that might turn out to be unpopular.

This policy of indecision, hesitancy and vacillation which the Central Government pursued for several months had its repercussions on the situation in the Province. Of course law and order was a Provincial subject but in situations like these where the whole population is seized with religious frenzy, something more than a motion of legal and administrative mechanism is necessary, and this 'something' did not exist in the Punjab and was not thought of in Karachi. The result, therefore, was that the storm continued brewing and when it burst it burst with fury. The proper time to stop it or be involved in it was when the threat of direct action was communicated to Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din but he seems to have taken it as an empty threat or to have relied on his personal influence with the *ulema*.

Against Mr. Daultana the allegation in the written statements, oral evidence and arguments before us is that he engineered the agitation in a game of higher politics. Indeed Mr. Fazal Illahi at one time seemed to suggest that this game was being played by Mr. Daultana not only in domestic but in international politics, the object being to throw out Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din, set up a Central Government under Mr. Daultana's own leadership and to convert Pakistan into a communistic state. We have carefully examined the evidence having a bearing on this part of the case but do not think Mr. Daultana could have any object in starting or encouraging the agitation in its earlier stages. He had a comfortable position here and, bed of thorns as the premiership of



Pakistan is, we do not think that office could have held any attractions for him. Nor do we think that he was so ambitious as to have played a game of international politics over the issue of khatm-i-nubuwwat. These possibilities appear to us to be somewhat remote and relate to matters which are not capable of proof. From the very beginning he seems to have clearly realized that the storm was brewing and that it was bound to grow in volume and intensity. He was as anxious to avoid a head-on clash with the *ulema* as Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din himself was. But while the latter relied on human ingenuity to discover some means to dissolve the impending storm, Mr. Daultana was sensible enough to judge that in such matters human ingenuity is not a very reliable factor to count on and that such problems are not solved by a fortuitous combination of circumstances. He knew that the storm was coining but he could not, like Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din, feel that if he just buried his head in the sand, the storm would blow over. Having seen clear signs of the coining gale, the only course for him to keep out of it was, if possible, to divert its course.

Nor is there sufficient evidence before us to hold that Mr. Daultana deliberately started the movement or that before the All Muslim Parties Convention of 13th July, 1952 at Lahore he did anything to encourage it. Before he appeared in this Court Maulana Akhtar Ali Khan had made two statements, one at his trial by a Special Military Court and the other in the form of a petition to the present Chief Minister on 12th April, 1953. In both these he alleged that Mr. Daultana, with whom he had fairly intimate relations, more than once instructed him to push the movement against the Central Government and to keep the Punjab Government out of it. In his statement before the Military Court he had also referred to a talk which Master Taj-ud-Din Ansari had with him and in the course of which Ansari had stated that Mr. Daultana had expressed his agreement with the anti-Ahmadi propaganda. In that very statement Maulana Akhtar Ali Khan had further stated that both Master Taj-ud-Din Ansari and Maulana Abul Hasanat had informed him that the *hartal* of 16th February at Lahore was to be organized and made successful under instructions from "the people in power".

Maulana Daud Ghaznavi also had made similar allegations against Mr. Daultana in a statement before a military officer. He had said there that once Maulana Akhtar Ali Khan had told them that Mr. Daultana had promised funds for the movement and that on another occasion some leaders including Maulana Abul Hasanat and Master Taj-ud-Din Ansari had informed him that they intended to start the movement in Karachi and on being asked the reason thereof had alleged that the direct action movement could not be started in Lahore unless they consulted the Chief Minister. Maulana Daud Ghaznavi had further mentioned in that statement that the view expressed by Maulana Abul Hasanat and Master Taj-ud-Din Ansari was later confirmed by Maulana Akhtar Ali Khan during the meetings of the Majlis-i-Amal and that Maulana Akhtar Ali Khan in a subsequent meeting of the Majlis-i-Amal had admitted that Mr. Daultana had promised to him that nobody would be arrested in the Punjab for taking part in the anti-Ahmadi movement.

In the inquiry Maulana Akhtar Ali Khan was questioned by us about his talk with Mr. Daultana and he denied it. His previous statement before the military court is not therefore substantive evidence. The remaining portions of Maulana Akhtar Ali Khan's and Maulana Daud Ghaznavi's statements all refer to hearsay and are therefore completely inadmissible. The other evidence against Mr. Daultana is contained in the statement of Maulana Amin Ahsan Islahi and a letter written by Maulana Abul Ala Maudoodi. But neither the statement nor the letter is anything more than opinion which must be ruled out as irrelevant. We cannot, therefore, act upon anyone of these pieces of evidence. In the same way the evidence of Dr. Inayat Ullah Salimi that Maulana Ghulam Ghaus Sarhaddi had once given out that the movement had the support of Mr. Daultana is inadmissible hearsay while his further statement that the public inferred from the activities of the Muslim Leaguers in Sheikhpura that the movement had the support of the Government is merely irrelevant opinion.

Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din has deposed that Mr. Daultana wanted to control the Centre in the appointment of the representative of the Punjab in the Central Government. Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din gained this impression only after differences between him and Mr. Daultana had arisen in regard to the parity proposal which the Basic Principles Committee had recommended. The report of the Basic Principles Committee was published sometime in December and, therefore, it is obvious that before the publication of that report Mr. Daultana could not possibly have this object in view. After the publication of the report a Punjab versus Bengal issue arose in an acute form over the parity question, the Punjab view being represented by Mr. Daultana and the Bengal view by Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din. The issue almost assumed the form of a personal dispute between these two gentlemen. Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din states that Mr. Daultana had signed the report of the Basic Principles Committee which had proposed parity, while Mr. Daultana's case is that he never gave his unqualified assent to that proposal and that he signed the Basic Principles Committee's Report subject to a note of dissent written by him. Whatever may be the actual position, and the document is not before us to find which version is true, there is no doubt about the fact that after the publication of the report, Mr. Daultana took a strong stand in favor of the Punjab view and mobilized public opinion in its favor. Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din's own case is that when he visited the Punjab to gauge public opinion on this issue, the several deputations which waited on him were briefed and instructed by Mr. Daultana himself and that the arguments urged before him by each deputation were identical, having been written in exactly the same words. He alleges that all these written briefs were provided to the several deputations by Mr. Daultana himself. It is therefore, clear that there was a tussle over this issue between Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din and Mr. Daultana, and it is quite possible that Mr. Daultana might have thought that if he succeeded in displacing Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din, the Punjab's chances of getting out of the parity proposal might improve and that with this object he might have, with a more easy conscience, attempted to involve Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din in trouble in order to do away

with his opposition But, as we have already pointed out, the policy to divert the movement to Karachi had been adopted by Mr. Daultana long before the publication of the Basic Principles Committee's Report, and there is no evidence before us that after the publication of that report he gave any direction in the matter to the *ulema* or the organizers of the movement to intensify their activities. The *ulema* had already had several interviews with Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din before the publication of the report and their subsequent activities in Karachi, including the passing of the direct action resolution and the delivery of the ultimatum, were merely the outcome of a course of action which they had already decided upon.

The above conclusions do not contradict our finding recorded while dealing with the case against the Muslim League that after the All Muslim Parties Convention at Lahore, and more particularly after the Muslim League's resolution of 27th July, Mr. Daultana's policy consistently was to divert the course of the movement towards Karachi, so that the Punjab may be saved from its ravages. That finding is based on the terms of the League resolution itself, Mr. Daultana's own speeches including his statement of 6th March, 1953 the effect of which has been fully discussed above under "Muslim League," numerous articles in the press, Mir Nur Ahmad, Director of Public Relations activities, and other circumstantial evidence. In his evidence Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din has used a very apt simile while complaining that Mr. Daultana wished him "to hold the baby". If the demands be compared to a baby, the whole subject of responsibility can be put into a single sentence and that is that the Ahrar gave birth to a baby and offered it to the *ulema* for adoption who agreed to father it, and that anticipating that the baby would cause mischief if it grew up in the Province, Mr. Daultana cast it on a canal, dug with the assistance of Mir Nur Ahmad and watered by the press and Mr. Daultana himself, to flow down Moses — like to Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din who in the apparent good looks of the baby noticed a frown and something indefinably sinister and therefore refusing to take it in his lap threw it away, with the result that the baby kicked and raised up a row which enveloped the Province of its birth and threw both Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din and Mr. Daultana out of office. The baby is still alive and waiting for someone to pick it up. And in the God-gifted State of Pakistan there are careers for everybody — political brigands, adventurers, Non-Entities. The only two persons who have denied such careers for themselves before us are Khan Sardar Bahadur Khan, the Communications Minister, and Mr. Hamid Nizami, the editor of the '*Nawa-i-Waqt*'. They have repudiated the baby, with all its consequences.

As we understand the case, the Chief Minister lays down the policy and the Secretaries work out the details. But Mr. Daultana himself admits — and this should be borne in mind when examining the policy in action ~ that it would be his duty to interfere if a glaring case of inaction came to his notice.

Mr. Daultana's plea is that so far as the law and order position went, his policy was one of firmness, and that he had done nothing contrary to the advice of his officers. In other

words, if in the working out of details any infirmity is detected, the responsibility will be that of the officers. He further says that the law and order situation was made difficult by the appearance of a new phenomenon on the political horizon, a phenomenon which affected the entire country and which consequently could be adjudicated upon by the Centre alone.

Several efforts were made to obtain from the Centre a declaration of firm policy in respect of the three Demands, but Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din, anxious to avoid what he termed "a head-on-dash" with the *Ulema*, always remained undetermined, carried on negotiations with the *Ulema* right up to the end, and in the last resort counted on a reference to the *Ulema* of the entire Muslim World. There were indications that he favored acceptance of the Demands.

Although Muslim Leaguers in general regarded the issue as a religious one, and could not detach themselves from its emotional appeal, Mr. Daultana persuaded them in the Council meetings of the 26th and 27th July, 1952 to refrain from resolving that the Ahmadis should be declared a minority as a provincial organization was not competent to decide matters which fell within the jurisdiction of the Central Council and the Assembly. He made it clear to them, however, that whatever be the decision of the Centre, it was the duty of the province to preserve law and order and protect life and property. (C. & M. Gazette, 28th July, 1952).

Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din agreed that Mr. Daultana pressed the Centre for a decision, but that he did so in order that responsibility should shift to the Centre. He told even the Constituent Assembly in March 1953, that the agitation appeared to have been prompted by power politics. He denied that in the August conference at Karachi there was any decision that direct clash with *Ulema* was to be avoided: the general trend of the discussion was that the best way to meet the situation was to adopt the principles enunciated in the communiqué of 14th August, which, if given effect to properly, would remove the root cause of the trouble which was the grievance that religious propaganda was carried on under official patronage. This communiqué, he maintained, defined the attitude of the Centre to the Demands. As regards the *Ulema*, since his approach to the Demands had always been that they were impracticable, it should have given to the *Ulema* an impression that they were unacceptable. It is true that he never rejected them finally, but he advised the *Ulema* not to press them and told them that human ingenuity surely ought to be able to devise a solution without accepting or rejecting the Demands. He further told them it was no part of the duties of the Government to declare a section of the population as a minority. That was the function of the Constituent Assembly. He adds that he himself was not prepared to have the Ahmadis declared a minority, but that he was not prepared to tell the *Ulema* so, as that would have resulted in a "head-on-clash," with them which he wished to avoid. He did tell them, however, that it was not in the interest of the country to press the Demands and very difficult to accept them, that even in the Constitutional document it would not be easy to evolve a definition of

the term "Muslim" which would debar the Ahmadis and at the same time not debar any other section.

Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din agreed that he had not advised Mr. Daultana to restrain the *Ulema* from publicly expressing their religious belief, for this would have meant interference with freedom of expression. But he added that liberty of expression did not mean license, and when the speakers started going beyond the limits, if the Punjab Government had made judicious use of Sections 153-A and 295-A of the Penal Code, the situation would not have deteriorated to the extent that even if the *Ulema* had wished to back out of "Direct Action," they had not the courage of doing so for fear of public opinion.

Since Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din agrees that he wished to avoid a clash with the *Ulema*, the question whether at the conference of August 1952, any decision to avoid a clash was taken loses importance. Two of Mr. Daultana's own witnesses, Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar and Khan Sardar Bahadur Khan – the only witnesses who were questioned as to the conference of August – say nothing, however, in support of Mr. Daultana. The former said that when provincial representatives were questioned as to their views, Khan Abdul Qayyum showed reluctance over the use of force, as it would react on his province, while Mr. Daultana was of the opinion that if the Centre took a definite decision that the movement should be put down, then with some effort the Punjab Government would be able successfully to tackle the situation. Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar could not say whether the Prime Minister expressed any view or that any formal decision was taken, but that the consensus of opinion was that the movement should not be put down by force. That was Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din's attitude also, generally: he did not seem to be in favor of the Demands, but at the same time he did not wish to use force to suppress public opinion.

This evidence does not negative Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din's assertion that the conference regarded the communiqué of the 14th August to be the best solution of the matter. Sardar Abdur Rab, who, under the Prime Minister's direction, prepared the draft of the communiqué, states that although it was not prepared at this conference, it possibly resulted from the deliberations of the conference. There must be some meaning in Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din's unhesitant denial that the conference decided to avoid a head-on-dash with the *Ulema*. If this was not what the conference decided, then Mr. Daultana's plea that after the 8th of August, 1952, it was not left open to him to take action, loses force. And if the Conference resulted in the communiqué of 14th August, the communiqué acquires fresh importance. It was an effort at "canalization" – an expression which will become familiar at a later stage -- and should have given an insight into Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din's mind. Maulana Akhtar Ali Khan, editor of the *Zamindar*, who had led a deputation to Karachi, made a triumphant announcement on or about the second of August, 1952, that the Central Government would accept some of the Demands on the 14th August, and received a baffling answer in the contents of

the communiqué. Kh. Nazim-ud-Din denies that any promise was made by him beyond the statement that he would deal with the subject in his Pakistan Day speech. Here, again, Mr. Daultana has made a statement which his counsel has not tried to put to other witnesses; that the Central Ministers told Kh. Nazim-ud-Din that he should not have given an undertaking to M. Akhtar Ali Khan but that if he had done so he should make up his mind to fulfill it. "It was decided, however that a clear pronouncement of policy was not possible or politic and that we should avoid the issue by some sort of a sop to the people and that sop was the issue of the communiqué." Mr. Daultana does not explain how the Ministers climbed down from their lofty insistence that Kh. Nazim-ud-Din should fulfill his promise, to an evasive communiqué making no reference to the Demands. We would, therefore, take the communiqué at its face value and hold that if, notwithstanding the expectations raised by the *Zamindar*, Kh. Nazim-ud-Din addressed himself, not to the Demands, but to what he regarded as the root cause, he could not have possessed any overflowing enthusiasm for the Demands, and if the *Ulema* had any hopes of him, then, we all hope for Heaven.

Kh. Nazim-ud-Din does not deny that Mr. Daultana pressed for a decision from time to time. The second occasion arose at Murree on the 26th of August, 1952 and the third occasion, according to him, after the Dacca (now Dhaka) session of the Muslim League in October. Lastly, the matter was revived on the 16th or 17th February, 1953, when Kh. Nazim-ud-Din visited Lahore. It was then that Kh. Nazim-ud-Din told him he was not prepared to take up a head-on fight with the *Ulema*.

According to Kh. Nazim-ud-Din, the Quaid-i-Azam himself had an Islamic Constitution for his ideal: Pakistan, in fact, had been achieved on this assurance. He did not accept the suggestion that it was the Quaid-i-Azam's view to have in Pakistan a single nation consisting of Muslims and non-Muslims, with equal rights of citizenship, because, if that had been his view, he would not have advised the reorganization of the Muslim League. When he was reminded that in his address to the Constituent Assembly on the 11th August, 1947, the Quaid-i-Azam had hoped that "in course of time, Hindus would cease to be Hindus and Muslims would cease to be Muslims, not in the religious sense, because that is the personal faith of each individual, but in the political sense as citizens of the State", he frankly said this was not his view of religion or of an Islamic State. He also admitted that in the interim report of the Basic Principles Committee about the future constitutional set-up submitted during the life of Khan Liaquat Ali Khan, the picture presented was not that of a religious State. The present report, he added, had resulted from long discussions held with the *Ulema* in the company of three other Ministers. Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar being one of them. In short, the atmosphere in which the present report was born was one of austere religiosity. How was it possible for a Government so thoroughly steeped in religion to reject the demands?

Khawaja Nazim-ud-Din himself does not claim that he clearly told the *Ulema* at any time that he was not prepared to declare the Ahmadis a minority. This was because he

wished to avoid a "head-on" clash. No one asked him what a "head-on" clash exactly means, but we suppose the idea conveyed by it is this. If you tell a man you are not going to accept his demand for something and that he can go to the more blazing of the two estates to which people are transferred hereafter, it fires him with infinitely more enthusiasm for what he regards as his mission than when you express sympathy with his point of view but regret that it is not possible for you to oblige him or that you have overwhelming difficulties. In such cases you are always willing to give further thought to the matter, but if that overflow of goodwill which should characterize the utterances of a true public man leads any person to any sort of paradise, it cannot be the paradise of a wise man.

At another stage of his statement, Mr. Daultana contended that the policy of the Centre was one of drift. That would not indicate any intention, but lack of the power of decision. But if the Centre is drifting in its own sphere, does it not stir provincial leadership to a stronger realization of its duty to save itself from the drift? We are not thinking of that exceptional type of leadership which rises to the surface in an hour of emergency. We are considering the common run of man, somewhat above the average, who can, by the exercise of commonsense and industry, help a lame donkey to its destination. Mr. Daultana replied that he could devise no better way of saving his own government from drift because it was clearly indicated in the Karachi conference of August, 1952 and subsequently that the demands and the speeches, so long as they kept within law, could not be prohibited. To the last minute he was not certain that the Prime Minister would not concede the Demands. The object of the negotiations with the *Ulema* appeared to be to persuade the leaders not to press the demands as an immediate objective. If this is the impression that Mr. Daultana received from the Prime Minister's conduct, it is unfortunate; but the party concerned, the *Ulema*, had a very different impression. It was not a mere impression in their case they heard it straight from the man concerned. Consequently, there could be but one object in negotiating to persuade the *Ulema* to yield, rather than to displease them by a blunt answer. Further, although it is true that the Prime Minister advocated liberty of expression, particularly of religious thought, his contention is that the speeches did not keep within the law; nevertheless they were not muzzled. It will be found in due course that this contention is not gratuitous.

The argument that the Prime Minister's injunction to avoid clash with the *Ulema* resulted in failure to take action in the provincial sphere assumes that the *Ulema* were a set of rowdy and abusive fanatics who preached violence and reveled in the sight of blood. Perhaps they will not deny being called fanatics, but not one of them was prepared to admit before us that he did not condemn violence.

Daultana's complaints against the Centre, it is difficult to appreciate the intensity of the fear which Kh. Nazim-ud-Din had of a head-on-dash with the *Ulema*. Any decision rejecting the demands would have led to the slaughter of a very large number of

Muslims, who would honestly lay down their lives, thinking that they were courting martyrdom. If any bloodshed has been caused, I maintain that before God I shall not be held responsible, but if I had taken the offensive and plunged the country into a religious war, I am sure I would have been condemned both here and hereafter. The situation would have been ten times worse if the fight had been on merits and not on the law-and-order question, and it is doubtful whether we would have ultimately succeeded".

If Kh. Nazim-ud-Din was convinced that the demands cannot be conceded, there should have been no hesitation in rejecting them. What he was reluctant to do was to "crush" the *Ulema*. How the rejection of the demands could result in crushing the *Ulema*, except in a metaphorical sense, is difficult to understand. Such, however, was his regard for the *Ulema* that on the 27th February, 1953, just before direct action came to the door of his house, he threatened resignation in the hope that "if the *Ulema* did not listen to reason and realize that they were endangering the safety of Pakistan, they should be shocked into this realization by my offer of resignation." We were started by the abundance of faith which this observation carried, and remarked that perhaps the *Ulema* would have welcomed his resignation as a feather in their caps (some of them wear caps now) and used it against future governments in similar situations. It seemed also to be his view that the *Ulema* represented the public. It has already been shown how a demand acquires the status of a public demand, and Kh. Nazim-ud-Din has himself stated that the reason why Maulana Maudoodi dissociated himself from "direct action" was that, according to him, the time was not ripe for it. In other words, the demands were not sufficiently public.

It was, therefore, a purely religious approach to the subject which made Kh. Nazim-ud-Din think that any bluntness with the *Ulema* would spell national disaster. And while he sincerely held this belief, he was alive to the fact that "whoever pressed the Centre for a decision did so in order that the responsibility should shift to the Centre. In that case, if the army or the police shot anybody, the provincial leaders would say it was at the bidding of the Centre. If in the sequel the Central Government were overthrown, the Provincial Government would say to the people: 'We had supported you throughout?' It is this natural but unfortunate fear of assuming responsibility for an unpleasant piece of work that has brought these bitter consequences. Kh. Nazim-ud-Din's case is that if the situation could be adequately handled on the law-and-order side, why was it necessary to insist that a decision should be taken on the demands? If it could be so handled, and if also it was made clear from time to time that the Centre was not willing to concede the demands, there could then be only one reason for insisting that a "firm" decision be given, and for telling people repeatedly that only the Centre could give a decision that the Centre should be embarrassed. We think this argument can best be appreciated if we treat the two Governments as an organic whole, which suffers as a whole if a part thereof is injured.



It now becomes necessary to examine the law- and-order side and the contribution made to it by the Centre.

As early as 1951 (7th September), the Ministry of Interior expressed its views to all Provincial Governments with reference to the Ahmadi-Ahrar controversy in no uncertain terms. "The Central Government consider that while the legitimate rights of any community or sect to propagate its religious beliefs should not be unduly restricted, and no discrimination should be made between the protagonists of differing views, religious controversies should be confined to reasonable limits and should not be allowed to reach a point where the public peace and tranquility may be endangered. Militant and aggressive sectarianism should, in the opinion of the Central Government, be suppressed with a heavy hand."

These views were repeated on the 2nd of July, 1952 in view of "the very noticeable increase in religious and sectarian controversies," leading in some places to a disturbance of the peace.

The letter ended as follows: "The Government of Pakistan have noted with satisfaction the action taken recently by the Punjab Government in dealing with sectarian agitation". The reference here is to the ban imposed on Ahmadi and Ahrar meetings in June 1952 and the prosecution of certain persons for inflammatory utterances.

## APPENDIX-2

### US SECRET DOCUMENTS REGARDING ISKANDER MIRZA'S MEETINGS WITH US LEADERS

(1)

#### National Intelligence Estimate<sup>1</sup>

NIE 52-55

Washington, March 15, 1955.

#### PROBABLE DEVELOPMENTS IN PAKISTAN<sup>2</sup>

##### The Problem

To estimate probable developments in Pakistan over the next several years with emphasis on its economic prospects and likely political stability.

##### Conclusions

1. After more than two years of recurrent crises, political power in Pakistan has been openly assumed by a small group of British trained administrators and military leaders centering around Governor-General Ghulam Mohammed and his two principal associates, Generals Iskander Mirza and Ayub Khan. The regime favors a strong central government, economic development through austerity measures and foreign aid, and close alignment with the US. (Paras 9-14, 21)

2. We believe that the present regime will remain in power at least through 1955 and probably considerably longer. Its firm control of the armed forces will almost certainly enable it to discourage or if need be defeat any attempt to challenge it, and it is unlikely to allow itself to be ousted by political maneuvering or legal challenges to its authority. Although East Pakistani provincialism will continue to pose serious problems, we do not believe that separatism will become a major threat. (Paras 15, 22, 28)

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, INR/NIE Files. Secret. National Intelligence Estimates were high-level interdepartmental reports appraising foreign policy problems. NIES were drafted by officers from those agencies represented on the Intelligence Advisory Committee (IAC), discussed and revised by interdepartmental working groups coordinated by the Office of National Estimates of the CIA, approved by the IAC, and circulated under the aegis of the President appropriate officers of cabinet level, and the members of the NSC. The Department of State provided all political and some economic sections of NIEs.

<sup>2</sup> According to a note on the cover sheet, the following intelligence organizations participated in the preparation of this estimate: the CIA and the intelligence organizations of the Departments of State, Army, Navy, Air Force, and the Joint Staff. All members of the JAC concurred with this estimate on March 15 with the exception of the representatives of the Atomic Energy Commission and Federal Bureau of Investigation, who abstained on the grounds that the subject was outside their jurisdiction.

3. At least for several years, however, the regime will probably be handicapped by a lack of organized political and popular support and even more by the thinness of its top leadership. Moreover, within the ruling group there are differences of view which could become serious. The death of the ailing Ghulam Mohammed which might come at any time – would probably not lead to the fall of the regime, but it would severely test the ability of Mirza and Ayub to keep their associates in line and their opponents under control, and might compel them to rely more openly on the armed forces. Should Mirza and Ayub in turn be removed from the scene, a many-sided struggle would probably follow. This might give rise to another, basically similar, authoritarian regime or it might result in serious internal disorganization and perhaps a weakening of Pakistan's present alignment with the US. (Paras 16, 23-26, 47)

4. The Communist Party of Pakistan, with an estimated strength of only 1,500-3,000, poses little threat to the government. (Para 20)

5. Presently programmed US economic assistance will alleviate Pakistan's immediate economic difficulties. In time, given substantial foreign aid and a settlement of the canal dispute with India, Pakistan has fairly good prospects of increasing agricultural production and possibly of achieving self-sufficiency in the important field of textiles. At best however, Pakistan is unlikely to do much more than keep its head above water and will probably be a recurrent petitioner for economic assistance for a number of years. Cessation of US aid during this period would necessitate substantial readjustments in economic policy, probably including reductions in development and defense expenditures. (Paras 36-39)

6. Under the present or any similar regime, Pakistan will almost certainly continue to cultivate close ties with the US, if only because of Pakistan's urgent need for US economic assistance and its desire for US military and diplomatic support to strengthen its position against India. Pakistan's present regime will probably cooperate with US efforts in the further development of anti-Communist defense arrangements in both the Middle East and Southeast Asia. It is not likely, however, to commit any more than token forces outside Pakistan territory unless its armed forces are considerably strengthened, its economy improved, and its fear of India greatly reduced. In the event of a general war, Pakistan would recognize that its interest and obligations lay with the West, but unless directly threatened, it would probably seek specific Western protection before overtly departing from no belligerence. (Paras 40-41, 43, 53)

7. Although a settlement of the Kashmir dispute remains highly improbable, Pakistan's relations with India are unlikely to worsen critically under the present regime. In fact, prospects are reasonably good for an eventual settlement of the canal waters dispute and various lesser controversies. Even if present tensions abate,

however, Pakistani-Indian relations will be marred for many years by underlying animosities. (Paras 44-45)

8. Pakistan has strained in its economic resources to build up its military capabilities, primarily for defense against India. However, these capabilities are seriously limited by logistical shortcomings and by deficiencies in equipment and technological skills which would require a long-sustained and costly effort to overcome. We believe that the present leadership would be favorably inclined toward US peacetime development of air bases for US use, but actual agreement to such development, and the extent of the rights which Pakistan would give the US for use of bases, in peace or war, might depend on the regime's current assessment of Indian, Soviet and domestic political reactions, and the extent of US aid and guarantees Pakistan might expect to receive. (Paras 48, 50-55)

[Here follows discussion of these points in numbered paragraphs 9 through 56.]

(2)

**'Memorandum of a Conversation, Karachi, March 30, 1955<sup>3</sup>**

**Participants**

Prime Minister Mohammad Ali  
Foreign Secretary J.A. Rahim  
Ambassador Hildreth

**Subject: Military Aid**

In conference with the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary yesterday, Wednesday, March 30, among several subjects covered, the Prime Minister raised the question of military aid, saying apparently his people and mine were at loggerheads over the number of men the United States would support and the size of divisions. I replied, "yes" that was so, and quickly reviewed with complete frankness the talks General Sexton, General Brown and I had with Ayub and his staff in Rawalpindi recently, and also the conversation I had had with Mirza and Ayub, covered in dispatch No. 608<sup>4</sup> being pouched in the same pouch as this dispatch.

In summary, I told them that there was disagreement and I expected there would be more of them, but I had told Ayub and I was telling them that I thought it was time we stopped chasing our tails and somebody made some firm decisions as to a limit on both manpower and dollars and how much of the dollars would be diverted from economic aid through using counterpart funds to achieve the military goal. Admittedly, Ayub would probably be disappointed but in order to stop Ayub and the Finance Minister scrapping and in order to stop ourselves scrapping I was advising our Defense Department to set a definite limitation in answer to these questions. I told the Prime Minister that all that had been promised him while he was in the States would be forthcoming, but it might not achieve what Ayub wanted, and, as the money was not available to achieve what Ayub wanted, I thought it was in the interests of both our

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<sup>3</sup> Source: Department of State, Central Files, 790D.5—MSP/3-3155, Secret Drafted by Hildreth. Transmitted to the Department as dispatch 612, March 31.

<sup>4</sup> In dispatch 608, March 31, Ambassador Hildreth reported that Mirza and Ayub had informed him that they did not want any support for military aid to come out of economic funds or counterpart funds because that only made the rest of Pakistan angry at the proportion of funds the military was receiving. The Ambassador countered that there was no money to accomplish what had already been agreed upon as desirable objectives unless the United States used counterpart funds. Hildreth told Ayub that the Department believed he was "trying to squeeze too hard" and that if he did not settle on a program at the present time, he would be risking the cooperation that he had received up-to-date. (Ibid., 790D.5-MSP/3-3155)

countries to get on with what could be accomplished instead of constantly holding up getting the program started in the hopes that it could be expanded.

The Prime Minister, harassed with many other problems, seemed almost to find relief in my decisiveness and indicated that he was no more interested than I was in arguing with his military people about the size of the division. He seemed resigned to the fact that if our military people could not agree on the size of the divisions that Pakistan would still get what was promised in the way of dollars, but would not come up with as many divisions as Ayub wanted if the size of the divisions were going to be as large as Ayub wanted.

I then went on and commented that some of our people could not make sense out of the Pakistan military requests for some things from the U.S., such as uniforms, which our people, particularly General Sexton and General Brown, thought they could make right here in Pakistan, thus saving the dollar exchange for things that they could not make here. Furthermore, this policy, in addition to saving dollar exchange, would give employment and better economic conditions in Pakistan. The Prime Minister seemed to whole heartedly concur in this line of reasoning and I went on and commented that we are not without some suspicions that there was an inclination in some Pakistan military circles to favor procurement of some stuff outside rather than making it here because there was more chance for a rake-off. I was careful to say we were not certain of this but, on the other hand, we were not free from suspicions. I, furthermore, told him that our military people both in Pakistan and in the U.S., from what I had seen in papers going over my desk, felt that the Master General of Ordnance was very poorly equipped to deal with his job.

All the above was reported to General Sexton and General Brown a few minutes ago and they expressed great pleasure and satisfaction that I had spoken as frankly as I had and on the subjects I covered with the Prime Minister and emphatically stated their belief that if the Master General of Ordnance was gotten out of the picture it would save tremendous sum of money for both Pakistan and the United States.

Horace A. Hildreth

(3)

**Telegram From the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State<sup>5</sup>**

*Karachi, August 12, 1955-4 p.m.*

272. US interests in current political turmoil GOP suggests desirability appraisal current situation and appropriate measures and attitudes US Government should adopt pending stabilization of Cabinet structure.

Current situation: Mirza and Prime Minister Chaudhri Mohammad Ali<sup>6</sup> have publicly indicated wish to include Suhrawardy and Awami Leaguers in Cabinet, and have privately reaffirmed this is their wish and that offer to Suhrawardy is open for next ten days. (Assume offer is conditioned to some extent on receipt assurances from Suhrawardy of his cooperation.) Ambassador has told Mirza, and it will be made dear to Suhrawardy by others, that US has no objection inclusion Suhrawardy in high Cabinet post.

Embassy considers best long-run interests of Pakistan will be served by coalition three parties and inclusion Suhrawardy during present sessions of CA and pending prospective national elections; desirable have one-unit<sup>7</sup> legislated on non-partisan basis; sessions of CA that follow in constitution drafting should be guided by non-partisan Cabinets; Suhrawardy's talents and cooperation as legislator could be of utmost importance if effective steps are to be taken in combating probable amendment one-unit legislation and devising constitution; his presence in government would ease strain on Prime Minister whose health is well-known subject concern. At this critical period Pakistan development, and pending establishment of a constitution, probable new adjustments in party politics, common sense and patriotism all call for submergence of party politics and struggle for personal position. (This may be unrealistic, but it is nonetheless desirable and worth trying for.)

While fully understanding necessity avoid US involvement in internal politics through any public stand, fact is that US relationships so important to Pakistanis that complete non-involvement impossible. If Embassy officers ignore Suhrawardy, for example, for next two weeks this may well be interpreted here as official policy indicative

<sup>5</sup> Source: Department of State, Central Files, 790D. 13/8-1255. Secret. Repeated to London, New Delhi, Dacca, and Lahore.

<sup>6</sup> Chaudhri Mohammad Ali became Prime Minister on August 11, replacing Mohammad Ali.

<sup>7</sup> An Administrative plan to amalgamate the four provinces of West Pakistan into a single province, designed primarily to balance the political relationship between East and West Pakistan.

disapproval of his inclusion in Cabinet; if he is cultivated by Embassy even on purely social basis, interpretation of US approval may be placed on such actions. Conclusion, in light our appraisal is that (1) we should encourage Suhrawardy through third parties to take Cabinet post under new Prime Minister, protecting our public position at all times. (2) Embassy officers should make some effort to maintain pleasant personal social contacts with Suhrawardy.

If Department differs from above course please advise<sup>8</sup>

Hildreth

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<sup>8</sup> The Department did not reply to this telegram. On August 22, Jones sent a memorandum to Allen which evaluated the new Pakistani cabinet. "The combination of General Mirza and Chaudhri Mohammad Ali," he suggested, "represents a top leadership very friendly to the United States" (Department of State, NEA Files: Lot 58 D 545, Pakistan)



(4)

## Telegram From the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State<sup>9</sup>

*Karachi, September 15, 1955 – 3 p.m.*

499. Joint Embassy-ICA-MAAG message. MAAG has been advised by DOD that total MDA program Pakistan will be limited to \$171 million, of which Army share about \$75 million, Navy \$30 million, Air Force \$65 million. Message confirms feeling country team has had for some time now that either we do not adequately understand objectives of US policy. Pakistan or with Washington has radically different appreciation of factors here and actions required to achieve policy objectives. So long as this situation of doubt and confusion obtains it is obviously difficult for US Government function effectively. Purpose this message to state our understanding basic US objectives and our estimate of effect DOD decision will have on realization these objectives and to assist Ambassador Hildreth's talks Washington. Would appreciate being advised points at which our understanding or views at variance with Washington.

1. Objectives. (These derive principally from OCB outline plan of operations on NSC 5409.)<sup>10</sup>

a. Military. To realize JCS Force goal of five and one-half divisions and four fighter squadrons (OCB). This force to have mission of internal security and defense of homeland (Meyers report).<sup>11</sup>

b. Economic. To get firm, stable, economic, base in Pakistan, and in time make country self-supporting. Must be careful to balance military and economic aid (OCB).

c. Political. Want strong, stable, responsible and friendly government. Must therefore encourage and support present ruling group (OCB).

2. Effect of DOD decision on attainment of objectives.

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<sup>9</sup> Source: Department of State, Central Files, 790D.5-MSP/9-1555. Secret; Priority. Repeated to Cairo for Bell. Ambassador Hildreth left Pakistan on September 12 for a 1-month visit to the United States; Gardiner was Charge.

<sup>10</sup> See footnote 2, Document 195

<sup>11</sup> Brigadier General H. Meyers headed a U.S. military survey team which went to Pakistan in March 1954 and prepared a report on the proposed U.S. military aid program.

a. Military. Chief problems relate army. Detailed analysis MAAG shows \$75 million funding ceiling will enable raising two infantry divisions to effective combat efficiency. Two infantry divisions will remain at reduced strength, lacking artillery, transportation and some support and basic units. One armored division can be brought limited combat strength but will be short anti-aircraft protection, personnel vehicles for infantry and division transportation. Corps troops will be limited reconnaissance, signal, engineer and maintenance units far below level required support five and half divisions. All these units will be seriously short transportation total; total five and half division program with minimum corps supporting troops requires induction 40,000 officers and enlisted men; equipment provided under \$75 million program will justify induction only 18,000 officers and enlisted men. Upon completion program within indicated funding ceiling Pakistan Army should have capability preserving internal security, provided no disturbances country-wide dimensions occur. However, will be inadequate protection homeland and borders Pakistan against attack either from north and west or south and east.

b. Economic. Principal deficiency not covered by projected MDAP is army transport. If Pakistanis should leave this deficiency uncovered, effect would be shortly to immobilize entire Pakistan Army. We are convinced Pakistanis cannot and will not permit this. Aside considerations minimum defense requirements which no Pakistan leader can disregard, simple fact is that present regime in large measure rests on army support. Doubtful without this support Mirza would now be Governor General.<sup>12</sup> When faced with choice between requirements security and economic development, we believe they will have no option but to choose security. Result will be increase Pakistan defense budget and diversion scarce foreign exchange from economic to military use. Laborious plans and projects planning board, drawn on assumption that defense expenditures will not exceed present level will have to be discarded and attainment firm, stable economic base and conditions self-support will have to be deferred indefinite future or abandoned. Only alternative would be increase economic aid in degree sufficient compensate for Pakistan diversion of funds from economic to military sector. This seems hardly intended by OCB direction that economic and military aid should be carefully balanced.

c. Political. Not possible assess extent of political damage with any accuracy, but there are number probable results, all discouraging. Will place problem of major magnitude before new Cabinet now struggling hard to keep government going on constitutional basis and generate momentum economic development. Give uneasy coalition on which government based and known bias of Bengali

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<sup>12</sup> Mirza was appointed Acting Governor-General on August 6 replacing Ghulam Mohammad who had taken a 2-month leave of absence due to ill health.

element this problem will certainly not be disposed without friction. Strong likelihood that friction will be sufficient to kindle sparks, and in explosive political situation here, these very hazardous. Chances of present government continuing on legitimate basis and giving country adequate constitutional system, not over-bright on most favorable assumptions, will be considerably worsened. Any US plans based on prospect of significant Pakistan contribution to general political stability and to security arrangements Middle East Southeast Asia will require drastic revision.

Repeating this message Cairo for Bell's comments<sup>13</sup>

Gardiner

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<sup>13</sup> Not found in Department of State files.

(5)

## Telegram From the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State<sup>14</sup>

*Karachi, September 19, 1955 – 4 p.m.*

519. Recent political developments portend situation of increasingly uneasy equilibrium between Pakistan's leaders and potential leaders. Embassy believes Ghulam Mohammad can never hold office again; Mirza logical successor, his appointment imminent without fanfare and without crisis.<sup>15</sup>

Embassy doubts that Mirza will prove capable of filling Ghulam Mohammed's position as leader Punjabi group at least in immediate future. Expect basic differences temperament ideologies of individuals within group will be sharpened.

PM Ali and Mirza as two principal leaders ruling group have fundamentally different approaches to basic political problems confronting nation. Mirza thinks in simple political terms; PM in complex. Mirza believes Pakistan requires strong hand (even mailed fist) indefinitely, and with Ayub concurring has used at least tacitly threat of force obtain own position and reportedly used it again to coerce PM Ali into accepting Prime Ministership. PM recognizes need for strong government but believes in constitutional procedures and need for government to be founded ultimately upon consent. Though he acquiesced to recent pressure in accepting his position and swallowing second rate Cabinet colleagues, he has convictions of his own and determination effect them. Opposition elements as well as some Muslim Leaguers (Gurmani, et al.) cognizant inherent potential conflict Mirza and Ali; political maneuvering can be expected for some time to come as individuals attempt decide how align selves in furthering their ambitions.

Current government coalition tenuous will be severely strained coming weeks. Suhrawardy and Awami Leaguers are pledged defeat coalition; will endeavor discredit United Front in Bengal, will not be squeamish in tactics. Further, all United Frontiers are not pleased with their own situation.

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<sup>14</sup> Source: Department of State, Central Files, 790 D.00/9-1955. Secret; Priority Repeated to London, New Delhi, Lahore, and Dacca.

<sup>15</sup> Mirza was appointed permanent Governor-General on September 19; he was officially sworn-in on October 6.

Crisis conceivable if as seems likely various legislative projects, constitution and electoral procedures fail materialize short-term. Impatience with legislative procedures, inability compromise in coalition, opposition needling or ill-conceived rabbleroising (especially East Bengal) could occasion another threat by Mirza which, though meant only to cow might have to be implemented. Alternatively, if PM's leadership, with possible assistance from Suhrawardy, seems promise constitution which might threaten domination Punjabi clique, Mirza will be strongly tempted forestall this development.

PM statements have reflected anxiety present situation; his remarks calling for enlightened, vocal public opinion, his faith common man, his assurance Constituent Assembly will not be dissolved, his flat statement Pakistan firmly on democratic road "and no power here which will be able destroy democracy" should be assessed not as platitudes but as placing himself on open record against Mirza's basic premises and endeavoring create moral situation wherein sole dictatorship or junta rule impossible.

If above assessment correct Embassy thinks US should give PM full backing and attempt moral suasion Mirza to hold his impatient authoritarian impulses in check. Believe initial opportunity provided occasion Mirza's imminent appointment as permanent GG. President's usual message felicitation might unobtrusively serve notice US interest early achievement Pakistan constitutional system which establishes responsible government, confirms supremacy law and safeguards individual rights. Latter two these principles are part Pakistan heritage from British rule and have in large measure been maintained to-date, though not without difficulty. Embassy believes that they plus principle accountability are maximum possible attain present circumstances and minimum required orderly development country on basis and in direction which will keep it useful ally US. Country not prepared western-type democracy and believe US policy should recognize this fact. Embassy therefore recommends that any US official statements should avoid invocation "democratic principles". Possible that use this term might in fact prove counterproductive by encouraging intransigence of doctrinaire left which might in turn prove further incitement Mirza and his authoritarian- minded friends.

Taking account these factors Embassy suggest President's message might characterize international and internal situation as Mirza takes over and state hopes for developments both fields as follows:

International: Pakistan has entered MSA with US, joined SEATO, common objectives sought. Progress already made, expectation further progress.

Internal : Pakistan making renewed effort develop constitution which will provide government under rule of law and give adequate expression its peoples' aspirations and ideals..

Americans understand from their own history difficult problems which beset new nation in process of developing new constitutional forms. They also know from own history that solid progress best assured by nation building on basis of rule of law. US heartened by fact Pakistan in brief history has demonstrated holds firmly this conviction. Mirza's predecessor showed devotion to goal and now new Constituent Assembly begins a fresh task giving enduring form this basic political principle. May Mirza see its successful achievement during his tenure.<sup>16</sup>

Gardiner

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<sup>16</sup> In telegram 728 to Karachi, September 30, the Department of State pointed out that the President did not make a practice of sending congratulatory messages to Heads of State upon assumption of power. It suggested instead that Gardiner send a note to Mirza over his own signature along the lines that he had originally suggested. (Department of State, Central Files, 790.00/9-1955)

(6)

## Telegram From the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State<sup>17</sup>

*Karachi, October 1, 1955 – 3 p.m.*

630. Joint Embassy-ICA-MAAG message. Reference Embtel 499<sup>18</sup> JCS paper 2099/512 makes clear to country team for first time that \$171 million ceiling on MDA program established in full knowledge that it will not permit realization approved force goals. This clarification welcome and eliminates our concern that Washington appreciation problem differed basically from ours here. Pakistanis have been informed of position and though Ayub's reaction as adverse as anticipated and defense officials show deep concern, indications are that Governor General and Prime Minister exercising restraining influence. Mirza informed Charge he considered air and navy allotments satisfactory and that while army allotment low and Ayub upset, he had explained to Ayub that with improvement world outlook United States could not undertake buildup forces beyond ability Pakistan ultimately support. Believe that influence Governor General and Prime Minister will be controlling that government will accept decision with good grace and there will be no immediate adverse results.

Team not so confident in long-run situation. Small size army program certain become generally known and when this happens opposition will be tempted attack government. Such purely political maneuvering probably not too serious domestically though it might have unfortunate effect on effort develop Middle East defense organization. Major domestic problem rooted in situation cited reference telegram. Army transport equipment almost completely obsolescent and major program of replacement cannot be avoided. Beginning has been repeatedly deferred and may be again but postponement inevitable day of reckoning is impairing effectiveness Pakistan Army and increasing urgency of problem.

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<sup>17</sup> Document 199.

<sup>18</sup> This paper, a report by the Joint Committee on Programs for Military Assistance, entitled "Military Aid Program for Pakistan" was approved by the Joint Chiefs of Staff on September 2. It stated that the estimate of \$171 million required to meet the force objectives established for Pakistan by the JCS was no longer valid. Instead, new estimates made by General Brown, and concurred in by the services, showed a requirement for \$301.1 million in military aid. The report concluded, however, that "a long-range MDA Program for Pakistan which will provide assistance in excess of \$171 million should not be developed at this time, but should be developed with other world wide MDA Programs as a part of the International Security Plan and in light of funds made available to support it." (National Archives, JCS Records, CCS. 092 Pakistan (8-22-46)

MAAG estimates that to maintain army at present level of efficiency essential replace on urgent basis about \$85 million transport equipment of which amount only about \$9 million in current MDA program. Considering age and condition present equipment MAAG convinced that absolute minimum program involves replacement about half vehicles in next two or three years after which replacement might proceed regular basis at rate 10 percent per year.

This situation of obvious concern US. Reference JCS paper and CA 2275,<sup>19</sup> US views on Middle East defense indicate dual interest in northern tier arrangement; (1) ultimately for buildup useful defensive strength, (2) initially for contribution political stability of area. Pakistanis have important potential both fields. However, to realize ultimate military contribution accelerated deterioration army transport must be checked. View urgency and importance this problem for own security Pakistanis will be forced somehow cover requirement themselves if we withhold assistance. However, we should recognize adverse effects such action on Pakistan progress toward viability and contribution objective area stability. They would be forced choose between starting replacement program now which would mean diversion funds from economic development or accepting risks further postponing which would increase urgency and magnitude problem when finally confronted. As pointed out reference telegram injection this issue government deliberations bound have disturbing effects.

We believe these considerations justify real efforts by US cover this basic military deficiency regardless ultimate decision on regional security program. If US willing cover about half urgent replacement requirements next two or three years believe Pakistanis might have reasonable hope of handling remainder themselves.

[Here follow specific recommendations concerning the utilization of funds.]

Gardiner

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<sup>19</sup> Dated September 17, not printed. (Department of State, Central Files, 780.5/9-1755)



(7)

## Telegram From the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State<sup>20</sup>

*Karachi, February 17, 1956 – 5 p.m.*

1592. For Under Secretary Hoover or Assistant Secretary Allen. On eve of my first appointment with Prime Minister in perhaps month, held first of this week, on my return from trip to East Pakistan with Governor General there was temptation to talk to Prime Minister along following lines:

"Embassy convinced there is deliberate effort at least encouraged by GOP to stage campaign prior visit of Secretary to squeeze US for additional aid and probably a substantial element of Pakistan officials and public opinion earnestly believe the best way to get most from US is to emulate example of Afghanistan, India and Egypt and try to play both sides. Embassy convinced emphasis and extent publicity such things as visit of Madame Sun Yat-sen,<sup>21</sup> Czech, Polish and Russian trade talks, reflections on Baghdad Pact, upcoming visits of both Prime Minister and Foreign Minister to Peking, to mention only a few, would not occur except with government approval. Embassy staff which has had faith in Pakistan and labored diligently in good faith to get maximum assistance possible for Pakistan has done so largely because of courage and honesty of GOP in pro-west stand and statements. Today only Mohammad Ali in Washington speaks along past lines and is clearly out of tune with government silence and newspaper and legislators comment in Pakistan. If GOP is only playing game to squeeze US we think it very risky as of course Embassy appraisals and press comments repeatedly flow from Embassy to Department and indirectly to Congress and US public. If change in course is not merely squeeze game but sincere, as we believe it to be on part of some influential Pakistan officials and non-officials then as friends of Pakistan we say how can you compete with India at its own game? The basis of strong support for Pakistan has been because it followed a different course from India and Egypt. If now you wish to follow the same course as GOI then Pakistan, considering its size and resources, necessarily must become the tail of the dog and our interest in Pakistan will tend to diminish and our interest in India increase."

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<sup>20</sup> Source : Department of State, Central Files, 611.90D/2-1756. Top Secret.

<sup>21</sup> Wife of the late Chinese President Sun Yat-sen and representative of the People's Republic of China. Madame Sun began an 8-day official visit to Pakistan on February 24.

In discussion top Embassy staff unanimously agreed unwise to talk to Prime Minister as above at upcoming meeting, particularly as he, Embassy is sure, is indirectly one of chief molders of public opinion. Consequently in talking with Prime Minister Monday evening February 13, I listened without arguing to innocuous statements of Prime Minister, mostly dealing with economic constitution and pleas for more help. Memo of conversation pouched today.<sup>22</sup>

Wednesday night February 15 in hour and half intimate, personal and frank talk with Governor General I expressed above quoted views. Summary only of points he made is:

1. He does not go along with policy of neutralism and has never forgiven present Prime Minister for being man who stopped the then Prime Minister Liaqat Ali Khan from sending a Pakistan division to Korea. His fight on this, which he lost and which nearly cost him his job was fundamentally due to the inherent neutralism of the present Prime Minister when he was advising Liaqat that he could not spare a division for Korea because of mistrust of India, whereas Mirza argued that the greatest assurance of support from west was a bold shouldering of its share of responsibility.
2. Not only is he not a neutralist but he believes best way to get most from west is not try bargain but whole heartedly do all possible and have faith that this attitude will be appreciated by good faith partners and bring tangible results. (Mirza has sung this song ever since I have known him.)
3. He was very irritated at Prime Minister and Foreign Office when he was on East Pakistan trip for the constant pressure they put on him to entertain Madame Sun Yat-sen. He said he personally wanted no part of Sun Yat-sen or those tactics (though he thinks US would be wise to admit Red China to UN before it happens anyway). Said the Foreign Office had phoned him in East Pakistan that Chinese in Peking had advised Pakistanis that if Governor General did not entertain Madame Sun Yat-sen they would consider it an insult. (With both Prime Minister and Foreign Minister<sup>23</sup> anxious go China it is easy understand pressure on Governor General to accord Sun Yat-sen hospitable treatment.)
4. He was glad I had not talked to Prime Minister the way I talked to him as he felt Dulles was man to talk to Prime Minister on his visit here.

Fundamentally Prime Minister is timid, weak and perhaps cowardly and he thinks I should advise Secretary in effect to say very bluntly to Prime Minister "what's going on here? We don't understand your apparent reversal of thinking. We have started help

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<sup>22</sup> Dispatch 599, dated February 17, not printed. (Department of State, Central Files, 611.90D/2-1756)

<sup>23</sup> Hamidul Huq Choudhury.

you in good faith and intend continue do so but we do not understand your flirtation with Communists."

Particularly thinks Prime Minister should be scolded for allowing an official of Foreign Office on his own initiative, though unattributed (presumably Foreign Minister), for publicly saying reception given Madame Sun Yat-sen was greater than that given Vice-President Nixon.<sup>24</sup> He said Foreign Minister so anxious visit China that without any approval of Prime Minister or Governor General he had asked for invitation to be extended to him and on his own initiative published announcement of it when it came. Governor General stated he would not say hardly any of the above to Secretary Dulles but only to me on a "Horace/Iskander" basis. His reason for this was he would not in dealing with representatives of foreign countries be disloyal to his Prime Minister. (In fairness to Governor General I repeat here what I am sure was reported in cables and I believe in Embassy report, namely that when in East Pakistan with Governor General just prior to heading into the wilds, he almost called off his trip but made phone calls to Ayub, Governor East Pakistan<sup>25</sup> and Fazlul Haq<sup>26</sup> and reported that he had told Fazlul Haq if he double crossed the Prime Minister and made a deal with Suhrawardy in East Pakistan without giving Prime Minister fair advance warning that he, Mirza and Ayub would move and move fast. The result was that Fazlul Haq did return Karachi, did not make a deal with Suhrawardy and Bashani,<sup>27</sup> for which Fazlul Haq was a few days later bitterly criticized in East Pakistan newspapers.)

Subsequently Governor General agreed I might send a summary of what he had said to Secretary Dulles, eyes only, but he will not talk this way to Dulles when he is here. Again repeated I knew him but Dulles did not know him well and Dulles would think he was being disloyal to his own government.

5. Unfortunately at present time he, Governor General, could not speak out because the provisional president would be elected by present consembly about mid-March for period of probably 18 to 24 months and he cannot risk alienating members present consembly who are talking this neutralist line but will soon vote on presidency. Among candidates for president are Suhrawardy, Ghulam Mohammad, Hamidul Huq Chowdhry and former Prime Minister Nazimuddin. Daultana<sup>28</sup> out because of having licked Gurmani<sup>29</sup> in recent provincial elections and Gurmani opposition to Daultana will stop Daultana. (Governor General stated he had 36 out of forty votes in West Pakistan for the presidency but made no mention of votes from East Pakistan. He did

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<sup>24</sup> Vice President Nixon visited Pakistan December 6-8, 1953. For documentation see Foreign Relations, 1952-1954, Vol. XI, Part 2, pp. 1830 ff.

<sup>25</sup> Amir-ud-Din Ahmad.

<sup>26</sup> Minister for the Interior and Minister for Education.

<sup>27</sup> Maulana Bhashani, President of the Awami League in East Pakistan.

<sup>28</sup> Mian Mumtaz Daultana, former Chief Minister of the Punjab and a leader of Muslim League.

<sup>29</sup> Mushtaq Ahmad Gurmani, Governor of West Pakistan.

say that if he had been left on as governor of East Pakistan, which he greatly desired, he was certain that within couple of years he could have not only had a strong Muslim majority fully supporting the central government but could also have had a large element of Hindus on his side.)<sup>30</sup>

6. He said the Egyptian Ambassador here<sup>31</sup> (whom Embassy considers very able and effective) had been very active in arguing with his Muslim brothers that they could collect from both sides the same as Egypt.

7. Mirza emphasized that regardless of any talks of neutralism if war came he and Ayub would throw out any neutralists and we could be assured of utmost cooperation of armed forces and of Pakistan. Pressed on loyalty of Ayub to him he indicated absolute certainty on this point.

8. He wanted me to understand that really the only reason he had agreed go Kabul was because of urgent pleading of US.

9. He was indignant that Prime Minister, while he was in East Pakistan, had allowed Nishtar<sup>32</sup> (pal of Miss Jinnah<sup>33</sup> and no friend of west or US) to become head Muslim League all against advice of Governor General and which Prime Minister prior departure Governor General for East Pakistan had seemed agree should not be done.

Hildreth

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<sup>30</sup> On March 6, Mirza was elected President. He was inaugurated on March 26 as President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, which had been adopted under the Constitution Bill passed by the Pakistani Constituent Assembly on February 29.

<sup>31</sup> Taffazil Ali.

<sup>32</sup> Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar.

<sup>33</sup> Widow of the former Pakistani Prime Minister.

(8)

## Editorial Note

15-06-56

At a meeting of the National Security Council on June 15, Director of Central Intelligence Allen Dulles discussed recent developments in Pakistan as part of his customary survey of significant world developments affecting United States security:

"Mr. Dulles remarked that events of the past two months in Pakistan had served to highlight the great difficulties which this strong ally of the United States was encountering. Pakistan was suffering from great political stability [instability?] as well as acute economic distress. Pakistan's relations with India and Afghanistan continued very bad. A new younger group of politicians was allegedly aspiring to the political leadership of Pakistan, but as yet there appeared to be no serious threat to the leadership of President Mirza, Pakistan's strong man. Meanwhile a near-famine situation existed in East Pakistan, and the Pakistanis are hoping to obtain a million tons of relief food from the United States. Finally, the Pakistani plan to bring the Kashmir dispute with India before the United Nations shortly after Nehru's visit to the United States next month." (Memorandum of discussion at the 288th meeting of the NSC by Gleason, June 18; Eisenhower, Library, Whitman File, NSC Records)

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## **Memorandum of a conversation<sup>34</sup>**

Karachi, July 9, 1956, 10 a.m.-noon

### **Present**

President Mirza  
Vice-President Nixon  
Charge d Affaires, A.Z., Gardiner  
Colonel LeRoy Watson (OSD/ISA)  
Mr. William Henry

### **Present for Part of Conversation**

Acting Prime Minister, Mr. I.I. Chundrigar  
Acting Foreign Minister, Mr. H.I. Rahimtoola  
Finance Minister, Mr. Amjad Ali

The Vice-President opened the conversation by asking President Mirza what topics were now of special interest to him. President Mirza said first of all he wished to raise the question of President Eisenhower's recent statement on neutralism<sup>35</sup> which had caused some difficulties in Pakistan. At the time Pakistan joined the Baghdad Pact, the Government had met considerable opposition. They were now being asked, "Are you sure the U.S. Government wants you in this Pact?" Mirza did not think that the U.S. Government wanted to exclude Pakistan from such arrangements and wished to point out that the Government of Pakistan had joined the Baghdad Pact for the security of Pakistan, which to his mind is bound up especially with the security of the area extending from Basra to the Straits of Ormuz (i.e., Persian Gulf). At every opportunity he was asking U.S. and U.K. officials what arrangements they were planning for the security of that area. As far as logistics were concerned, he thought that the U.S.S.R. could attack with substantial forces at D-Day plus 35 and, therefore, there must be a

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<sup>34</sup> Source: Department Of State, Karachi Embassy Files: Lot 64 F 16, 361.1 Nixon. Top Secret. Drafted by Gardiner. Forwarded from Gardiner to Allen under cover of a letter dated July 12. In telegram 85 from Karachi, July 11, Gardiner summarized the main points covered in the conversation. (Ibid., Central Files, 033.1100-NI/7-1156)  
Nixon was on a brief Asian tour, organized around his visit to the Philippines for the tenth anniversary celebration of Philippine independence. Further documentation is ibid., 033.H00-NI, and ibid., Conference Files : Lot 62 D 181, CF 729A. He stopped in Pakistan on July 9 for a few hours. In telegram 2 from Karachi to Taipei, July 6, repeated to the Department as telegram 36, Gardiner extensively briefed the Vice President on Pakistani developments. (Ibid., Central Files, 033.1100-NI/7-656)

<sup>35</sup> The text of the President's statement is printed in Department of State Bulletin, June 18, 1956, pp. 1004-1005.

defense plan to assemble defensive forces at D plus 30. In spite of all his efforts, the President said he could not get the answer to the question, "What forces will you make available to defend the area?" from either American or British authorities.

The Vice-President asked Colonel Watson to respond to this question. Colonel Watson stated that the Joint Chiefs of Staff foresee no Soviet aggression in this area as a separate action. It would only occur if there were a global war. He thought that estimates of Russian capabilities had overlooked the defensive capacity of U.S. strategic and tactical armed forces and that the Russian capacity is exaggerated. President Mirza asked whether the U.S. could put in ground troops quickly enough. Colonel Watson replied that special troops with special weapons could be quickly made available and that the planning of the Baghdad Pact countries on the military side was just getting under way.

Vice-President Nixon said that President Eisenhower's remarks were taken from context and that our position would be further clarified. The Vice- President then referred to the grand concept of the area to be defended in the event of Russian aggression. He considered that the Middle East and the European complex was equally involved and that it was a prime objective of U.S. policy to prevent the area from being overrun. Colonel Watson pointed out that the maintenance of ground troops by the countries immediately involved, sufficiently strong to stop the Russians, would break the economics of the countries in question. President Mirza said that if the U.S. joined the Baghdad Pact, Pakistan's worries would be over.

The Vice-President then asked President Mirza if he had considered the other type of attack, erosion through subversion. President Mirza by inference indicated that his greatest concern in this context was with Tehran. The Iranian Army was not highly regarded by Mirza; the officer class was corrupt and by and large worthless. The soldiers, however, were good and possibly some improvement was being made through the U.S. military assistance group. The system under which Generals were paid a lump sum for feeding the troops was very bad. He had told the Shah about this. He thought the Shah was shaping up well as a leader. Mirza was planning to visit Iran in November and Turkey in July. His object was to cement the Baghdad Pact countries as closely as possible.

Continuing, President Mirza said that he was especially concerned with Russian infiltration into Afghanistan. The Afghans had obtained weapons from the Czechs and the U.S.S.R. did not have to come out into the open. They were, however, supporting the Afghans on the Pushtoonistan question, and Mirza was especially worried about the road program which is envisaged to encircle Afghanistan, tapping the Russian military headquarters just across the Oxus. A road is also being built from Fala to Zahedan, where the Iranians are especially weak. He suggested the Vice- President impress upon the State Department and on the Pentagon that the Afghan problem is of much greater significance than it has been in past years and of considerable military importance.

Vice-President Nixon asked what we could do to ease the situation.

President Mirza replied that he thought the situation justified increasing the Pakistan Army by one infantry division to build up the total to five infantry divisions and one and a half armored divisions... He would leave no stone unturned to come to an arrangement with the Afghans when he visits the King. He would try to keep Pushtoonistan in cold storage for a five or ten years period in agreement with the Afghans. He would try to establish a joint border commission to settle cases of difficulties between the tribes. He assured the Vice-President that he would make every effort for a peaceful settlement.

The Vice-President then turned the subject of the conversation to neutralism. He said that this concerned the American leaders very greatly, and asked what posture President Mirza thought the U.S. should adopt. President Mirza replied that despite his personal dislike for the neutralists and particularly Nasser<sup>^</sup> he would, if he were responsible for U.S. policy, continue to give economic aid to the neutrals if the aid in question was of any importance to the masses. He would not help the neutrals as much as the countries aligned with the U.S., but he saw no objection to extending aid for projects designed to raise standards of living and remove the masses from the threat of communism. He felt the same way about aid to India. He would not stop American aid to India, if he had the say, despite the fact that Pakistan's relations with India are not good. If questioned on this point by opposition groups in Pakistan, his answer would be that his interest was in the aid that his country was given. He agreed that America must take the world as a whole and not drive neutrals into the communist camp by withholding aid.

On the other hand, he would urge that we turn a deaf ear to Indian protests concerning the aid that America was giving to Pakistan.

The Vice-President asked what President Mirza thought was the effect of the new propaganda "look" of Bulganin and Khrushchev and of the Commie Chinese. President Mirza replied that he wondered whether there was a real change in policy until he read the text of Mikoyan's speech at the 20th Congress of Soviets. Examination of this speech convinced him that the Soviets had changed their methods but not their objectives which are no different in the present regime from those of their predecessors. The Russians were very busy inviting Pakistanis to see Russia.+

The Vice-President asked what the U.S. should do insofar as cultural and trade contacts were concerned. President Mirza implied that these were difficult to control.

The President pointed out that there was a great liking for China and the Chinese in Pakistan. The Chinese were effective and intelligent people with wonderful manners.



They were very adept in "getting round" the Pakistanis. The Pakistanis were very interested in visiting China and would undoubtedly continue to do so. He was watching the Commie trend very carefully and was not frightened. He pointed out that most of the Commonwealth countries were busily trading with China, and as far as Pakistan was concerned, they were glad to have the Chinese market especially for their exports of cotton. They were also ready to do business with the Russians, although he had blocked the establishment of a Russian trade delegation in Dacca which would simply become another communist cell.

The Vice-President observed that President Mirza appeared to regard these contacts as good business but that he understood that they had no effect on Pakistan's basic foreign policies. He wondered about the exchange of persons program.

President Mirza replied that there would not be much to this with Russia but that there was more activity insofar as China was concerned. He said he had recently talked with a mullah who had visited China and the mullah observed that conditions looked good on the surface but as far as the Muslim religion was concerned, the Chinese were keeping it alive for the older generation and that Islam would be dead in China when the younger generation came along.

Vice-President Nixon observed that it was his impression that President Mirza felt it was in the U.S. interests not to be bashful about standing in clearly with our friends and allies and that we need not fear the effect on local governments of appearing too friendly. President Mirza said that his views were very clear on this and he agreed with the Vice-President. However, many of his Ministers did not agree with him. He pointed out the attitude of the Egyptian Ambassador who had tried to explain to Mirza how to deal with the U.S. According to the Egyptians, the best way was to accept aid from the communists and then U.S. assistance would come forward in greater volume. The Vice-President and President Mirza both agreed that in the long run such a policy would not work out, as it violated fundamental moral issues.

At this point, the President called for Acting Prime Minister Chundrigar, Minister of Finance, Amjad Ali, and Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs Rahimtoolah to join the gathering.

The Vice-President asked whether our aid was moving fast enough, and requested an outline of Pakistan's economic problems.

Mr. Chundrigar pointed out that Pakistan was still faced with three major problems; first, the need to obtain materials for its industrial plants and to expand its industries; secondly, its need for basic raw materials such as foodstuffs; and third, the need to have aid move swiftly. He then raised the question of Pakistan's need for assistance in atomic energy needs.

Continuing, Mr. Chundrigar said that Pakistan's problems insofar as atomic development are concerned are two-fold. First of all, India was establishing a \$14,000,000 reactor, having received half the cost from Canada for the foreign exchange components of this installation, and a gift from the U.S. of \$250,000 for heavy water. This was a striking contrast with the assistance preferred by the U.S. to Pakistan, which was only half the cost of a small reactor (\$350,000) of no particular use to the Pakistanis. Pakistan needed some help in a big way. Vice-President Nixon agreed that this posed a difficult political problem for the Pakistanis in view of Indian neutralism and Pakistan's alignment with the free world. Acting Prime Minister Chundrigar continued that Pakistan's difficulties were compounded by U.S. action in setting up the regional center in the Philippines. East Pakistan could use a package power station such as that planned for the regional center at Manila. Such an installation would help solve the power problem of East Pakistan which was very serious, as shortages of power in East Pakistan hampered the future of their jute market.

The Finance Minister continued by pointing out that the proposed atomic center in Manila might be divided between Thailand, the Philippines and East Pakistan, the three SEATO members concerned. If the installations were located in the three countries, students could circulate, and the process would be a useful liaison for SEATO.

Turning to problems of aid, the Finance Minister pointed out the long time required to make decisions. After Congressional appropriations in July, allotments were generally delayed until November, and it was difficult to finalize action in Pakistan on specific programs until late winter or early spring. He pointed out that last year discussions for the PL-480 program started in November, and while grateful for the immediate shipments of rice and of wheat, the 1956 fiscal program had still not been finalized so that it was necessary to fall back on mutual security funds for necessary shipments of wheat.

The Finance Minister continued by pointing out the value of a buffer stock of cereals in this part of the world. If such a stock were established and the U.S. helped with storage facilities, the U.S. could thereafter avoid continuous storage expenses which would be borne by Pakistan. A stock of between 500,000 and 1,000,000 tons of wheat would be very valuable insurance against panics in the local cereal markets, and it would be good public relations to have a food base in Asia in contrast to airplane bases. He thought arrangements could be made whereby grain could be moved and stored each year and released only as needed. In response to a question from the Vice-President, the Finance Minister thought that the presence of such a stock would go far to alleviate panic conditions, as generally speaking the fear of shortages led to hoarding which exaggerated difficulties such as the Government was now facing both in East and West Pakistan.

The Vice-President asked about prospects of capital development and the interest of private capital in Pakistan. The Finance Minister indicated that the Pakistanis were attempting to attract American capital and had been successful particularly in the case of the oil companies, with Standard Vacuum and Hunt both exploring here. There was also interest expressed by the Sun Oil Company in exploration. The Export Import Bank was not functioning in Pakistan, but Pakistan had obtained lines of credit totaling about \$60,000,000 from the I.B.R.D.

Acting Prime Minister Chundrigar pointed out that both Standard Vacuum and Burmah Shell had put up oil refineries in India, and that an oil refinery in Pakistan would be very useful for refining imported crude oil, if not for the eventual refining of crude oil which very likely would be discovered in Pakistan.

The Vice-President thought that the Pakistanis should make special efforts to attract private capital.

The Acting Prime Minister responded that Pakistan was a poor country and that the U.S. businessmen think in large terms.

The Vice-President then asked what he might say when he returned to America which would be most helpful to Pakistan. The following points were made by the President and the various Ministers:

1. President Mirza suggested that the Vice-President might talk privately about the military situation, especially Pakistan's need for an additional division.
2. All concerned suggested that he attempt to expedite the flow of aid.
3. Storage of food as suggested by the Finance Minister was another major point.
4. Acting Prime Minister Chundrigar referred to immediate shipments of food which he thought should be rushed to Pakistan. He pointed out that rice had recently moved up in price from 15 to 50-70 Rupees per maund.
5. Pakistan's need for assistance in the atomic energy field was emphasized.

The Vice-President then asked what questions might arise when he talked to reporters at the airport before his departure. Mr. Chundrigar thought he would very likely be questioned regarding neutralism, with particular reference to President Eisenhower's recent statement, and that there would be questions about Kashmir.

Vice-President Nixon then suggested that visits by leading Pakistanis to Thailand and the Philippines would be extremely valuable as both these countries needed the moral support of their allies at this time. The President said he was considering a trip to Indonesia and that President Soekarno was coming to Pakistan in January. Vice-President Nixon thought this was a good thing, and that Pakistan would do well to cultivate the Indonesians with whom they were joined by religious bonds.

President Mirza then said that we frequently expressed ideas of "defensive armament" He wondered what was meant by this. He thought that after the results of the Korean war, we had given up ideas that defense alone was of any value.

The Vice-President observed that one must emphasize defense in public statements as a political matter, but as far as what one did was concerned, actions would be both defensive and offensive.

Colonel Watson pointed out that defensive armament was a political and not a military concept.

President Mirza then reverted to his interest in light bombers to permit the possibility of retaliation, which might have an especially salutary effect on Afghanistan. He recalled that in 1951 when conditions between India and Pakistan were tense, the presence of six Halifax bombers had been known to the Indians, and in all likelihood had prevented India's attacking Pakistan. President Mirza thought that a light bomber squadron<sup>36</sup> would be very helpful in deterring Afghan aggression as well as threats from India, although he stated that so far as war with India was concerned, it would be both criminal and suicidal from Pakistan's point of view.

At this point, the conversation was broken off as it was necessary for the Vice-President and his party to return to the airport.<sup>37</sup>

A.Z. Gardiner

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<sup>36</sup> President Mirza told the Charge on the evening of July 9th that he had just read a presentation made by "his people in Washington" asking for two squadrons of light bombers, and that he was "horrified" by the manner in which this request had been put forward. A.Z.G. (Footnote in the source text.)

<sup>37</sup> In telegram 130 from Karachi, July 14, Gardiner reported that the Pakistani leaders regarded Nixon's conversation of July 9 to be significant due to his sympathetic attitude. "Mirza subsequently expressed to me his thorough satisfaction with talks," the Charge noted, "particularly attitude expressed on military pacts, and VP's undertaking clarify further US position on neutralism." (Department of State, Central Files, 033.1100-NI/7-1456)

## APPENDIX -3

### CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY OF PAKISTAN

*Friday, the 2nd March, 1956*

The Constituent Assembly of Pakistan met in the Assembly Chamber, Karachi, at Three of the Clock, in the Afternoon, Mr. Speaker (The Honorable Mr. Abdul Wahab Khan) in the chair.

#### **His Excellency the Governor-General's Assent to Bills**

Secretary: Sir, I have to inform Honorable Members that His Excellency the Governor-General has assented to the following Bills under the provisions of rule 62 read with section 6(3) of the Indian Independence Act, 1947: —

Name of the Bill	Date of assent
1. The Constitution (Amendment) Bill,	28th Feb., 1956.
2. The Validation of Laws Bill, 1956	29th Feb., 1956.
3. The Bill to provide a Constitution for Islamic Republic of Pakistan.	2nd March, 1956.

#### **Fixation of Date for Election of President of Pakistan**

**The Honorable Mr. I.I. Chundrigar** (West Pakistan: Muslim): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move:

"Whereas the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan has been empowered by clause (2) of Article 222 of the Constitution to elect a person to serve as President of Pakistan until such time as a President elected under Article 32 of the Constitution has entered upon his office;

And whereas the said Assembly has been empowered to fix a day for the said purpose within thirty days of the coming into force of clause (2) of Article 222 of the Constitution;

Now, therefore, the Constituent Assembly hereby fixes Monday, the 5th of March, 1956, as the day for electing a person to serve as President of Pakistan until such time as a President elected under Article 32 of the Constitution has entered upon his office."

**Mr. Speaker:** Motion moved:

"Whereas the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan has been empowered by clause (2) of Article 222 of the Constitution to elect a person to serve as President of Pakistan until such time as a President elected under Article 32 of the Constitution has entered upon his office;

And whereas the said Assembly has been empowered to fix a day for the said purpose within thirty days of the coming into force of clause (2) of Article 222 of the Constitution;

Now, therefore, the Constituent Assembly hereby fixes Monday, the 5th of March, 1956, as the day for electing a person to serve as President of Pakistan until such time as a President elected under Article 32 of the Constitution has entered upon his office."

**The Honorable Mr. I. I. Chundrigar:** Sir, I need say only a few words in support of the motion. Sir, you are aware and the country is aware that we want the new Constitution to come into force as soon as possible. The Honorable Members of the House have taken great pains to pass the Constitution Bill as quickly as possible.

All the Honorable Members have worked very hard to satisfy the public demand to give ourselves a Constitution as soon as possible. As a necessary consequence, we desire to complete the remaining processes at once. The motion which stands in my name and the next motion will show that we want that the new Constitution should come into force without delay. I, therefore, commend my motion to the House.

**Mr. Speaker:** The question is: "Whereas the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan has been empowered by clause (2) of Article 222 of the Constitution to elect a person to serve as President of Pakistan until such time as a President elected under Article 32 of the Constitution has entered upon his office;

And whereas the said Assembly has been empowered to fix a day for the said purpose within thirty days of the coming into force of clause (2) of Article 222 of the Constitution;

Now, therefore, the Constituent Assembly hereby fixes Monday, the 5th of March, 1956, as the day for electing a person to serve as President of Pakistan until such time as a President elected under Article 32 of the Constitution has entered upon his office."

The motion was adopted.

### **Announcement Re: Nomination and Election of the President of Pakistan**

**Mr. Speaker:** Now in pursuance of the motion adopted today, the election of the President under Article 222 of the Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan is to be

held on Monday, the 5th March, 1956, Nominations for the purpose of election will be received in the Notice Office before noon on Sunday, the 4th March, 1956. Notice Office will remain open only for the purpose of receiving the nominations on that day. The election, if necessary, will be held at 9 a.m. on Monday, the 5th March, 1956.

### **Fixation of Constitution Day**

**The Honorable Mr. A. K. Fazlul Haq** (East Bengal: Muslim): Sir, I beg to move the following resolution:

"Whereas the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan has been empowered by clause (4) of Article 222 of the institution to fix a day to be the Constitution Day, on which the person elected as President under clause (2) of Article 222 of the Constitution should, after taking an oath or affirmation of office, enter upon the duties of the office of the President of Pakistan.

Now, therefore, the Constituent Assembly hereby fixes Friday, the 23rd day of March, 1956, to be the Constitution Day, on which the person elected Constitution should take an oath or affirmation of office of the President and enter upon the duties of that office, and

The 23rd day of March shall be celebrated as the Republic Day every year."

**Mr. Speaker:** Motion moved:

"Whereas the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan has been empowered by clause (4) of Article 222 of the Constitution to fix a day to be the Constitution Day, on which the person elected as President under clause (2) of Article 222 of the Constitution should, after taking an oath or affirmation of office, enter upon the duties of the office of the President of Pakistan.

Now, therefore, the Constituent Assembly hereby fixes Friday, the 23rd day of March, 1956, to be the Constitution Day on which the person elected by the. Constituent Assembly as President under clause (2) of Article 222 of the Constitution should take an oath or affirmation of office of the President and enter upon the duties of that office, and

The 23rd day of March shall be celebrated as the Republic Day every year."

**The Honorable Mr. A. K. Fazlul Haq:** Sir, it is with feelings of inexpressible joy, not unmingled with a little pardonable pride, that I take this opportunity of saying a few words on the motion before the House.

Sir, the events that led to the establishment of Pakistan have been of a historical character. The root of the whole movement for Pakistan goes as far back as the year 1906 when the All-India Muslim League was founded through the efforts of Sir Salimullah, Nawab of Dacca, at a meeting held at Dacca where representatives from all parts of India had gathered. Sir, I remember that date because I took some little part in writing and drafting resolutions that were adopted at the meeting. That was in the year 1906. In the year 1940 — on the 23rd March — I had the good fortune to have been called upon by the Quaid-i-Azam to move the Pakistan Resolution (Applause). Today I am moved when I see the fruition of all our efforts for the establishment of Pakistan — foremost State in the world.

Sir, I need not say anything further at the present moment. My feelings are too strong for words. I hope, Sir, that the people of Pakistan will remember the gift that Providence has bestowed upon them, and they will not consider any sacrifice too great to make Pakistan not only one of the greatest States, but the foremost great State in the whole world. Sir, I commend this resolution to the House.

**Mr. Speaker:** The question is:

"Whereas the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan has been empowered by clause (4) of Article 222 of the Constitution to fix a day to be the Constitution Day, on which the person elected as President under clause (2) of Article 222 of the Constitution should, after taking an oath or affirmation of office, enter upon the duties of the office of the president of Pakistan.

Now, therefore, the Constituent Assembly hereby fixes Friday, the 23rd day of March, 1956, to be the Constitution Day, on which the person elected by the Constituent Assembly as President under clause (2) of Article 222 of the Constitution should take an oath or affirmation of office of the President and enter upon the duties of that office, and

The 23rd day of March shall be celebrated as the Republic Day every year." The motion was adopted.

**Constituent Assembly of Pakistan**  
**Monday, the 5th March, 1956**

The Constituent Assembly of Pakistan met in the Assembly Chamber, Karachi, at Nine of the Clock, in the Morning, Mr. Speaker (The Honorable Mr. Abdul Wahab Khan) in the Chair.



## **Announcement Re: Election of the First President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan**

**Mr. Speaker:** I have to inform Honorable Members that before noon on Sunday, the 4th March, 1956, the time and date fixed for receiving nomination 412 for the election of the President under clause (2) of Article 222 of the Constitution, fifty nomination papers, proposing His Excellency Major-General Iskander Mirza were received.

The following are the proposers:

1. The Honorable Mr. Mohammad Ali.
2. The Honorable Mr. A.K. Fazlul Haq.
3. Mr. Abdul Aleem.
4. Mr. Abdul Karim.
5. The Honorable Mr. Abdul Latif Biswas.
6. Mr. Abdus Sattar.
7. Mr. Adeluddin Ahmad.
8. The Honorable Mr. Akshay Kumar Das.
9. Moulana Hafiz Athar Ali.
10. Mr. Farid Ahmad.
11. Mr. Fazlur Rahman.
12. The Honorable Mr. Hamidul Haq Chaudhry.
13. The Honorable Mr. Kamini Kumar Dutta.
14. The Honorable Mr. Lutfur Rahman Khan.
15. Syed Mahfuzul Haq.
16. The Honorable Mr. Mohammad Nurul Haq Chaudhry.
17. Mian Abdul Bari.
18. Soofi Abdul Hamid Khan.
19. The Honorable Syed Abid Hussain Shah.
20. Syed Alamdar Hussain Shah Gilani.
21. The Honorable Sardar Amir Azam Khan.
22. Malik Amir Mohammad Khan.
23. Chaudhri Aziz Din.
24. Mir Balakh Sher Mazari.
25. Malik Muhammad Firoz Khan Noon.
26. The Honorable Mr. C. E. Gibbon.
27. The Honorable Mr. I. I. Chundrigar.
28. Khan Iftikhar Husain Khan of Mamdot.
29. Chaudhri Muhammad Hussain Chatha.
30. The Honorable Mian Mumtaz Muhammad Khan Daultana.
31. Syed Mohyuddin Lal Badshah.
32. His Excellency Mr. Mushtaq Ahmad Gurmani.

33. Sardar Abdur Rashid Khan.
34. Khan Mohammad Jalaluddin Khan.
35. The Honorable Mr. M. R. Kayani.
36. The Honorable Pir Ali Mohammad Rashdi.
37. Mir Ghulam Ali Khan Talpur.
38. The Honorable Mr. M. A. Khuhro.
39. Haji Moula Baklish Soomro.
40. Mr. Siroomal Kirpaldas.
41. The Honorable Dr. Khan Saheb
42. Mr. Yusuf A. Haroon.
43. Mian Abdus Salam.
44. Syed Ahmad Nawaz Shah Gardezi.
45. Mirza Mumtaz Hasan Kizilbash.
46. Nawab Mir Baj Khan.
47. Major-General M. A. H. Jahan Zeb.
48. Malik Jehangir Khan Madda Khel Wazir.
49. K. B. Haji Malik Mehrdil Khan Mahsud.
50. Malik Waris Khan Malikdinkhel Afridi.

As he is the only candidate for the office of the President, I declare His Excellency Major-General Iskander Mirza duly elected as the President of Pakistan under clause (2) of Article 222 of the Constitution.

### **Congratulations to the First President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan**

The Honorable Mr. I. I. Chundrigar (West Pakistan: Muslim): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to congratulate His Excellency Major-General Iskander Mirza for having the honor of becoming the first President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and I congratulate the House as well on the choice it has made.

His Excellency has served Pakistan in various capacities, first as a Defence Secretary at a time when the duties of that office required from the incumbent of that office various qualities of head and heart. After the partition of the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent, the Indian Army was divided into two and there were many people in foreign countries and the United Kingdom who thought that the work of organizing the two Armies out of one was a stupendous task. As we know, Sir, that task was accomplished in a very commendable manner and we can boast of one of the finest armies in the world. His Excellency was next called upon to undertake duties as the Governor Bengal, and unpleasant as the administration under 92-A was, His Excellency tried to win the confidence of the people of that Province. Later on His Excellency served as the Minister of Interior in the Government of Pakistan. That again was a time of great stress. And his last assignment was as the Governor-General of Pakistan. During the brief interval that His Excellency has filled that office, people of the country have noticed with admiration

the manner in which democratic conventions have been revived in this country and His Excellency has throughout acted entirely in consonance with the highest traditions of that office. It is in the fitness of things that this honor should fall on his shoulders and, I think, I am voicing the feelings of the House when I say that he has the support, the goodwill and sympathy of the whole country in the discharge of the onerous duties which fall on his shoulders as the first President of Pakistan.

The Honorable Mr. C. E. Gibbon (West Pakistan: General): Mr. Speaker, Sir, Nothing could give me greater pleasure as a member of the minority community than to address you today, in the matter of the election of His Excellency Major-General Iskander Mirza. It is a well-known fact that the actions of men are like an index to a book, they point out what is most remarkable in them. In this election we have obviously selected a man whose integrity, honesty and sincerity of purpose is beyond any question of doubt. A man who in the last few months has shown outstanding qualities of leadership and understanding and a respect for democratic values. It is because of these essentials which go to make up his character that all of us here present did not hesitate for a moment to subscribe our names to the nomination papers and to elect him as the first President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. I have merely one more observation to make, namely, that I sincerely hope that His Excellency, in the discharge of his duties and responsibilities, will act in a manner that will not cause us, the members of the minority communities, to doubt for a single moment his sincerity in keeping alive and alight those democratic principles which have guided us in the framing of our Constitution, and for that I am moved towards quoting from Longfellow's famous poem so that it may go down into history. Probably Longfellow, when he wrote, may have had such a thought in mind:-

"Lives of great men all remind us  
We can make our lives sublime,  
And departing leave behind us  
Footprints on the sands of time."

**Mr. Mozaffar Ali Khan Qizilbash** (West Pakistan: Muslim): Mr. Speaker, Sir, it gives me great pleasure to be present in the House today and to congratulate His Excellency Major-General Iskander Mirza not only to congratulate him on being elected as the first President of our Islamic Republic but also to congratulate the House, this Constituent Assembly, on the good sense that they have shown and elected the right person for the right job. As far as His Excellency is concerned, Mr. Speaker, everybody in Pakistan and in the international world knows him. He comes of a very distinguished family of Bengal and throughout his service he has always been at the fore-front and particularly the services which he has rendered since the birth of Pakistan has always been at the fore-front. Mr. Speaker, as we all know, since he became a member of our Government for the last two years, the policies and outlook of our Government had changed, and we do hope now that we have elected him as our first President, he will show the same

honesty and sincerity of purpose and that strong hand which he had shown in the past. Everybody today is rejoicing, I am sure, on the fact that we have a good man and an honest man and a sincere man and a strong man at the helm of affairs. I congratulate him and the House on this. But I must say one thing, Mr. Speaker, that I am sorry to see that a few members from the Opposition are not present on such an historic occasion as passing of this Constitution and election of its first President. The mere fact that we have got a Constitution is a thing of great historic occasion, the framing of our Constitution has saved Pakistan, otherwise if this Constitution had been delayed any longer I dread to think what would have been the consequences. Sir, I have the greatest respect and regard for Honorable the Leader of the Opposition, and I am sorry that I do not see him in the House today. But, I am sure, that he will join us in congratulating and be happy at the fact that we have His Excellency Major- General Iskander Mirza as the first President of our Republic.

**The Honorable Mr. Kamini Kumar Dutta** (East Bengal: General): Sir, with a great pleasure, I join my voice with the Honorable Law Minister in congratulating Major-General Iskander Mirza, in his appointment as the first President of Islamic Republic of Pakistan. I can say here that I did not come in contact with His Excellency only for the first time on the occasion of my work here in the Constituent Assembly on this particular task. I happen to have the good fortune in coming in contact with him in the old Assembly also when I was a member of the Defence Committee of the House successively for several years and, if I am not mistaken, I was taken a member of the Defence Committee almost every year and at that time our present President happened to be the Secretary for Defence and from that time I did observe one thing. His ideas were disciplined and definite. He is a true soldier and from my contact on this occasion, I can say, that he is essentially a constitutionally-minded person. There is no tinge of autocracy in him or any idea not to observe all the rules of democracy. I need not recount all the facts in favor of his election, which have been so ably stated by the Honorable Law Minister. I endorse them.

I add only one thing more. Safeguards have been provided for the minorities in the Constitution. My ideas about the Constitution are well-known. I had expressed them in the House. On this occasion I refer to his message to the minorities on the occasion of his giving assent to the Constitution conveying his assurance that all the provisions regarding the safeguards of the interest of the minorities will be scrupulously observed. His Excellency was further pleased to state that he will treat it as his personal responsibility. I think greater assurance is not possible. I, on behalf of the minorities, welcome this assurance and wish him a happy life and prosperity. (Applause).

**The Honorable Mr. Abdul Latif Biswas** (East Bengal: Muslim): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to congratulate His Excellency Major-General Iskander Mirza on the occasion of his election as the first President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Sir, I congratulate him as one belonging to the United Front Party — one of the component parts of the

Coalition Cabinet — and my congratulations are on behalf of the party I have the honor to represent. At the outset I beg to submit that the election of Major-General Iskander Mirza has brought honor and pride to Bengal inasmuch as that the honor has fallen on the scion of an ancient ruling family. Sir, his election to the exalted position has proved beyond doubt that he has been placed in charge of the confidence as he proved himself to be one of the ablest administrators. His sincerity of purpose and determination and burning patriotism for the cause of Pakistan and also in securing its rightful position in the comity of nations for Pakistan has been rewarded by his elevation as first President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

Sir, I can say — and say with confidence that the cause of Pakistan will be secure in the hands of His Excellency. I do not like to make a long speech on this occasion. I associate myself with the feelings of the Honorable Members who have spoken before me.

With these few words I assure His Excellency the support of East Bengal in the cause of administration of Pakistan and convey good wishes and feelings of the province which he has the honor to represent.

**The Honorable Dr. Khan Saheb** (West Pakistan: Muslim): Mr. Speaker, I have great pleasure in congratulating His Excellency Iskander Mirza for becoming the first President of our Republic. My first associations with him were when the non-cooperation movement in the cause of freedom was going on in 1931, when he was Assistant Commissioner in Nowshera. On that occasion I may tell you that it was due to his patience, his control over emotions that he saved the lives of thousands of people. If he had made the slightest mistake on that occasion in Akberpura, I assure you that at least a few thousand people would have been killed.

Then I will mention another occasion to show you what an administrator he is. Later on when I became the Chief Minister of Frontier and Sir George Cunningham went on leave and Sir Arthur Parson became the acting Governor in place of Sir George Cunningham, a dispute arose with our brave tribes of Afridis. Sir Arthur being a very strict man, was inclined to bomb the Afridis and on that occasion, he (Major-General Iskander Mirza) was the Political Agent of Khyber. He came to me and explained the situation. I expressed inability to interfere because I knew that Sir Arthur may not like it and I asked him to suggest to Sir Arthur if I could be consulted. He went and then Sir Arthur telephoned to me that Iskander was coming and we would see what could be done and the affair was settled peacefully.

Then, Sir, as a personal friend I will mention to you another incident. He being a Deputy Commissioner of Peshawar during the Civil Disobedience Movement kept on his relations with me. The Inspector General of Police complained against his association with me, but he took no notice and we remained friends throughout. So, my own feeling about him is that he is the best man we have got as President. He is a first

class administrator. I think we must all help him in his task which is most difficult. (Applause.)

**The Honorable Mr. Mohammad Ali** (West Pakistan: Muslim): Sir, it is with special pleasure that I rise to endorse the sentiments that have been expressed on the election of His Excellency Iskander Mirza as the first President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. (Applause) I have got the privilege of working in close association with him for the last ten years. In 1946 he came to Delhi as Joint Secretary of the Department of Defence. I happened at that time to be the Financial Adviser to War and Supply. Ever since then I have known him working in various capacities. He played a most distinguished role in carrying out the partition of the pre-partition Indian Army and the re-organization of the Pakistan Army. This was indeed one of the most crucial things about the whole partition problem and the country has reason to be grateful to him for the manner in which he carried out these duties.

Later, as Defence Secretary, as Governor of East Bengal, as Minister, for the Interior, and more recently as the Governor-General, in every capacity that he has served Pakistan, he has served it worthily and well. (Applause). A staunch friend, a forthright man, a great Administrator these are the qualities that mark him, and, above all, a sincere patriot who, when he says "My country first and last" means it — means it with the whole of his deeds.

I am sure, therefore, that he will continue to serve Pakistan as worthily and as well in this new capacity as he has served her in the past. And may Pakistan rise to ever greater glory with Major-General Iskander Mirza as President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan! (Applause.)

**Mr. Speaker:** Gentlemen, I associate myself with the well-deserved high tributes paid to Major-General Iskander Mirza, who has been elected uncontested today as the first President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan under the new Constitution. I hope and trust that under his able guidance Pakistan will flourish and prosper. I congratulate Major-General Iskander Mirza on his election to this high office, the highest that Pakistan can bestow upon its citizens and particularly as he has the honor of being the first President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

The House stands adjourned till 10 a.m. on Thursday, the 22nd March, 1956.

The Constituent Assembly then adjourned till Ten of the Clock, in the Morning, on Thursday, the 22nd March, 1956.

## APPENDIX-4

### PRESIDENTIAL ORDER OF THE DAY

*October 7, 1958*

No. F. 81/Pres/58Z 25th October, 1958 Gazette, 31st October, 1958 — The following Proclamation made by the President at 10.30 p.m. on the 7th day of October, 1958, is published for general information:

For the last two years, I have been watching, with the deepest anxiety, the ruthless struggle for power, corruption, the shameful exploitation of our simple, honest, patriotic and industrious masses, the lack of decorum, and the prostitution of Islam for political ends. There have been a few honorable exceptions. But being in a minority they have not been able to assert their influence in the affairs of the country.

These despicable activities have led to a dictatorship of the lowest order. Adventurers and exploiters have flourished to the detriment of the masses and are getting richer by their nefarious practices.

Despite my repeated endeavors, no serious attempt has been made to tackle the food crises. Food has been a problem of life and death for us in a country which should be really surplus. Agriculture and land administration have been made a handmaiden of politics so that in our present system of government, no political party will be able to take any positive action to increase production. In East Pakistan, on the other hand, there is- a well-organized smuggling of food, medicines and other necessities of life. The masses there suffer due to the shortages so caused in, and the consequent high prices of these commodities. Import of food has been a constant and serious drain on our foreign exchange earnings in the last few years, with the result that the Government is constrained to curtail the much needed internal development projects.

Some of our politicians have lately been talking of bloody revolution. Another type of adventurer among them think it fit to go to foreign countries and attempt direct alignment with them which can only be described as high treason.

The disgraceful scene enacted recently in the East Pakistan Assembly is known to all. I am told that such episodes were common occurrences in pre-partition Bengal. Whether they were or not, it is certainly not a civilized mode of procedure. You do not raise the prestige of your country by beating the Speaker, killing the Deputy Speaker and desecrating the National Flag.

The mentality of the political parties has sunk so low that I am unable any longer to believe that elections will improve the present chaotic internal situation and enable us to form a strong and stable Government capable of dealing with the innumerable and complex problems facing us today. We cannot get men from the Moon. The same group of people who have brought Pakistan on the verge of ruination will rig the elections for their own ends. They will come back more revengeful, because I am sure the elections will be contested, mainly, on personal, regional and sectarian basis. When they return, they will use the same methods which have made a tragic farce of democracy and are the main cause of the present widespread frustration in the country. However much the administration may try, I am convinced, judging by shifting loyalties and the ceaseless and unscrupulous scramble for office, that elections will be neither free nor fair. They will not solve our difficulties. On the contrary, they are likely to create greater unhappiness and disappointment leading ultimately to a really bloody revolution. Recently, we had elections for the Karachi Municipal Corporation. Twenty per cent of the electorate exercised their votes, and out of these, about fifty percent were bogus votes.

We hear threats and cries of civil disobedience in order to retain private volunteer organizations and to break up the One Unit. These disruptive tendencies are a good indication of their patriotism and the length to which politicians and adventurers are prepared to go to achieve their parochial aims.

Our foreign policy is subjected to unintelligent and irresponsible criticism, not for patriotic motives, but from selfish viewpoints often by the very people who were responsible for it. We desire to have friendly relations with all nations, but political adventurers try their best to create bad blood and misunderstandings between us and countries like the U.S.S.R. ; the U.A.R. and the People's Republic of China. Against India, of course, they scream for war, knowing full well that they will be nowhere near the firing line.. In no country in the world, do political parties treat foreign policy in the manner it has been done in Pakistan. To dispel the confusion so caused, I categorically reiterate that we shall continue to follow a policy which our interests and geography demand and that we shall honor all our international commitments which, as is well-known, we have undertaken to safeguard the security of Pakistan and as a peace loving nation, to play our part in averting the danger of war from this troubled world.

For the last three years, I have been doing my utmost to work the Constitution in a democratic way. I have labored to bring about coalition after coalition, hoping that it would stabilize the administration and that the affairs of the country would be run in the interests of the masses. My detractors, in their dishonest ways, have on every opportunity, called these attempts Palace intrigues. It has become fashionable to put all the blame on the President. A wit said the other day, "If it rains too much it is the fault of the President and if it does not rain it is the fault of the President." If only I alone were concerned, I would go on taking these fulminations with the contempt they



deserve. But the intention of these traitors and unpatriotic elements is to destroy the prestige of Pakistan and the Government by attacking the Head of the State. They have succeeded to a great extent, and, if this state of affairs is allowed to go on, they will achieve their ultimate purpose.

My appraisal of the internal situation had led me to believe that a vast majority of the people no longer have any confidence in the present system of Government and are getting more and more disillusioned and disappointed and are becoming dangerously resentful of the manner in which they have been exploited. Their resentment and bitterness are justifiable. The leaders have not been able to render them the service they deserve and have failed to prove themselves worthy of the confidence the masses had reposed in them.

The Constitution which was brought into being on 23rd March, 1956, after so many tribulations, is unworkable. It is full of dangerous compromises so that Pakistan will disintegrate internally if the inherent malaise is not removed. To rectify them, the country must first be taken to sanity by a peaceful revolution. Then, it is my intention to collect a number of patriotic persons to examine our problems in the political field and devise a Constitution more suitable to the genius of the Muslim people. When it is ready, and at the appropriate time, it will be submitted to the referendum of the people.

It is said that the Constitution is sacred. But more sacred than the Constitution or anything else is the country and the welfare and happiness of its people. As Head of the State, my foremost duty before my God and the people is the integrity of Pakistan. It is seriously threatened by the ruthlessness of traitors and political adventurers whose selfishness, thirst for power and unpatriotic conduct cannot be restrained by a government set up under the present system. Nor can I any longer remain a spectator of activities designed to destroy the country. After deep and anxious thought, I have come to the regrettable conclusion that I would be failing in my duty if I did not take steps, which in my opinion, are inescapable in present conditions, to save Pakistan from complete disruption. I have, therefore, decided that: –

- (a) The Constitution of the 23rd March, 1956 will be abrogated.
- (b) The Central and Provincial Governments will be dismissed with immediate effect.
- (c) The National Parliament and Provincial Assemblies will be dissolved.
- (d) All political parties will be abolished.
- (e) Until alternative arrangements are made. Pakistan will come under Martial Law. I hereby appoint General Mohammad Ayub Khan,

Commander-in-Chief, Pakistan Army, as the Chief Martial Law Administrator and place all the Armed Forces of Pakistan under his command.

To the valiant Armed Forces of Pakistan, I have to say that having been closely associated with them since the very inception of Pakistan; I have learned to admire their patriotism and loyalty. I am putting a great strain on them. I fully realize this, but I ask you, Officers and men of the Armed Forces, on your service depends the future existence of Pakistan as an independent nation and a bastion in these parts of the Free World. Do your job without fear or favor and may God help you.

To the people of Pakistan I talk as a brother and a fellow compatriot. Present action has been taken with the utmost regret but I have had to do it in the interests of the country and the masses, finer men than whom it is difficult to imagine. To the patriots and the law abiding, I promise you will be happier and freer. The political adventurers, the smugglers, the black-marketers, the hoarders, will be unhappy and their activities will be severely restricted. As for the traitors, they had better flee the country if they can and while the going is good.

## APPENDIX - 5

### MEMOIRS OF A PRESIDENT

Iskander Mirza, President of Pakistan from March 23, 1956, to October 27, 1958 has been widely charged with pushing the country into the dark alley of authoritarianism which proved to be the main cause of the state's dismemberment. Twenty-nine years ago, on September 23, 1967, Mirza gave an interview to Hasan Ispahani in London. The taped interview is one of the few records remaining of Iskander Mirza's life and times. The rest were allegedly destroyed by his chief nemesis, the late President Ayub Khan.

In this interview, Iskander Mirza gives his version of the events that led to Pakistan's first martial law, and reflects on the people who were key players in the political arena at that time. This *Newsline* special feature is the first installment of a two-part series.

**Q:** Today, you are condemned for all that happened during the period that you held the reins of power in Pakistan, and President Ayub's book (Friends, Not Masters) published recently, appears to have put a royal seal on your mismanagement and misfeasance's. Was it necessary for you and Gurmani to bring into being the Republican Party?

**A:** In order to complete the story, it is really necessary to go still further back, that is, September, 1954, in London. You came to the hotel where I was staying and asked me to go to the airport with you to receive Prime Minister Mohammad Ali Bogra who was returning from the United States. Bogra, Chaudhri Mohammad Ali and the party had arrived before we reached the airport. As soon as Bogra saw us, he said, "Don't you know there is a great deal of trouble in Karachi?" and told us that they had just heard that the Governor-General Ghulam Mohammad, was about to declare martial law. I was astounded. Just then, General Ayub also arrived from America. He took me aside and said "Don't propose any thing, because, before leaving for America, Governor General Ghulam Mohammad promised me that I would be asked to take over the country." So I said, "Look, this would be a very stupid thing to do. He is a very sick man, and you must not take everything he says seriously. Let us wait and see what transpires when we return to Karachi." Bogra asked me if I could get a special aeroplane, so we could get there quickly. After a few fruitless bids, an aeroplane was placed at our disposal, and we all, including yourself - you were then high commissioner — flew to Karachi.

Mohammad Ali Bogra asked me if I could arrange for any army guard for him at the airport. He said his information was that it would be very necessary. I telephoned General Musa from the plane and asked him to very kindly arrange for a company in

battle order to be ready at the airport to protect the Prime Minister. When we landed, there was an enormous and very excited crowd running here and there, with the director of civil intelligence jumping from one car to another, the whole place was like a madhouse. I then suggested to you to get hold of Bogra, put him in a car, and take him to the governor-general's house, and said I would follow later with some others. When we got to the governor general's house there was no sign of you or Bogra. When we got in, we saw Chaudhri Mohammad Ali walking about in the room, and the governor general lying on the floor, on a white sheet. His face was red and he looked really ill, not quite in his senses. He was almost frothing at the mouth and striking his fist in the air. We asked him, "What has happened?" "Oh" he said, "I am very angry. I want to get rid of this government. I don't want to see the Prime Minister's face. He has been disloyal to me. And I want you two to take over the country." I said to him quietly, "Look, this is not the way to do things. What is the world going to say? You wait, Mohammad Ali Bogra must have come by now, and he will come up, and you must see him and have a heart to heart talk. So, one of the servants was sent down, and Bogra and you entered the room. At first, I thought the governor general was going to burst or suffer a mental collapse. But he gradually recovered, and then we started talking. He was furious. However, finally they came to an agreement: a new cabinet would be formed, the assembly would be suspended and things would start de novo from the next day. Chaudhri Mohammad Ali was running between the governor general and Bogra and drafting something for all this to take effect the next day. The following day, Ghulam Mohammad gave a list of people he wanted in the cabinet - you, General Ayub, myself and Chaudhri Mohammad Ali, with Mohammad Ali Bogra as Prime Minister. The others he told Bogra to select himself. The proclamation, which was drafted by Chaudhri Mohammad Ali in consultation with the Bogra, Nawab and Ghulam Mohammad was issued to the press. We then started thinking of what to do next. A government was selected, and sworn in the next day. Our principle task was to clean up the administration as much as we could, and to work towards bringing in the new constitution, so that the people could start having a share in the government of the country. But before we could come to that, it was decided to have a sort of election ... In my opinion, it was a big farce. However, some of us were elected, and some not. Another cabinet was formed after about six months. Then the constitution making started furiously. Mohammad Ali Bogra had to go away to America as ambassador, an assignment he was very fond of. Unfortunately we lost your services, Mr. Ispahani, since you refused to be elected on the terms proposed.

A few months after this, the governor general got very seriously ill ... he was suffering from paralysis, heart trouble and very high blood pressure. The doctors said that he must not continue as governor general for the moment, and the then cabinet decided that I should act as governor general. As soon as I took over as governor general, the question arose as to who should be Prime Minister. Bogra was going to America as ambassador, and Chaudhri Mohammad Ali, accompanied by Gurmani, came to me, and he said that it was the opinion of the Muslim League that Mr. Suhrawardy, the

leader of the Awami League, who had about 13 men in the constituent assembly, should be Prime Minister. I said this was a very peculiar way of starting a new constitution, because, in any constitution, the largest party forms a government, and I really couldn't understand how I could override that provision. I said, "I am going to ask you, Chaudhri Sahib, to form a government. If you are not able to form a government, then it is for you to come to me and tell me that you have failed. You can't tell me to ask this man or that man to be Prime Minister." He (Chaudhri Mohammad Ali) then told me that he would like to be Prime Minister and work the constitution for which he had labored so hard, so why don't I talk to Mr. Suhrawardy and try to get him to come around? I said, "I will try." I went to Mr. Suhrawardy's house, and I talked to him, and ultimately, he agreed that he would not vehemently oppose Chaudhri Sahib's government. He said he would be in the opposition, but he would not be in the government itself. I said, "This ought to be enough for you, Mohammad Ali," and he said, "Yes."

And he formed a government. This government brought in the One Unit scheme; it was decided that the whole of West Punjab, Sindh, Frontier and Balochistan would lose their respective identities and merge into one province, to be known as West Pakistan.

**Q :** Were you not one of, the prime movers of this 'one Unit' formation. And did you not, through your influence, with Khuhro and others, help to form this 'One Unit'?

**A :** I was sitting in the President's House, when there was a telephone call from Lahore. It was Dr. Khan Sahib telling me that he had formed a new party; the Republican Party. I asked, "Why?" He said, "Because I can't trust the Muslim League, they have done me in." I said, "Who has joined your party?" He said, "Most of the members of the Muslim League." I told him that personally I was against the fragmentation of the Muslim League in this manner, and I did not understand why this had been done. "Have you consulted Nawab Gurmani?" I asked. He said, "Nawab Gurmani is the man who put the idea of forming the Republican Party in our head." So I said, "Have you spoken to the Prime Minister, Mr. Mohammad Ali. He said, "No, why should I?" I said, "When you are breaking a party, you might have talked to the Prime Minister, who after all is the head of the Muslim League ... you haven't been very wise." But in the meantime, Chaudhri Mohammad Ali had also heard of it, and he came to see me, looking glum. And he said, "This is what they have done?" I said, "I have no hand in it, Mohammad this is the hand of your great friend Gurmani. I am told the whole conception is his. I can't tell them to break the party, just as I couldn't tell them not to form the party. It is now for you as Prime Minister to see that the thing dies in its infancy." But he didn't take any action, and the Muslim League members of the Punjab Assembly joined the Republican Party. When the vote of confidence for Dr. Khan Sahib came, he won by one vote, the casting vote of the President, who was also a member of the Republican Party the chief minister of Khairpur, by the name of Mumtaz Qizilbash. He decided that he would not remain the President of the Muslim League, but would

make Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar President. I was going on to the Chittagong Hill Tracts, and before leaving, I sent for Chaudhri Mohammad Ali, and I said, "Look, you've known Nishtar, perhaps, for 10 years. I've known him for 25 years. Please listen to me, and don't make him President of the Muslim League. He's a religious fanatic, and he will work against you behind your back, and he will try and control the whole government because he seems to think that he's no less a man than the Quaid-e-Azam." Chaudhri Mohammad Ali hummed and hawed, and gave me no direct answer. After returning from the Chittagong Hill Tracts to Dacca, I got a telegram from Chaudhri Mohammad Ali, requesting me to return to Karachi as early as possible, as things were not going as well as they should, and there was Muslim League agitation on minor points. So I returned to Karachi cancelling my tour to the Sunderbans, and had talks with Chaudhri Mohammad Ali, and he said, "You were absolutely right about Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar, I'm having all sorts of trouble" I said, "I assure you these troubles will increase, because I know him." I said, 'Liaquat Ali Khan was a clever politician. Why did he take the job of President of the Muslim League when the Quaid-e-Azam died? Because he knew that whoever he appointed, would try and control the country through this organization ... you, for no reason at all, have divested yourself of a very strong position in the country.' And I said, "There is very little I can do to help. However, we'll have to go on." The agitation started. His house was picketed, there was police action, and mullaism started to increase. One day, Chaudhri Mohammad Ali came to my office, and said, "Please shoot me; I've made too many mistakes." Now, when a Prime Minister of a country comes to the President, and tells him to shoot him because he has made too many mistakes, and he's almost weeping the only conclusion the President can arrive at is that the man has lost his nerves, and is no longer able to continue as Prime Minister. Just about then, Nawab Gurmani also came from Lahore to see me for some job, I said, "Look ... This man who has brought in the constitution has lost his nerve within a year. And I don't think in these conditions it is fair on the country that he should continue as Prime Minister." Nawab Gurmani agreed. I then sent for Chaudhri Mohammad Ali, and said to him: "Don't you think you should resign and go to England for treatment?" He said, "I have no money." So I said, "That can be arranged by the government; I will see that you get enough finances to get proper treatment in London." He was quite happy about that and he tendered his resignation and was sent to London, where he stayed three or four months for his treatment. This was the first experience I had of trying to run the 1956 Constitution, which I had from the very beginning told Chaudhri Mohammad Ali would not work in this country. I had said "The constitution we have brought in is just like the British Constitution, but we have forgotten the main thing in the British Constitution: the permanent head of state. Countries like France, which are far more educated than we are, have failed to run this constitution and I have been telling you from the beginning to try and get a constitution which will run in this country and, to this end I also got an American expert to advise you. But you all were determined to have this constitution, and now this is the first installment. God knows what will happen in the future.

**Q:** Why did you keep changing ministers and Prime Ministers as often as a man changes his singlet on a hot and humid summer day?

**A:** Chaudhri Mohammad Ali had a breakdown, which was not caused by me, but by his mental condition which he got because he was trying to work the Constitution of 1956 in a country not suited for it. I had to think of whom to get as the new Prime Minister. I had a talk Dr. Khan Sahib and Nawab Gurmani, and I said, "I think it would be better if we went back to the old idea of the Muslim League and get Mr. Suhrawardy to form a cabinet in cooperation with the Republican Party. Between them they have the majority to do so. The Hindu members would also support this coalition." Mr. Suhrawardy was a brilliant parliamentarian and a very clever man ... So I sent for him, and I said, "Would you be able to form a ministry in coalition with the Republican Party and the Hindu members of the Assembly?" He said quite definitely that he would be. I told him to have a talk with Dr. Khan Sahib, the leader of the Republican Party, and see what he could do about it. He came back after a short time, and said he was ready, and that he would give me names by the next day, and his cabinet was sworn in. He worked very well. He was the first man who had the courage to bring the issue of the Baghdad Pact into the Constituent Assembly, and had the motion supporting the pact passed in parliament. He was very fond of touring foreign countries, and there were a lot of troubles during those tours, but I disregarded them because he was carrying on the administration better than his predecessor. I had a long-standing invitation to go on a state visit to Iran in late October 1956. Suhrawardy was in America at that time and was due to arrive the day after I left for Iran. But on the evening before I was to leave for Iran, I received a telegram brought by the deputy high commissioner of Great Britain from the Prime Minister, informing me of the attack on Port Said, and the action they were going to take in regard to the Suez Canal. I expressed my surprise that I, as head of a country in the Commonwealth, had been faced with a *fait accompli*, and that too at a time when I was about to leave the country to go to Iran. But I said, will now try to send a telex to His Imperial Majesty the Shahinshah, and request him to invite the Prime Ministers of Turkey and Iraq to come to Tehran because of this situation, which we could then discuss and formulate a plan for joint action." I sent a telex, and before I left for Iran, I received an answer from his Imperial Majesty, that the Prime Ministers of Turkey and Iraq were coming to Tehran during my visit. So when I got there I had talks with His Imperial Majesty, and we awaited the arrival of the other Prime Ministers, who landed the same day at different times ... The following day we started holding meetings with the Prime Ministers of Iran, Turkey, and Iraq, with His Imperial Majesty in the chair, and discussed the situation. It was not an easy situation. Our sympathies as Muslims were with Egypt; our interests as members of the Baghdad Pact were to take such action so as not to disrupt this Pact, and so we had decided, after long discussions, to await developments. That night, at about two o'clock in the morning. I got a telephone message from my ambassador in Tehran, General Raza, that the British ambassador wanted to see me urgently. The British Ambassador arrived at about four

O'clock in the morning and said that the British government had received information that Pakistan's Prime Minister had declared in an open meeting in Karachi that he was going to leave the Commonwealth. I told the British ambassador, "That's a very great surprise to me; however, you can assure the British government that, as long as I am President of Pakistan, we are not leaving the Commonwealth so easily," and that, "I must have time to think what action I am going to take to undo the troubles created by that speech." I asked the ambassador to come in the morning, and said I would then be able to tell him what action we would take.

As soon as the ambassador left, I tried to go to sleep, but I couldn't because I was worried. So I sent for the military secretary, gave him a letter for Prime Minister Suhrawardy, and sent him in my airplane to deliver this letter, sending instructions that the airplane should await the Prime Minister's orders. In the letter I had asked the Prime Minister that since the situation was rather difficult, and the Prime Ministers of all the other Muslim countries of the Baghdad Pact were here, it would be good if he would come too. He arrived the next day. I saw him, and I said, "This China visit seems to have completely changed you." And this was the first time I got inkling that he was not a very stable man, because, when, he was in Tehran, and the other Prime Ministers, all talked to him, he was more for anti-Arab action than anybody else. And this after having made a speech in Karachi that he would leave the Commonwealth if the British did not immediately evacuate Port Said and the Suez Canal area. He was more with them than anybody else. So I came to the conclusion that I did not have a very stable Prime Minister in dealing with foreign affairs; he was likely to change at any moment. But I kept that to myself, and we returned to Karachi as quickly as possible, and cancelled our trip to Iraq. Matters went on like this until suddenly, one day, Dr. Khan Sahib and other members of the Republican Party arrived at the Government House and Produced certain speeches of Mr. Suhrawardy, which he had made in different parts of West Pakistan, attacking the Republican Party in a violent manner, and they said, "It is impossible to cooperate with this man, we want to get rid of him," I told Dr. Khan Sahib, "It is very easy to say that you want to get rid of Prime Ministers, but not only the Republican Party, the country has also got to run. You must think of the country. I suggested a meeting between Dr. Khan Sahib and one or two leaders of the Republican Party and Mr. Suhrawardy the next day.

At that time, there was also a great deal of talk and rumors about corruption in the ministries of industries and commerce, and this was forcibly put to me by Dr. Khan Sahib, to whom I said, "Well, when we talk with Mr. Suhrawardy, we'll try and solve this problem, too." Practically the entire next day was taken up in sorting out the differences between Mr. Suhrawardy and Dr. Khan Sahib, and by the evening we had almost cleared up everything. I told them, "I must get both your signatures on this pact which I will draft and keep ready by 11 o'clock tomorrow, and both of you must be here.- During the night I don't know what happened. Before informing me, Mr. Suhrawardy, sent a letter to one of the newspapers, I think *Morning News*, saying that he



had demanded to summoning of the assembly, and that the differences with the Republican Party were of no consequence since he had got a complete majority. This with 13 members of the Awami League in the parliament. I couldn't believe my eyes when I read this. Just then a letter came from Mr. Suhrawardy, demanding that the assembly be summoned. I telephoned Mr. Suhrawardy and said, "This is a definite double-cross. You came to an agreement with me yesterday that you would agree to all the conditions of the pact and now you are demanding the recall of the assembly. Without even informing me, you put it in the press. "I said, "I now demand your resignation within two hours, or I'll dismiss you. He came and actually wept but I said, "Nothing doing You must put in your resignation. The funny thing is, shortly after he handed in his resignation, and I induced the Muslim League to form a government with the Krishak Sramik Party and the Hindu members, Dr. Khan Sahib went and joined Suhrawardy and they became great friends. I could never have dreamt Dr. Khan Sahib would do this sort of volte face, demanding Suhrawardy's head on a plate, and then going and joining him. However, I arranged the coalition between the Muslim League and the Krishak Sramik, and a government was formed with Mr. Chundrigar as Prime Minister. This government was the easiest government to work with - they were honest, they were straight, not brilliant, but quite good.

I was very happy for the first time. I didn't have worries every day. I had to go on a state visit to Portugal and Spain, and so, after seeing this government work for about two months. I left for England, and from there, I went to France, and then to Portugal and Spain.

While I was in Portugal, I started receiving telegrams from Mr. Chundrigar that all was not well with the coalition and that the Republicans were again creating trouble. I returned to Karachi, and met Mr. Chundrigar at the airport. He seemed unhappy, and he said, "The coalition has almost broken down." I said, "Look, on the one hand you all say that the President is only for show, on the other, you make him do all the dirty work. Why can't you all solve these differences yourselves? Why should I have to come into it every time? He said, "Well, the situation is such that you have to come in." So I again sent for Dr. Khan Sahib, and I said, "Now, what is the trouble?" They produced some speeches made by Daultana and Mr. Chundrigar in West Punjab, in which they had strongly supported the Muslim League. So, Dr. Khan Sahib said, "This is going against the Republican Party's interest, and they are creating a Muslim League on our head." I said, "Look, the Muslim League has been in existence for God knows how many years, you are only a two-years show, and why can't they go around saying that you must support the Muslim League? Why don't you go and say you support the Republican Party? A coalition government does not mean that you give up your own party. Then I had a meeting with some of the leaders of the Republican Party, in which Sir Firoze Khan Noon, Mumtaz Daultana and Nawab Muzaffar Ali were present, along with some others, and I said, "I'm really fed up .... Every time I go out of the country there is some trouble. This time, there is no reason for it as I have told the Republican

Party," I told Sir Firoze Khan, "Those speeches which you brought - they do not impress me at all. And you all want to break with this party. Dr. Khan Sahib has gone and joined hands with Mr. Suhrawardy again. I don't understand all this." I said, "I really would like to resign, and get out of all this mess. You all cannot run the government in this way."

They got against Chundrigar, who was an honorable man, and he came and handed over his resignation. I told Chundrigar, "I do not accept your resignation. I will keep you for another month, and see if it is possible to get the Republican Party to see reason." But what I saw was that Dr. Khan Sahib and Suhrawardy were getting closer and closer together. I asked "Doctor, one day you are kicking Suhrawardy, another day you are becoming blood brothers. I just don't understand." He said, "Ah ha, this is politics." I said, "I have not understood this type of politics." However, I said, "You can do what you like, and I will do what I like. I'm going to keep Chundrigar as long as I can." He was furious ... He hated the Muslim League and this was apparent when he said, "What is the Muslim League?" I said, "Well, they gave you Pakistan, whatever it is." But I can't do anything in that one month. But then, I was also determined to see that neither Dr. Khan Sahib nor Mr. Suhrawardy came into the cabinet. I told Sir Firoze Khan Noon, "You form the cabinet, as deputy leader of the Republican Party? And I said, "The Krishak Sramik will form an alliance with you, and you carry on." He said, "All right" But it was a very, very weak government - unable to do anything. I was not able to do anything much myself, as at that time I was most anxious that the elections should take place in February and that they should get the government they wanted. I was so sick by all this nonsense that was going on, that I wanted to get out, if possible.

Sir Firoze was absolutely honest and well-meaning, but he didn't have the brains or the capacity to be a good Prime Minister in a difficult country like Pakistan, with an impossible constitution. So, we wanted some Bengalis to come into the ministries. He selected two, I swore them in the morning, but in the evening, they resigned. "They wanted the ministries of industries and commerce; as I couldn't give them those, they resigned," said Sir Feroze. "This is a funny thing. Everybody wants to make money," I remarked. Around then, Mr. Menderes, the Turkish Prime Minister, on his way from Formosa, came to stay with me for three days. One evening, he told me that his ambassador had repeatedly told him that this country was going. "You are our ally, and, naturally, we are very concerned," he said, "There comes a time, when the head of state has to be willing to take any risk, risk his life or anything, to try and save his country. And whatever I have heard here, from my embassy, the time has come." I said, "I have not quite formulated in my head what I should do. Elections are three or four months away; after that they can do what they like." He said, "Yes,, that's only if you don't care whether the country goes to the dogs or not. But you've got to hold it together."

Then, I received the news that the Krishak Sramik Party had killed the deputy speaker of the Bengal Assembly while it was in session. Things were now really reaching a terrible state. There were speakers like Abdul Qayyum Khan, who used to put loudspeakers outside the President's House, and deliver the most abusive speeches.

And the government either was too helpless to do anything, or didn't care to do anything. So I decided I'd taken action. Now there were two courses for me: to suspend the constitution, or to abrogate it. Suspension meant having one court case after the other, as Ghulam Mohammad had to face when he suspended the constitution.

So I said, "Why go through all that again?" I thought, abrogate the constitution, and immediately ask Justice Munir to come and have a look at the 1956 Constitution carefully, and bring about such amendments as would be suitable for the country. That was in my head. I thought there would be turmoil for some time, especially in Bengal, where the Awami League would be thrown out, so I must have martial law to support the civil power-quickly. And to have martial law, I would have to have a martial law administrator. I had no personal ambition to be a dictator. So I said I will ask General Ayub, my friend of 25 years, to come and be chief martial law administrator and Prime Minister, and have some military officers in the cabinet, but a greater majority of civilians. This was agreed to between General Ayub and me, and I fixed a date of October 7, for issuing my proclamation, in which I said that this martial law is not a punitive measure, but a preventive measure, that is, it is not to punish the people, but to prevent any trouble, and that I will remove martial law as soon as possible. And this assurance I also gave to President Eisenhower, Mr. Macmillan and the Shah of Iran.

So, the day was set for the 7th and General Ayub arrived on the 5th. There was no talk of his saying to me to make things legal, or that I must write letters here and letters there. I saw no necessity to write letters all around the countryside. The only letter I wanted to write, which I did, was to the then Prime Minister, Sir Firoze Khan Noon, explaining that I had to bring this martial law, as in my judgment, now there was no way out to save the country, and expressing my deep regret that I had to do it at a time when he was the Prime Minister. All these stories which Ayub Khan tells in his book, that he talked to me again and again, about writing a letter to him about not to do this and not to do that during the martial law period, are complete lies. The only talk I had with him, which he didn't like, was that I must remove martial law by November 7 or 8, because it was no longer necessary. I said the country has taken the revolution with enthusiasm and I see no reason why the people should be punished or made to suffer any hardship unnecessarily.

In his book. General Ayub says that he was informed by Air commodore Rabb that I had asked him to arrest three generals, Yahya, Hamid and Sher Bahadur. This person (Rabb) considered the military control of the time a God-given opportunity to wreak vengeance for his supersession in the command of the Pakistan Air Force by Air

Commodore Asghar Khan, now Air Marshal. For this bit of work, Rabb was amply rewarded. He was drafted into the foreign office, and appointed chief of protocol. After a brief period, he was named Pakistan's ambassador to Turkey, and later to Lebanon ... This makes one think of the possibility of a collusion between Rabb and Ayub from the beginning. There were four generals in the Cabinet at the time: Ayub, Sheikh, Azam and Burki. The latter three were very close to Ayub. I would ask any reasonable man to consider what I could hope to achieve by the arrest of the three generals, Yahya, Hamid and Sher Bahadur. Yahya and Hamid were on the General's staff, and should have been in Rawalpindi at the time I am supposed to have ordered or requested their arrest. Sher Bahadur was in Karachi as director of military intelligence. A person possessing even average wit would regard a request of order to an air force officer to arrest two generals in Rawalpindi, about 700 miles from Karachi, or a general in Karachi, in the midst of an area in which at least one infantry brigade was deployed, within immediate striking distance, as an act of a deranged mind, or consider it to be a fakir's fairy tale.

What makes the assertion even more absurd is, that I am supposed to have issued orders over the telephone, at a time when the lines of all those who counted in the country, including the President, were being systematically tapped. If I had harbored any self-interest, would I have initiated the revolution? There was nothing easier for me than to sit back, do nothing, and remain President of Pakistan. If the revolution of October 7, 1958 had failed, I would have been the only person who would have been shot. I took the calculated risk because, in my judgment, there was no other course left if the country was to be saved. In my proclamation of October 7, 1958, I could easily have retained all powers in my hands. I had no desire to be a dictator. My cardinal error was that I trusted persons whom I knew and helped for 20 years. I regarded them as trustworthy friends. A letter from General Ayub Khan, written in April 1958, will prove I had no cause to suspect his loyalty and want of faith. I shall read the letter now to you:

*My Dear President*

..... History will have a cause to be proud of you. I personally am indebted to you for choosing me to shoulder this responsibility. Let us hope that I shall come up to your expectations. I can promise you my very best efforts.

Yours Sincerely  
M.A. Khan

I must express my deep regret that even my wife, who devoted all her time to social work and to enhancing the prestige of the President's house, has not been spared. I categorically deny [the allegation] that she asked me to get rid of General Ayub Khan. There was absolutely no reason for her to do so. The allegation only proves that there was someone in the President's house base enough to fabricate tales in the hope of

improving his situation. A man of honor would not take upon himself the task of a spy in the household of his head of state. Several experienced men, among them leading politicians, repeatedly advised me not to grant extension after extension of service periods to the chiefs of the defence forces, saying, it was a dangerous practice, unknown in Great Britain, USA, and some other great countries. All the accounts of the talks from December 6 to the time of the military *coup d'état* given in Ayub's book, have no basis. Why should I get apprehensive, if General Ayub addressed a large crowd in Dacca? In an area where 55 million inhabitants are concentrated in 50,000 square miles, crowds are normally to be seen, or can be collected. When I was governor of East Bengal, I addressed large crowds in several places, at difficult times, and the then central government did not dream of suspecting my loyalty. Ayub Khan wishes to make people believe that I worked to destroy the revolution so that I would be shot.

**Q:** What actually happened between the declaration of martial law on October 7 until the day of your departure from Pakistan, when you were compelled to take up residence and become a refugee in Britain?

**A:** A day or two after martial law was enforced in Karachi, I began to hear rumors that army officers were going into shops in Karachi and forcing shop keepers to sell them commodities at cheap rates, and they were threatened that if they did not do so, they would be in trouble. I said, I will wait for General Ayub's return from Dacca, and then I will tell him to stop it with a strong hand. I was also continuously hearing that General Ayub, having become chief martial law administrator, and sworn in by me as Prime Minister, was now thinking that he should take over complete power and get rid of me. I just took this to be a rumor and did not believe it, as I said, how could a friend of mine for 20 years, who had been brought into this position by me, commit an act of treachery of this nature. These rumors continued, until the very end, but I never believed them. On the night of the 26th, Generals Ayub and Burki came to see me, and we had drinks together in the garden. He seemed perfectly normal to me, and friendly, and so did General Burki. I don't think even Machiavelli could have improved on General Ayub Khan's action. Later I went to your house, to pick up my wife who was visiting your wife. We got home, had a quick dinner, and went to bed. At about 10 o'clock, one of the bearers of the President's House knocked at the door. He said that some generals had come, and wanted to see me. So I immediately put on my dressing gown and came out and was surprised to see a large number of army men in the garden, and also in the veranda, with sten guns and revolvers. I couldn't understand what it was about, so I went down, and there I saw General Azam, Sheikh, Burki, and Sher Bahadur. I said, "What's happened? Has there been any trouble in Bengal?" because I was constantly apprehensive of trouble in that area, They said, "No, we have come to talk to you of a serious matter. In the interests of the country, we want you to leave Pakistan." So I said, "Well, if the army are all of this opinion, it is not possible for me to fight them all alone. Will you allow my wife to go to the Iranian Embassy, as she is an Iranian national? And then I will give you my decision?" They said, "No." so I was

not able to give them the decision I would have liked to, to tell them to go to hell and do what they liked, I was not going, and I was not resigning or anything." But as my wife also would have been in their power, I was forced to agree to leave the country. They tried to make me sign a paper, that I was leaving Pakistan willingly. I declined to do that. I said, "As I am required to leave the country by the army, I am leaving it." In the end, I believe, that paper was torn and not made use of. However, they put a brigadier of extremely bad manners, Brigadier Bahadur Sher to take charge of all the proceedings, and he kept saying. "Pack quickly, pack quickly, and take as little as possible," and there were people all around with revolvers out, and sten guns out, trying to frighten my wife, who was not at all frightened. Well, we packed whatever things we could, in an hour or so, and were ready to move. The cavalcade was then taken to Mauripur Airport, where I was met by the American ambassador, Mr. Langelly, who was a personal friend of mine. He looked very disturbed and unhappy, and also by Air Marshal Asghar Khan, who also looked unhappy.

However, I was taken to one of the wayfarer's airplanes, generally used for transport of army equipment or a large number of men and officers, and flown to Quetta. I was put in the house of the agent to the governor-general, which was full of troops. We were put in a small room, and there were officers posted all round with revolvers and sten guns, trying to show off how brave they were, and we stayed there for about six or seven days. In the middle of our stay, my wife got fed up, and told Brigadier Bahadur Sher, whose men kept pointing these revolvers and sten guns at us the whole time. "If you want to shoot, shoot! You can't frighten us." Bahadur Sher ... felt ashamed and from that day, at least we were not shown these weapons. Then, one day Bahadur Sher, came to me, and he said, "You are leaving for Karachi tomorrow as arrangements have been made for you to go to England, but you will have to buy your own tickets, and also pay for your passports," which I did So I went to Mauripur, where I was kept waiting for about four hours, and then sent by aeroplane to Drigh Road Civil Airport. At the airport were the Australian high commissioner, and the Portuguese ambassador, and a Greek friend, Mr. Dendrino. There must have been at least a battalion of infantry all around the airport, and God knows how many police, and C.I.D. personnel. Because of engine trouble in the BOAC aircraft, we were left waiting for five hours in the airport, and all the people who had come to see me, stayed all those five hours, much to the annoyance of Bahadur Sher, and my old military secretary Nawazish. From Karachi, I went to Amsterdam and then on to London, where I was received by Colonel Hugo, of the Commonwealth Relations Office, who had arranged accommodation for me in the Hyde Park Hotel.

When I was in London for a few days, I heard reports that the army was spreading rumors in Karachi and other places in Pakistan, that I had been thoroughly searched, and made to sign a cheque for an enormous sum of money before I was allowed to go. This, I categorically deny. In the first place, if there was a cheque of that description signed by me, would not the army have been very glad to publish a photograph of it in

every newspaper in the world in order to damn me? I came to London without any money and if it had not been for my friends, I would have had to starve here for the first week or 10 days. I told the authorities in England, to satisfy the Pakistan government, by telling them to go and examine my account in any bank in Europe they could find, and see what money I've got. I've never had any money, I never tried to collect any money. One son I had lost while he was in the air force doing his duty, the other son I sent to America for education, so that he may not be in Pakistan while I was governor-general or President, and he got a job on his own ability in the World Bank, where he's still working. As for one of my sons-in-law, who's married to my eldest daughter, he's an officer in the PIA, he was an officer since the inception of Pakistan. He has got his promotion according to his ability and his service, and still is not very high up, and anybody can go and see in what way he has to live. Let me also add that when my belongings and those of my wife were sent to your house in Karachi, and you sent me the inventories with the baggage, I discovered that several of my best guns, a large number of suits, and all the documents and diaries were missing.

Comparisons are always odious, but I would like the public to judge my state, and compare it with that of General Ayub Khan; what he has done for his sons, for himself, his relations, his ministers, his friends, etc. They've all become multimillionaires several times over in the short period the country has been under army rule. What I was hoping would go from Pakistan, that is, corruption, has come in a hundredfold strength, and is likely to completely destroy the moral basis of the country.

I have read portions of *Friends not Masters*. My general comment on the book is that it is an attempt by Ayub Khan to damn his predecessor by every possible means, and to project himself as a superman. But he has only succeeded in projecting himself as a Machiavelli, and hence one who embodies no honest principles nor morals.

This book is fit for the dustbin. The title, *Friends Not Master*, is apparently a reference to those nations who have been helping Pakistan in all sorts of emergencies. I hope it does not imply that it gives Pakistan latitude to trash friends like China, Iran, or America. The very title gives one the impression that it is the product of a mind suffering from an inferiority complex. Ayub's basic democracy has been derived from the British concept of a village *panchayat*, introduced in order to delay Indian independence as much as possible. Basic democracy's sole aim is to keep Ayub in power, and make corrupt elections cheaper, as a much smaller number of people have to be bribed to get votes. A great friend of Ayub, Mr. Ghulam Faruque, speaking on the budget in the Assembly on June 21, 1965, said, "President Ayub had a billion dollar personality. To me, the president is more than one hundred divisions of the army." A few years earlier, when Faruque was out of a job and I had enquired about basic democracy, he had said, "Basic democracy is an insult to the intelligence of any educated man." It is only sycophants like Ghulam Faruque who can get close to President Ayub.

As far as I know, Ayub's father started life in Hodsons Horse as a *sawar*, and became a trumpeter of the B squadron. Once, when I was discussing promoting Ayub to major general, I vividly remember General Sir Frank Messerly exclaiming, "Not that son of a trumpeter." His father might have gone up the ladder to risaldar major, a rank below that of a second lieutenant, and on this basis bestowed on himself the position of a scion of a distinguished family, but this is all nonsense. Ayub's family hailed from Kach, a tehsil in the Gambellpur district of the Punjab. When Hari Singh Nalva, the Sikh conqueror of Hazara, established Haripur, he got families from areas in the vicinity to settle round about this place. This is how Ayub's ancestors came to Haripur, and all that talk of one of his ancestors being a ruler of the state of all the Sikhs is pure fairy tale. When Ayub's father died, each son got 500 rupees as his inheritance; that is all that the man had accumulated after a full life's hard work and savings.

Ayub Khan says that he met his Sandhurst expenses by doing well and winning many scholarships. A reference to Sandhurst's records will show that there were no such scholarships at Sandhurst — he'd better invent another lie. On page 10 there is another figment of Ayub's imagination of getting two stripes at Sandhurst, and receiving an address by the commandant. He might have got the stripes, but the commandant never gave an address on such occasions. Besides, the type of address Ayub has concocted could not have been given, as there was no occasion for it. He was by no means the first Indian to get stripes. In Sandhurst itself, there was no racial discrimination to the best of my knowledge. On page 12 is an incident of a tactical exercise: Ayub says on one side was a battalion commander, on the other, himself, a second lieutenant, or at the most, a junior lieutenant. The incident is nonsense from beginning to end. An officer coming out of Sandhurst was always posted to a British infantry battalion for one year, and was on the unattached list. The most he did was to command a platoon of about 30 men. What kind of exercise was it in which a platoon was pitched against a battalion? An officer on the unattached list remained with the British battalion for one year; how did Ayub remain for three years? It is pure nonsense. On page 15, he refers to his service in the Boundary Force commanded by General Reese. The truth is that in this period he did not earn himself a good name. There were many rumors about his misdoings. I was then defence secretary of Pakistan, and in order to save Ayub, got general headquarters to post him first as brigade commander at Gurdai, and later on to command whatever troops we could muster in east Bengal. Later, an impression is sought to be created that it was on General Ayub's advice that Waziristan was evacuated, and that the peaceful evacuation was entirely due to his talents, both military and political. This is nonsense. Razmak was the apex of the triangle — Dera Ismail Khan, Razmak, Bannu. There were district headquarters with ancillary troops at Dera Ismail Khan, a striking force with a strong brigade group at Razmak, and along with, those protection troops lower down at Girzai and Mir Ali. Ayub has carefully avoided giving his own location at the time of evacuation. He certainly was not at Razmak, the principle evacuation centre. Long before the evacuation, Sir George Cunningham, the NWFP governor toured Waziristan, talked to the tribes, and ensured that his political officers were in the picture. Sir George



himself marched out of Razmak camp with the last troops. He had a tremendous hold over the tribes, and told me a few days later that the whole operation went like clockwork, and the tribes were really sorry at the departure of the troops, as with them went a means of livelihood. For a brigade commander with no knowledge of political control, to try and project himself as a linchpin controlling everything from a remote area is just fantastic. The decision for the evacuation of Waziristan was taken at Rawalpindi, at a meeting at which were present Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan, Sir George Cunningham, Governor-General Sir Douglas Gracey, Chaudhry Mohammad Ali, Colonel A.S.B. Shah, representing the foreign ministry and myself as defence secretary. The foreign office was totally opposed to the evacuation of Razmak, on the ground of political effect on the tribes of the Frontier in general, and they were apprehensive of the adverse effect such a move would have on our relations with Afghanistan, whose campaign of Pakhtoonistan was at full blast at the time. The objections were good, but not good enough, Colonel Shah was speaking as an experienced political officer of the British days. Since Pakistan and the advent of Pakistan, the situation had changed fundamentally. I asked for evacuation on two grounds: the inability of Pakistan to tie up one division in Waziristan, especially as the protection of Pakistan from Indian danger had become one of paramount importance; and for a want of financial resources to increase the strength of the army if we were to have adequate troops to maintain the *status quo* in Waziristan. Sir George Cunningham saw no dangers in tribal areas, principally the Khyber and Waziristan, if we got out of Razmak, and he advised us to do so. As regards Pakhtoonistan, Sir George said this was a separate issue. But Waziristan, we were told, could only give a short-time boost to the Pakhtoonistan propaganda, which after all, was only propaganda. Liaquat Ali Khan decided on evacuation. No one was even aware of Ayub's existence at the meeting.

Liaquat Ali Khan, for political reasons, and because India had appointed General Cariappa as army chief of staff in place of General Busha, was anxious to appoint a Pakistani as Commander in Chief (C-in-C). He had several talks with me, and it was decided to appoint General Iftikhar as C-in-C. He was being groomed for this appointment. He went with me to America on a mission and was by far, the most capable Pakistani officer for the job. It was decided to announce his selection a few months before General Gracey was due to go, and in the meantime, he was selected for a course at the Imperial Defence College. On his way to this course, he was killed in an air crash near Karachi a great tragedy for Pakistan. After his death, I could not find anybody to take his place. After a good many consultations, Liaquat Ali Khan decided on the advice of Chaudhry Mohammad Ali, to appoint Ayub.

Ayub refers to the Rawalpindi Conspiracy as a non-event. The conspiracy was a fact. The conspirators made the error of disclosing everything to a police inspector, Kiani, who told us everything - names, etc. When (General) Akbar was arrested, we got hold of all the papers, and were able to arrest all the ring leaders.

On page 40, in the process of projecting himself, Ayub says that I, as defence secretary, never took any of the army problems to Liaquat Ali Khan, and asked him (Ayub) to do so, that Liaquat Ali Khan did not like me, and that after his talks, he arranged to take me along with him to see Liaquat Ali Khan, Only an imbecile would believe such untruths. Even Goebbels, who was the master of big lies, did not advocate that lies which can be seen through so easily should be uttered in statecraft. In the first place, I was defence secretary from 1947 onwards. Ayub became C-in-C in January 1951. What was happening from '47 to '51 - the most crucial years in which the army was reorganized and trained on a proper basis? As C-in-C, he got a 100 percent trained army. Gracey and Mackay, who were in charge during this time, were well-known soldiers of proven ability, in peace and war. They were not the products of luck and circumstances. As for Liaquat not liking me, this is news to me. What was there to prevent him from getting rid of me? Many civil servants were after my job; his favorites, Naqvi and Ghulam Mohammad, were amongst them. He once refused to let me go on a diplomatic assignment on the grounds that I could not be spared. Ayub used to come to Karachi mostly in the winter, for a shoot or two; what happened for months together, when I had to see Liaquat Ali Khan at least once a week? Again, what happened to all the problems of the navy and air force? Did Ayub settle them once in four months with Liaquat? Regarding the Indian concentration of 1951, its offensive ideas were killed by the statement of the British air commander in the Indian cabinet meeting. The Indians knew we had a few useful bombers, and they had no answer. To say that. we had as few as 13 tanks with 40 hours' engine life, is not true. We had a brigade of Sherman tanks and about 50 Stuart tanks. As early as 1949, before the Kashmir cease-fire, I put a proposal to allow us to cut off the lines of communication of Indian Army, operating in Poonch. We could have bottled up five Indian divisions and destroyed the Sindhi tale. We had deployed, in forward concentration, a good proportion of our artillery, a brigade of Sherman tanks, and a number of infantry, etc. From our military intelligence, which, unlike in 1965, was very efficient, we knew what the Indians would bring on the Lahore-Sialkot front, and were ready for them. What Ayub want the world to accept are lies. He wants everyone to believe he was the maker of the Pakistan army. Truth does not interest him.

Ayub inherited a perfectly organized and disciplined army. The rot set in when removed from the army most of the men with brains. This was apparent when Pakistan laid the foundations of that senseless and purposeless war with India. In this war, the soldiers and officers up to the rank of lieutenant colonel fought magnificently. But what could they do when strategic thinking was not existent, and the generals showed no initiative of any kind, and military intelligence was interested only in internal intelligence?

Ayub claims in one story that Governor-General Ghulam Mohammad telephoned him at the London airport, and I was handed the telephone. This has no truth in it. The only telephone at the airport from Karachi was to the Prime Minister, Chaudury Mohammad

Ali, but who telephoned, I do not know. The Prime Minister never inquired what would happen to him when he got back to Karachi, nor did he ask for a guarantee that he would not be arrested. All he asked of me was to get some troops on the tarmac, as he had information that there was going to be a large crowd, and keeping order would be difficult. I did this from the airplane, by radio-telegraphing. Ayub never spoke to me about the inadvisability of taking the Prime Minister to the President's House. I was not prepared to take any advice from anybody before seeing for myself what the situation was. The decision was made only after we landed. We saw the crowd milling around without purpose. It was at the airport that I told Hassan Ispahani to bring the Prime Minister to the Governor General's house, and to sit downstairs while we had a talk with the Governor General. Chaudhry Mohammad Ali, Ayub and I went to the Governor General's room. He looked very flushed and not very coherent. We calmed him down, and there was no solo conference between him and Ayub as claimed. When the Governor General calmed down, he sent for Mohammad Ali Bogra and Hassan Ispahani. After a little more excitement, the whole matter was settled in a decent manner. The Governor General once, at the beginning, asked me and Ayub to take over; there was nothing in writing. I told the Governor General that this way would do not the country any good and said we must find a *modus vivendi*. Ghulam Mohammad was really not well, and nobody in his senses would have taken him seriously. All these dramatics on this affair mentioned in Ayub's book are sheer fantasy.

The programme which Ayub says he presented to the cabinet I never saw, and I think it is one more child of his imagination. He was taken into the cabinet by Mohammad Ali Bogra; I was present when this was done, and did not hear Ayub say that he would like to be out. He was all for being defence minister. When Chaudhry Mohammad Ali became Prime Minister in August 1955, the 'One-Unit' scheme was an accomplished fact. Throughout, Chaudhry Mohammad Ali was a supporter of the 'One Unit' scheme, and Ayub had nothing to do with its inception or its working. When I became acting Governor General in 1955. It was decided that Bogra should go to the United States as ambassador. The Muslim League Parliamentary Party held a meeting and elected Chaudhry Mohammad Ali as its leader, and apparently asked him — under Gurmanis, influence — to propose Suhrawardy as Prime Minister. When Chaudhry did this I replied that he could not suggest the name of any person to be Prime Minister, and I asked him to form a government as he was the leader of the largest party. I could not understand the workings of Mohammad Ali's mind when he told me that Suhrawardy must consent. In other words, like all weak men, he wanted unanimous consent. I said I would talk to Suhrawardy, which I did, and obtained his very reluctant consent, though he said that he and his party would remain in the opposition. There was no outmaneuvering involved. Fazlul Haq was leader of the United Front, and there was no cultivating of him by me as suggested by Ayub. He had an immense following in East Bengal, and my four months as governor of East Bengal in 1954 convinced me that all the attacks on Fazlul Haq were erroneous, and shortly afterwards, he was made governor of East Bengal by Chaudhry Mohammad Ali. Chaudhry Mohammad Ali

resigned from his office of Prime Minister owing to ill health, and went to London for four months for treatment. His place was taken by Mr. Suhrawardy with the backing of his own party, the Awami League, the Republican Party, and the Hindu minority. He fell foul of his principle supporters, the Republican Party, and had to go. I then asked the leader of the Muslim League Party to form a government. And Mr. Chundrigar was able to do so. He could not last long, owing to the whims of the Republican Party, and his place was taken by Sir Firoze Khan Noon. The 'One Unit' scheme was never a reason for party maneuvers. It is again a figment of Ayub's imagination. He's trying to project himself as the originator of the 'One Unit' scheme; nothing could be further from the truth. As President under the 1965 Constitution, I had hardly my powers, and the only thing I could do, when forced to, was to try and patch up matters. The family feud between Nawab Qazilbash, the Ali family, and Abid Hussain was greatly responsible for the break-up of the coalition between the Muslim League and the Republican Party. That there was no animosity between Suhrawardy and Dr Khan Sahib was true. For immediately after the break-up of the Muslim League coalition, they became bosom friends.

Ayub's contention that I was privy to the Khan of Kalat's intrigues to form a Baluch empire, is also without foundation, and a deplorable lie. I ordered military action and deposed the Khan.

Later, he says that I anticipated the Indo-China war. In 1958, India and China were close friends. How could anyone foresee that they would fight in '62? This story is rather far-fetched.

Ayub claims in his book to admire the Shahenshah's political acumen. I hope he means it. However, when I informed Ayub that the Shahenshah wanted me in Tehran for three or four days, he said, "why do you want to go to Tehran — the days of kings are over."

An impression is sought to be spread by Ayub that before October 4, he was not aware of much that was going on. As a matter of fact, a week before General Yahya came over from Rawalpindi, I drafted in my own handwriting the proclamation which ushered in the revolution of October 7, and handed it over to Yahya, to show to Ayub for any comments. Yahya returned before October 5 with no comments. I was never brooding, nor bitter, nor desperate as claimed. In my view, the country had to be saved whatever the cost, and I had no desire to sit back and remain President under the 1956 Constitution, and let the country go to pieces. No advice was necessary from Ayub. In his book, he's giving advice left, right, and centre. I had written a letter to Sir Firoze Khan Noon and had detailed an ADC to take it to him on the morning the proclamation was due to come out. In that proclamation, I had appointed Ayub as chief martial law administrator, and later swore him in as Prime Minister and also swore in the other ministers. There was no point in giving a letter of appointment to General Ayub, and I do not understand why this fabrication has found a place in the book.

The story of troops receiving contrary orders is another fabrication, as is the unchivalrous attack on my wife. And does Ayub want the world to believe that I, who brought in the revolution, wanted it to fail? Can stupidity go any further? If the revolution failed, I was the only one who would have had to pay with my life. Ayub says I rang up various people, involving them in some deal. My telephones were all tapped, and I knew about this. The deals must be in the imagination of Ayub, and his generals. There were deals a plenty, made after I left the country and Ayub, his family and some generals are multimillionaires today. I do not wish to waste more time in dealing with this wretched book. It appears to have been written with two objects in view: first, to give me as bad a name as possible, on utterly false and mean premises; two, to project Ayub as a personality of great acumen as an administrator, a military strategist, and a saintly character. To damn me, he has written so many falsehoods that no decent man of any intelligence would believe them, and this applies to his process of building himself up. His regime will be known in history as the most corrupt that Pakistan has ever had, of cashing in on the work of the past, and of military ineptitude, as shown in the stupid war with India in 1965.

Ayub Khan writes in his book that at one stage I got cold feet. This is as far from the truth as I am from the moon. I challenge anyone to honestly say that I have ever been a coward. My accuser is none else than the son of a trumpeter of B Squadron of Hodsons Horse who developed icy feet when he was sent to Burma during the Second World War. Why was he returned after a short stay in Burma? There is no mention of his ever distinguishing himself in any of the war diaries in Burma, or in any other engagement. Who got cold feet during the stupid and unaccountable 17 day war with India in 1965? In that ill-planned-almost childishly planned war — the cream of our brave young officers lost their precious lives. Who telephoned President Johnson to intervene and stop the fighting? Whoever in his senses and with an atom of experience would go to a major war with less than one month's firepower at his disposal? Who would ever believe that the thrust towards Aknoor would not bring about a riposte by the Indians, in Sialkot and Lahore? Who went to the United States of America, after the cease-fire, to plead with President Johnson to forgive him for being a naughty boy? I ask in all seriousness, did Ayub ever visit the front, where fighting was raging, as the supreme commander? His place was mostly in general headquarters, or at the front, studying reports and maps, and issuing corrective directives. Not a glass of water could be drunk by the commanders at the front, without first getting clearance from Ayub, thus stultifying any initiative. Yet, he was not always available at Rawalpindi, or at the area of battles. These are undeniable facts. A supreme commander, with a modicum of sense; would have carefully studied the topography of the country, before committing his armored division to attack. Nothing like this was done, nor direct infantry support made available. The result was that more than 60 of the fine Patton tanks of the division got bogged and the armored division had to beat an ignominious retreat without achieving anything. That kind of attack is not delivered in a vacuum, it must have an

objective, clearly defined, and attainable. Not an excursion, as this counter-attack of Ayub's was, which only created the famous 'Pattonnagar.' Nor did it display the velour of old Muslim leaders like Taimur the great, who by his immediate presence, and maneuvers, always changed defeat into victory. I can say much more from this distant land, of the many follies committed by Ayub Khan during the 1965 war. But this is enough for the present. As for the Tashkent sellout, the less said, the better. Ayub is a real paper field marshal, with absolutely no experience of war. He is completely innocent of the science of the higher direction of war.

Ayub's book is chock-a-block full of lies, and no honorable man with a conscience would have ever written it, merely to deceive his own people, and also the outside world. It's appropriate place is in the trash can."

**[Ref. *Newsline*, May-June, 1996]**