

W.B.Bland: REPORT OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE MARXIST-LENINIST ORGANISATION OF BRITAIN”

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INTRODUCTION

Marxism-Leninism is the scientific outlook of the working class, the science of socialism and of its construction by the working people, the science of socialist revolution. The temporary victory of revisionism in the international communist movement has given rise to the widespread circulation of perversions of "Marxism -Leninism" shorn, in the interests of world imperialism, of its revolutionary content. Before dealing with the specific revolutionary process in Pakistan, it seems desirable to us therefore, to restate very briefly the essential principles of Marxism-Leninism in relation to colonial-type countries in general, as these principles were developed by the Communist International, then the International vanguard of the working classes of all countries.

PART ONE: THE REVOLUTIONARY PROCESS IN COLONIAL TYPE COUNTRIES

Colonial-type Countries

A colonial-type country is one which is industrially relatively undeveloped and which is under the economic, and possibly also the political, domination of a Great Power - in the twentieth century an imperialist power.

A colonial-type country may be:

- 1) a colony under the open, direct political rule of a dominating Great Power;
- 2) a semi-colony, nominally "independent" but with its economic system largely controlled for the benefit of the ruling class of a dominating Great Power; or
- 3) a neo-colony, a former colony which has become nominally "independent" but which continues to have its economic system largely controlled for the benefit of the ruling class of the same dominating Great Power which formerly ruled it directly.

The nominal "ruling class" of a semi-colony or of a neo-colony is one which is dependent on the ruling class of the dominating Great Power.

The Relation of Classes in a Colonial-Type Country to The Struggle for National Liberation

Sooner or later a struggle for national liberation from the domination of the Great Power concerned develops in every colonial-type country.

In the twentieth century, in general, the classes in a colonial-type country which would be benefited by national liberation are:

- 1) the working class;
- 2) the urban petty-bourgeoisie;
- 3) the peasantry, and
- 4) the national bourgeoisie - i.e., that section of the capitalist class the interests of which are held back by the domination of the Great Power.

In the twentieth century, in general, the classes in a colonial-type country which have interests that could be harmed by national liberation are:

- 1) the landlord class, and
- 2) the comprador bourgeoisie, i.e., that section of the capitalist class the interests of which (mainly commercial and financial) are dependent upon the domination of the Great Power.

The Necessity of Armed Struggle

Normally, the colonial administration of a Great Power in the case of a colony, or of the nominal "ruling class" in the case of a semi-colony or neo-colony, possesses a state machinery of force, the essential core of which consists of armed men and the purpose of which is to maintain by force the subjection of the colonial-type country to the dominating Great Power.

In order to achieve national liberation, therefore the revolutionary classes must build up their own revolutionary machinery of force, the spearhead of which must consist of armed men, strong enough to destroy the anti-national state machinery of force.

Thus, the achievement of national liberation can, normally, be brought about only by armed struggle.

The Socialist Revolution

The social problems of the working class, the poorer strata of the urban petty bourgeoisie and the poorer strata of the peasantry cannot be solved by national liberation: these are exploited classes and, if the revolutionary process in the colonial-type country ceases with the achievement of national liberation, they continue to be exploited by the national capitalists and the rich (capitalist) peasants.

The social problems of the working class, the poorer strata of the urban petty bourgeoisie and the poorer strata of the peasantry can be solved only by the abolition of exploitation in a socialist society, and this can only be brought about by a socialist revolution.

The class forces in a colonial type country which stand to benefit from a socialist revolution are narrower than those which benefit from national liberation; they are:

- 1) the working class,
- 2) the poorer strata of the urban petty bourgeoisie, and
- 3) the poorer strata of the peasantry.

All other classes, including the national bourgeoisie and the rich (capitalist) peasants have interests which would be harmed by a socialist revolution.

The achievement of a socialist revolution requires the leadership of the poorer strata of the peasantry by the working class.

The Stages of the Revolutionary Process in a Colonial type Country

For the working class, the poorer strata and the urban petty bourgeoisie and the poorer strata of the peasantry, the primary objective significance of national liberation is as a preliminary to the socialist revolution. In a colonial-type country, national liberation is a necessary strategical preliminary to the socialist revolution because it enables certain class forces opposed to the socialist revolution to be defeated, partly or entirely, by a wider coalition of class forces than those which stand to gain from the socialist revolution. That is, in national liberation the national bourgeoisie and the rich (capitalist) peasants have an objective interest in, and so may be enlisted in, the national liberation struggle against the foreign dominating imperialists and their class allies within the country: the landlords and comprador bourgeoisie.

The revolutionary process in a colonial-type country must, therefore, be fought in two successive 'stages' :

- 1) the stage of national liberation; the stage of national-democratic revolution - the aims of which are national and democratic and not socialist, and;
- 2) the stage of socialist revolution.

Uninterrupted Revolution

It is in the interests of the working class, of the poorer strata of the urban petty bourgeoisie and of the poorer strata of the peasantry that there should be the minimum possible time-gap between the stage of national-democratic revolution and the stage of socialist revolution. It is, in fact, in the interests of these class forces that the stage of national-democratic revolution should pass without interruption into the stage of socialist revolution, without any intervening period of national capitalism in which exploitation continues.

The uninterrupted transition from the stage of national-democratic revolution to the stage of socialist revolution can be achieved only if the leadership of both stages of the revolutionary process is in the hands of the working class.

This involves a class struggle between the working class and the national bourgeoisie for the leading role in the national-democratic revolution. If the working class succeeds in wresting the leadership of the national-democratic revolution from the hands of the national bourgeoisie, the latter will inevitably desert the revolutionary forces and go over to the side of the anti-national forces - preferring a subordinate role in a colonial-type society to the complete loss of its "rights" of exploitation in a socialist society.

The Necessity of a Marxist-Leninist Party of the Working Class

The working class cannot carry through this revolutionary strategy spontaneously, It can do so only if it is led by a disciplined political party based on Marxism-Leninism.

PART TWO: PAKISTAN AS A BRITISH NEO-COLONY

The Origin of Pakistan

The concept of what is now the state of Pakistan appears to have first been put forward at Cambridge University in January 1933, when a group of Moslem students, headed by Chaudhuri Rahmat Ali, proposed in a pamphlet the establishment of a state carved out of those parts of India in which Moslems were in a majority.

They suggested as the name of this state "**Pakstan**" - P (Punjab); A("Afghanistan", i.e. the North-West Frontier Province); K (Kashmir); S (Sind); TAN (Baluchistan). East Bengal; in which Moslem were also in a majority, did not figure in this earliest concept, of what soon came to be called "**Pakistan**" (" Land of the Pure").

In December 1906 the Moslem League had been founded by a group of pro-British landed aristocrats, headed by the Agha Khan and the Nawab of Dacca. Its ostensible aim, was to work for the protection of, and advancement of the Moslems of India. But in reality its primary purpose was to foster "loyalty" among Moslems to British imperialist rule. At its 27th, conference, held in Lahore in March 1940, the Moslem League, under the leadership of Mohammad-Ali Jinnah, adopted the concept of "Pakistan" (now including East Bengal) as the basis of its programme.

As the principal political organisation of the landlord and (later) the comprador bourgeois classes in the predominantly Moslem areas of the Indian sub-continent, classes which depended upon foreign imperialism for the maintenance of their social position, the Moslem League was from its foundation objectively an instrument of British imperialism. And its adoption of Moslem separatism accentuated this role. It became the

most important vehicle in the service of the British imperialists for splitting the Indian movement for liberation, and Moslem League ministries were established in then India, for a number of provinces with the support of the colonial authorities.

The Formation of Pakistan

In August 1947 British colonial rule over the Indian sub-continent came officially to an end and the latter was divided into the two Dominions of India and Pakistan.

This partition was carried out, not on any ethnical basis, but on the basis of the predominant religious beliefs among the population. The boundaries were drawn, and the property of the Indian Empire divided between the two Dominions, in such a way as to create what was hoped would be a permanent state of tension between them, so strengthening the possibility of the continued domination of both by British imperialism. In fact, partition quickly led to mass shifts of population, the persecution of minorities and wholesale flights of refugees.

As a result of the religious basis of partition, the new Dominion of Pakistan consisted of two territorial regions in the west and east of the sub-continent, separated by more than a thousand miles from each other. West Pakistan is more than five times the size of East Pakistan (310 thousand square miles against 55 thousand square miles), but East Pakistan has 8 million (10%) more population than West Pakistan (now 51 million against 43 million).

The establishment of the Dominion of Pakistan was preceded by the setting up of a "Constituent Assembly" of 69 members, the appointment of Jinnah, leader of the Moslem League, as Governor-General; the appointment of British commanders for Pakistan's armed forces; and the appointment of a government, headed by Liaqua Ali Khan, all but one member of which belonged to the Moslem League.

In other words, the formation of the artificial state of Pakistan consisted essentially of the negotiated transfer of political power to the pro-imperialist land-owning and comprador bourgeois classes represented politically by the Moslem League.

This transfer of power was not, of course, purely voluntary; but neither was it the result of an outright victory of the national-democratic revolution. The position was that the latter had developed to the point where the declining strength of British imperialism was no longer sufficient to enable it to continue to rule the Indian sub-continent in the old directly colonial way. It had become necessary to replace direct colonial rule by indirect neo-colonial domination. Sir Stafford Cripps virtually admitted to this when he told the House of Commons on March 3th, 1947;

"What, then, were the alternatives which faced us? These alternatives were fundamentally two. ... First, we could attempt to strengthen British control in India on the basis of an expanded personnel in the Secretary of State's office and a

considerable reinforcement of British troops. The second alternative was that we could accept the fact that the first alternative was not possible, ... We had not the power to carry it out".

The Class Structure of Pakistan

In the early 1950s the class structure of Pakistan was roughly as follows (the figures include dependents):

West Pakistan

	<u>Millions</u>
Landlord class	0.2
Rich peasant class (rural capitalists)	1
Urban capitalists (comprador and national)	0.3
Urban petty bourgeoisie	3
Middle peasants (mostly working without wage labour)	5
Poor peasants (including agricultural workers)	19
Urban working class	6
	<u>TOTAL: 34.5</u>

East Pakistan

	<u>Millions</u>
Rich peasant class (rural capitalists)	1
Urban capitalists (mostly national)	0.2
Urban petty bourgeoisie	3
Middle peasants	7
Poor Peasants (including agricultural workers)	28
Urban working class	4
	<u>TOTAL: 43.2</u>

There are significant differences in the class structure of West and East Pakistan.

In West Pakistan (according to the Census of Agriculture published in 1963-4), 63.3 thousand landlords (representing 1.25% of landholders) own more than 100 acres of land, owning between them 15.2 million acres of land (31.2% of the privately owned land). Of these 6.1 thousand of the biggest landlords (representing 0.1% of landholders) own 11.5% of privately owned land. The economic position of the landlords in the West was strengthened by the fact that, before partition, many of the rural money lenders were Hindus and Sikhs; when these departed, their function was taken over by the landlords.

In the East, on the other hand, most of the biggest landowners themselves were Hindus, who moved into India on partition. Taking advantage of religious prejudices, the rich peasants were able in 1950 to secure the passing by the East Pakistan provincial

government of the East Pakistan Acquisition and Tenancy Act which limited the size of landholdings; as a result of this measure, most of the remaining Hindu landlords left the country and the excess and vacated land was redistributed, much of it falling into the hands of the rich peasants. Although many of the Bengali landlords managed to evade the effect of the Act by gifting part of their land to nominees before the Act came into effect, the economic power of the landlord class in East Pakistan is relatively much smaller than in the West.

A further significant difference in the class structure of West and East Pakistan has been brought about by the more rapid development of capitalist industry in the West. Of the 1,414 industrial enterprises which Pakistan inherited, only 314 (22%) were situated in the East, and this picture has been continued to the present day. The fact that this industrial development was largely financed by foreign capital quickly led to the formation in the West of a new comprador industrial capitalist class, largely recruited at first from businessmen who had emigrated from India.

A section of the landlord class in the West fused both with this new comprador industrial bourgeoisie and with the old commercial /financial comprador bourgeoisie to create a new comprador ruling class, which after a period of internal struggle, gained control of the state apparatus, of coercion.

The military dictatorship of Ayub Khan was the instrument of this ruling class, which made use of the state machine to advance to the position of a powerful state monopoly capitalist class - the notorious "Twenty Families" who (according to Dr. Mahbubul Huq, chief economist of the Planning Commission, and M. Raschid, Governor of the State Bank, in 1968) owned 66% of industry, 79% of insurance and 80% of banking.

[The Semi-Colonial Position of East Pakistan](#)

The control of the state machine by a ruling class having its base in West Pakistan was assisted by the fact that, under British rule, military officers and higher civil servants had been drawn principally from landed families in the West. This process was continued after "independence". Goodnow, in his study of the Pakistani civil service, says:

"The situation was aggravated by the fact that the central bureaucrats had been overwhelmingly drawn from West Pakistan."

M.F.Goodnow: "The Civil Service in'Pakistan", New Haven; 1964; p.43),

and Colonel Mohammed Ahmed, the biographer of Ayub Khan, agrees :

"Most of the senior officials had come from West Pakistan, feeling too unhappy to be discreet. They would complain in bitter terms even in the presence of East Pakistanis, whom they blamed for all the misery and inconvenience. A thousand-mile gulf already existed geographically between the people of the two provinces.

Temerity and impudence of the West Pakistanis was widening it emotionally much further.'

(M. Ahmed: "My Chief "; Lahore;1960; p.7-8).

In his report in the "Sunday Times" of June 13th, 1971, Anthony Mascaren has declares that this situation has been greatly accentuated since the full military occupation of East Pakistan:

"East Bengal can only be kept in Pakistan by the heavy hand of the army. And the army is dominated by the Punjabis, who traditionally despise and. dislike the Bengalis. ...

The Government's policy for East Bengal was spelled out to me in the Eastern Command headquarters at Dacca. it has three elements:

- 1) the Bengalis have proved themselves 'unreliable' and must be ruled by West Pakistanis;
- 2) the Bengalis will have to be re-educated along proper Islamic lines. The 'Islamisation of the masses' - this is the official jargon - is intended to eliminate secessionist tendencies and provide a strong religious bond with West Pakistan;
- 3) When the Hindus have been eliminated by death and flight, their property will be used as a golden carrot to win over the under-privileged Muslim middle-class.

....

Because of the mutiny, it has been officially decreed that there will not for the present be any further recruitment of Bengalis in the defence forces. Bengali fighter pilots, among them some of the aces of the Air Force, had the humiliation of being grounded and moved to non-flying duties. Even PIA (Pakistan International Airways - Ed.) air crews operating between the two wings of the country have been strained clean of Bengalis.

The East Pakistan Rifles, once almost exclusively a Bengali para-military force, has ceased to exist since the mutiny. A new force, the Civil Defence Force, has been raised by recruiting Biharis and volunteers from West Pakistan. Biharis, instead of Bengalis, are also being used as the basic material for the police. They are supervised by officers sent out from West Pakistan and by secondment from the army. ...

Hundreds of West Pakistani government civil servants, doctors, and technicians for the radio, TV, telegraph and telephone services have already been sent out to East Pakistan. More are being encouraged to go with the promise of one- and two-step promotions

I was told that all the Commissioners of East Bengal and the district Deputy Commissioners will in future be either Biharis or civil officers from West Pakistan.

...

The Government has also come down hard on the universities and colleges of East Bengal. They were considered the hot beds of conspiracy and they are being 'sorted out'. Many professors have fled. Some have been shot. They will be replaced by fresh recruitment from West Pakistan. ...

Bengali officers are also being weeded out of sensitive positions in the Civil and Foreign Services."
("Sunday Times", June 13th, 1971; p.12,14).

As a result of the control of the state machine by a ruling class based in West Pakistan, state funds were used to develop the economy of the West to a far greater extent than that of the East. In studying the following official figures for even the first years of Pakistan's existence, it should be remembered that the population of East Pakistan is some 19% greater than that of the West.

Capital Expenditure of Provincial Governments: (million rupees)

	<u>EAST</u>	<u>WEST</u>	<u>EAST %</u>
1947-48	2.0	30.5	6%
1948-49	6.4	28.0	19%
1949-50	15.6	114.1	12%
1950-51	16.1	109.4	13%
1951-52	51.5	138.6	27%
1952-53	79.2	186.4	29%
1953-54	91.7	190.6	33%
1954-55	26.8	190.7	12%
1955-56	33.6	330.5	9%
Total:	322.9	1,318.8	20%

DEVELOPMENTAL LOANS SANCTIONED FOR Provincial Governments: (million rupees)

	<u>EAST</u>	<u>WEST</u>	<u>EAST %</u>
1948-49	40.0	72.7	35%
1949-50	42.1	61.5	40%
1950-51	20.0	65.1	24%
1951-52	33.0	75.0	30%
1952-53	29.0	55.0	35%
Total:	164.1	329.3	33%

("Ten Years of Pakistan: 1947-1957", p.56,58).

While the jute exports of East Pakistan provide the principal source of the country's foreign exchange, West Pakistan has received, on average 70% of the country's imports. By 1956 economists had calculated that West Pakistan was receiving an annual tribute from the East of more than 300 million rupees ("Pakistan Times", February 8th, 1957).

Furthermore, a considerable part of the industry which has developed in East Pakistan is controlled by, or financed by, West Pakistani capital.

Since the foundation of Pakistan, East Pakistan has become a market for the manufactured goods produced in the industrial centres of the West, while its raw materials have been used primarily to develop Karachi and the Punjab. In other words, East Pakistan has been in the position of a semi-colony to the dominant West, as a speaker in the Constituent Assembly expressed it as early as 1948:

"A feeling is growing among the Eastern Pakistanis that Eastern Pakistan is being neglected and treated merely as a 'colony' of West Pakistan".
(Constituent Assembly of Pakistan Debates, Volume 2, No.1: February 1948; p.6-7).

The Neo-colonial Position of Pakistan

While, since the foundation of Pakistan, East Pakistan has been in the position of a semi-colony of West Pakistan, Pakistan as a whole has been in the position of a neo-colony of foreign imperialism.

In the early years of its existence, until 1953, the country was dominated politically by a landlord-comprador bourgeois class coalition dependent upon British imperialism, represented politically by the Moslem League. During these years Pakistan's economy was dominated by British monopoly capital:

Ninety % of the banking capital was in the hands of British banks, and British firms controlled more than 80% of Pakistan's imports. The insurance business was also dominated by British capital. Pakistan's holdings of sterling in London and the organisation of currency control within the sterling area, of which Pakistan was a member, restricted the country's opportunities of developing economic relations with states outside the orbit of British imperialism.

The aim of British imperialism - an aim which was faithfully carried out by the Moslem League government of Pakistan - was to hold back the industrial development of the country so that it might continue to be a market for British manufactured goods and a source of raw materials and super-profits for the British imperialists.

In May 1948 the government of the new Dominion issued a long statement of its economic programme. It emphasised that this programme would be based upon private enterprise and foreign capital. It declared that initial emphasis must be laid on the development of agriculture and of industries based on agriculture, as well as on the promotion of handicrafts.

In February 1950 a British industrial mission headed by Lord Burghley, director of the National Provincial Bank and the British Overseas Airways Corporation, toured Pakistan with the declared aim of exploring the possibility of trade expansion and of assistance by British firms to Pakistan's "economic development". The mission's report, issued in August of the same year, recommended that the basic needs of power, water and transport should come before any intensive industrial growth, stating that of these needs the expansion of water-power was "vitally urgent" and one which would require the assistance of British consulting engineers. It recommended that Pakistani technicians should be trained in Britain, and that British technicians should assist in the operation of Pakistani industry. Its final recommendations were that continued publicity should be carried out making clear the Government's stated policy that no further industries would be nationalised, so encouraging investment from abroad, that company taxation should be reduced and the price of Pakistan's exports lowered.

The first indication that a section of Pakistan's ruling class was beginning to look beyond London for its inspiration came when Chowdhury Nazir Ahmed Khan, Pakistan's Minister of Industries, denounced the mission's report as "unrealistic", and declared:

"It would be too much for any country to expect that Pakistan would formulate its industrial policy to suit that country's interests or requirements".

Although officially designated as a measure "to combat Communism", the "Colombo Plan for Co-operative Economic Development in South and South-East Asia", announced in November 1950, was evolved by the British imperialists primarily to compete with the "Point Four" programme of "aid" to underdeveloped countries being brought into being by the US imperialists. The plan was a programme for the "economic development" of Pakistan, India, Ceylon, Malaya and British Borneo costing Pounds Sterling PS 1,868 million over six years. Of this sum, PS 840 million was to be provided directly by the countries being "assisted", PS 246 million from their sterling balances held in London, PS 700 million from "external sources" (mostly, it was hoped, from the USA) and only PS 60 million from Britain.

Eventually, in fact, the United States imperialists did "assist" the Colombo Plan, by incorporating it in their own "aid" programme. By the fourth meeting of the Colombo Plan countries at Ottawa in October 1954, the original seven participating countries had increased to seventeen by the addition of the USA, Japan, the Philippines, Indonesia, Burma, Nepal, South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. Even the meager "aid" programme embodied in the Colombo Plan had proved beyond the enfeebled capacity of British imperialism.

The Formation of National-Democratic Parties

The policy of the neo-colonial Moslem League regime proved extremely frustrating to Pakistan's national capitalists in both East and West, but particularly in the former. From 1950 on, parties representing the interests of these national capitalists began to appear,

parties making their appeal to the peasants, to the urban petty bourgeoisie and to the working class.

In March 1950 there was formed in East Pakistan the [Awami \(People's\) Moslem League](#), led by [Husain Shahid Suhrawardy](#), [Sheikh Mujibur Rahman](#) and peasant leader [Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani](#)

Shortly afterwards the [Azad \(Free\) Pakistan Party](#) appeared in West Pakistan under the leadership of [Mian Iftikharuddin](#) owner of Progressive Papers Ltd., which controlled a chain of newspapers and journals, including the leading English language newspaper "Pakistan Times".

In January 1953 the formation of the [Ganatantri Dal \(Democratic Party\)](#) in the East was followed, also in the East, by the revival of the [Krishak Sramik \(Peasant /Worker\) Party](#), headed by [Fazlul Hug](#) in September of the same year.

Also in September 1953, the Awami Moslem League dropped the religious adjective from its name to become the [Awami League](#).

In 1948 the Communist Party of India had split itself into the [Communist Party of India](#) and the [Communist Party of Pakistan](#), with [Sajjad Zaheer](#) as its first General Secretary. It represented at this time the interests of the working class. In West Pakistan it was forced to go underground after the Rawalpindi "conspiracy" case in 1951; in East Pakistan it was underground from the foundation of Pakistan until November 1953, when it was able to hold its first public meeting. It correctly combined this underground activity with open fractional work within the national -democratic parties, mainly the Awami League and Ganatantri Dal in the East, and the Azad Pakistan Party in the West.

Centralisation and Repression

Faced with the potential threat of national-democratic opposition, the government took steps both to centralise economic control and to arm itself with repressive powers.

In July 1948 a [State Bank](#) was set up to coordinate financial control of the economy, and in the same month [Governor-General Jinnah](#) granted himself special powers by which he could instruct the Governor of a province to take direct control of the provincial administration "in case of emergency". It is interesting to note that this latter step was carried out under Section 92 of the Government of India Act passed in 1935 by the British Conservative Government.

In September 1948 the government set up a Central Engineering Authority to coordinate public works activities in the provinces, particularly the development of electric power.

In December 1948 the right to grant oil and mineral concessions was transferred from the provincial governments to the central government.

In January 1949 the Constituent Assembly passed the Public and Representative Offices Disqualification Act (PRODA), retrospectively to 1947, empowering the Governor-General to debar from public life for up to ten years anyone found guilty by a court or tribunal of any abuse of his official position. As Keith Callard points out:

"The main sufferers under PRODA were politicians who had incurred the displeasure of the central government."

(K.Callard: "Pakistan: A Political Study"; London, 1957; p.103).

In October 1949 the government promulgated the Public Safety Ordinance, giving itself wide powers of detention without trial, restriction of movement, censorship of newspapers and periodicals, and control of "subversive bodies".

In November 1950 it was announced that an Industrial Development Corporation would be set up, with a capital of 40 million rupees, for the development of the jute, paper, engineering and chemical industry. The Minister of Industries, in making this announcement, emphasised that foreign capital and foreign "aid" would be welcomed.

In March 1951 Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan announced that a "communist conspiracy" had been uncovered in the army. A number of army officers (headed by Major-General Akbar Khan Chief of the General Staff), Faiz Ahmed Faiz (editor of the "Pakistan Times") and Saijad Zaheer (General Secretary of the Communist Party), were arrested, tried secretly by special tribunals, and sentenced to terms of imprisonment.

Political Struggle within the Ruling Class

As early as mid-1948 the British intelligence service was reporting to London that an influential section of the landlord and comprador-bourgeois classes in West Pakistan was beginning to look for support away from Britain, with its declining economic and military strength, towards the United States, which had emerged from the Second World War as by far the strongest imperialist power in the world. Accordingly, the British imperialists turned their special attention towards the weaker Bengali landlords as a social base for their continued domination of Pakistan. The Bengali landlords were headed by Cambridge educated Khwaja Nazimuddin, knighted for his services to the British Raj.

In September 1948 Jinnah died, and the Bengali landlords, backed by British imperialism, succeeded in elevating Khwaja Nazimuddin to the vacant post of Governor-General. The new Governor-General, in his turn, nominated another Bengali landlord, Nurul Amin, to succeed him as Chief Minister of East Bengal.

In September 1950 - in which month [Major-General Mohammad Ayub Khan](#) was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Pakistan army in succession to General Sir Douglas Gracey -- the [Basic Principles Committee](#) (appointed in March 1949 to prepare the basis of a Constitution for Pakistan) presented its interim report. Dominated by the ["Karachi" landlord/comprador bourgeois clique](#), the Committee proposed that the country should have, a parliamentary system of government with two Houses, each having equal powers: the lower "House of the People" would be directly elected on the basis of population, while the upper "House of Units" would be elected indirectly by provincial legislatures on the basis of an equal number of members from each province.

With West Pakistan divided into a number of provinces, and the East made up of a single province, a constitution on this basis would have rendered the pro-British Bengali landlord clique virtually impotent. The Committee's recommendation that [Urdu](#) (one of the languages of West Pakistan spoken, according to the 1951 Census, by only 3.3% of the population of the country) should be the official language of Pakistan caused particular indignation in East Bengal.

In March 1950 the Moslem League in the Punjab - dominated by the powerful Punjabi landlords, headed by [Mian Mumtaz Daultana](#) - gained a sweeping victory in the Punjab provincial elections, winning 143 seats out of 194. The ["Punjabi" clique](#), as it came to be known, thus assumed an influential role in the ruling party, and it too was turning towards U.S. imperialism.

Thus, by 1950 three rival groups had come into being within the ruling class of Pakistan:

- 1) the pro-British "Bengali" clique of Eastern landlords and comprador bourgeoisie;
- 2) the pro-U.S. "Punjabi" clique of Western landlords, and
- 3) the pro-U.S. "Karachi" clique of Western landlords and financial/ commercial /industrial comprador bourgeoisie.

In October 1951 Prime Minister, [Liaquat Ali Khan](#) was assassinated. In his hands the office of Prime Minister had, since the death of Jinnah, acquired particular influence, and on the following day Governor-General [Khwaja Nazimuddin](#) appointed himself [Prime Minister](#), and then resigned as Governor-General. The "Karachi" clique successfully replied to this move by securing the appointment of its nominee, [Ghulam Mohammad](#), to the vacant post of Governor-General.

To strengthen its position against the constitutional proposals put forward by the Basic Principles Committee, the "Bengali" clique sought and won the support of the orthodox [mullahs](#) (the Moslem priesthood) to assist it by organising a campaign to the effect that the proposals were "insufficiently Islamic" in content.

In October 1952 the Council of the Moslem League met in Dacca. Here the "Bengali" clique were successful in securing, the adoption of an amendment to the constitution of the League, by which East and West Pakistan would in future have parity of seats on the Council of the League. With West Pakistan divided into several provinces, this effectively enabled the "Bengali" clique to dominate the Moslem League for the time being.

In December 1952 a revised report on the basic principles of the State Constitution was presented to the Constituent Assembly by Prime Minister Khwaja Nazimuddin. It pandered to the conservative mullahs who had assisted in the fight against the 1950 report by declaring that the Head of State must be a Moslem, who would appoint a board of persons versed in Islamic law to advise on legislation. But its most important proposal was to introduce into the State Constitution the principle which had been incorporated in the constitution of the Moslem League three months earlier, namely, that both the upper and lower Houses would have parity of representation between East and West Pakistan. To weaken the position of the Western cliques still more, it was proposed that West Pakistan should be further sub-divided. Although the decision on an official language was left to the Constituent Assembly, this report represented a significant victory for the pro-British "Bengali" clique.

Both the "Punjabi" and the "Karachi" cliques naturally found these constitutional proposals unacceptable, and sought to use against them the same weapon which the "Bengali" clique had used against the 1950 report - that of religious fanaticism. They secured the support of the influential organisation of the orthodox mullahs, the Jamaitul-Ulema-e-Islami, to stir up the backward masses against both the report and the government which had presented them, claiming that the new proposals were still "insufficiently Islamic" in content. In the Punjab, violent programs were organised against a Moslem minority sect, the Ahmadyas, and in March 1953 the Governor-General imposed Martial Law on the province.

By April the "Karachi" clique judged that the position of the Khwaja Nazimuddin government had been sufficiently weakened, and on April 17th 1953, Governor- General Ghulam Mohammad arbitrarily dismissed it from office.

PART THREE: PAKISTAN AS A SEMI-COLONY OF U.S. IMPERIALISM FIRST PHASE: THE PARLIAMENTARY FACADE

Pakistan Moves into the Orbit of U.S. Imperialism

The coup of April 1953 represented a victory of the "Karachi" landlord-comprador bourgeois clique and a defeat of the Bengal landlord /comprador bourgeois clique. But it represented also a victory for U.S. imperialism in relation to Pakistan and a defeat for British imperialism.

The pro-British Khwaja Nazimuddin was replaced as Prime Minister by a figure who had the confidence of the United States imperialists, the Ambassador to Washington, [Mohammad Ali of Bogra](#).

In May 1953 Secretary of State [John Foster Dulles](#) and Director of the Mutual Security Agency [Harold E. Stassen](#) paid an official visit to Pakistan, and in the following month the U.S. government made a gift to the government of Pakistan of 700,000 tons of surplus American wheat. In November 1953 Pakistan's Governor-General Ghulam Mohammad met [President Eisenhower](#) and Secretary of State Dulles in Washington.

Prior to the 1953 coup Pakistan had signed, in February 1951, an agreement with the United States for technical assistance under the "Point Four" programme. But after the coup U.S. "aid" began to flow in considerable quantities. As an article in "Pakistan Today" expresses it:

"In 1953 the U.S. made a dramatic entry into Pakistan politics. It was not until that year that the U.S. had provided any substantial aid to Pakistan."
(Khusro: "The Burden of U.S. Aid", in: "Pakistan Today"; autumn 1961; P.14).

The following table shows the increasing amount of U.S. "aid" to Pakistan (in millions of dollars).

<u>US AID</u>	<u>\$ Millions</u>
1954.....	22.0
1955.....	109.7
1956.....	161.3
1957.....	174.4
1958.....	143.1
1959.....	283.1
1960.....	318.8

The sharp increase in 1959 followed the establishment of the [Ayub Khan military dictatorship](#) in October 1958.

The following table shows the total of foreign "aid" received by Pakistan in 1951-1960 (in millions of dollars)

<u>FOREIGN AID TO PAKISTAN 1951-1960</u>	
US government	1,238.4
Ford Foundation (USA).....	9.4
World Bank.....	151.0
Canada.....	113.0

EXPRESSED IN TERMS OF DOMINATED INTERESTS:

US controlled "Aid".....	1,528.2
United Kingdom govt.....	3.2
Commonwealth govts.....	34.0
Other governments.....	0.6
Total :	\$ million 1,566.0

In this period 98% of total foreign "aid" received by Pakistan came from US-controlled sources.

The price of this US "aid" was, of course, Pakistan's incorporation into the US-dominated system of alliances.

In February 1954 Prime Minister Mohammad Ali announced that the Pakistan government had requested military assistance from the United States. When President Eisenhower was pleased to accept the request a few days later, Mohammad Ali declared:

"Pakistan today enters what promises to be a glorious chapter in our history".

In March 1954 a US military mission arrived in Pakistan. In April 1954 Pakistan moved into the orbit of US imperialism by signing a treaty of "political economic, military and cultural" co-operation with Turkey, which had joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation in February 1952. In July 1955 Pakistan adhered to the Turkey-Iraq "Defence Pact", then known as the "Baghdad Pact" but transformed in August 1959 into the Central Treaty Organisation (CENTO). In May 1954 a "Mutual Defence Assistance Agreement" was signed between Pakistan and the United States. As an article in "Pakistan Today" commented:

"As far as the US is concerned, it does no more than state that it will make such military aid available to Pakistan as 'the Government of the US may authorise' - i.e., there is no specific obligation at all on the US. On the other hand, the agreement imposes on the Government of Pakistan a series of specified obligations. Most of these provisions are in the nature of an undertaking by the Government of Pakistan to follow in the wake of US policies, especially in the event of hostilities. The agreement also imposes on the Pakistan Government the obligation to receive US Government personnel and to give them every facility to observe what is being done with the aid that is furnished. This means that, in the case of military aid, the US observers have the right of direct access to the Pakistan army."

(Khusro: "The Burden of US Aid", in: "Pakistan Today", autumn 1961; p.18-19).

In September 1954 Pakistan adhered to the US-dominated [South-East Asia Treaty Organisation \(SEATO\)](#) . As the US Consul-General in Lahore said in October 1955:

"Pakistan represents to us Americans a new Land of Promise".

The First "Five Year Plan"

Pakistan's change of "masters" did not alter the basic colonial-type pattern of the country's economy.

The first "Five Year Plan" was launched under [Prime Minister Chaudhri Mohammad Ali](#) in 1955. Three years and three governments later, [Prime Minister Malik Firoz Khan Noon](#) was saying:

"I was staggered to learn that until a few day's ago the Five-Year Plan had not even been authenticated by the Government for publication. With hardly two more years to go, the Plan continues to be regarded as routine departmental file, meant only for recording of prolific notes and cross-notes. Even a properly co-ordinated machinery for the implementation of the Plan has not yet been evolved."

(Malik Firoz Khan Noon: Reply to an address at the foundation-stone laying ceremony at a power plant in Multan, April 24th, 1958).

The basis of the Plan, such as it was, was, of course, private enterprise:

"Despite this dismal record, the accent of the First Five Year Plan was still on private enterprise".

(Mushtaq Ahmad: "Government and Politics in Pakistan"; Karachi; 1963: pt214),

The main purpose of the Plan was not to speed industrialisation, but to slow it down, by making allocations in such a way as to lay "special emphasis" on agriculture, on the pretext that, before the Plan, industry had been developing too rapidly in relation to agriculture:

"In the past the interests of agriculture had been sacrificed at the altar of industry.....

By putting agriculture in the centre of the programme the balance, formerly tilted too heavily in favour of industry, was sought to be redressed.....

All that the Plan did was to catalogue the projects in the public and private sector and to determine the allocations with special emphasis on agriculture."

(Mushtaq Ahmad: *ibid.*, p.61, 214),

"In Pakistan a steady move away from industrialisation policy has taken place. The First Five Year Plan stepped down industrial investment under the excuse of 'consolidating' the development which had already taken place."
(Khusro: "The Burden of US Aid", in: "Pakistan Today", autumn 1961; p.47).

The Plan's one progressive feature - a scheme for land reform in West Pakistan - was shelved by the Subrawardy government (1956-57) and abandoned by the Noon government (1957-58):

"To appease the Republican partners in the Government, he (i.e., Prime Minister Suhrawardy - Ed.) agreed to shelve the proposal for land reform, which was the redeeming feature of the Plan. ...
Land reforms which were considered basic to the entire Plan and which under Republican pressure were shelved during Mr. Suhrawardy's tenure, were totally abandoned (by the Noon government - Ed.) ...
A vital limb of the Plan was thus amputated. Malik Firoz Khan (Noon - Ed.) was the first Prime Minister to justify the existence of landlordism as a stabilising force in society."
(Mushtaq Ahmad: *ibid.*-, p,72, 79).

Even the planned targets for the development of public works in connection with agriculture were however, reached only in a minority of cases:

"Major irrigation and power projects were behind schedule. Only 50%. of the irrigation projects were attained in West Pakistan and 33% in East Pakistan, even though the expenditure in all cases was in excess of the original estimates."
(Mushtaq Ahmad: *ibid.*; p.214).

The Plan was based, in the words of Mushtaq Ahmad, on a

"Gross overestimation of resources, both internal and external."
(Mushtaq Abmad: *ibid.*; p.70).

Furthermore, the fiscal Policy of successive governments was based predominantly on indirect taxation, which fell most heavily on the poorer strata of the population, while the rich were successful in evading much of the relatively modest taxes imposed upon them, with the aid of corrupt tax officials:

"The fiscal policy was still wedded to indirect methods of taxation, whose incidence was inevitably borne by the common people. The rich still made a disproportionately small contribution to the Exchequer, and even where the rate of taxation was made heavier, there was no proportionate increase in the yield. Evasion of taxes was a common practice which the Ministry of Finance and the Central Board of Revenue did nothing to check, nor were steps taken to

eradicate corruption from the Income Tax and Customs Departments."
(Mushtaq Ahmad: *ibid.* p.79).

As a result of the overestimation of resources and the fiscal policy, the Plan was financed to a great extent by inflationary method i.e., by the printing of new money:

"The gross overestimation of resources, both internal and external, had driven the previous government (i.e., the [Chaudhri Mohammad Ali](#) government - Ed.) to rely increasingly on methods of inflationary finance, as was evidenced in the increase in money supply. . . .

The projects had, therefore, to be financed out of State borrowing from the banks, leading to a further addition in the money supply.

The dreadful economic and social implications of uncontrolled inflation were ignored by the National Economic Council

(As a result of the fiscal policy - Ed.) the inflationary trends were consequently accentuated.

The operations of the free market led to an unprecedented rise in prices."
(Mushtaq Ahmad: *ibid.*, p.70,71,79, 214).

The money in circulation rose, in fact, by 654.9 million rupees in 1955-56, and by 454.0 million rupees in 1956-57. (State Bank Annual Report, 1956-57; p.31,29).

By the time of the Suhrawardy government (1956-57) it became necessary to scale down the modest targets of the original Plan, while the Noon government (1967-58) , scaled them down still further, without altering the basis of the Plan:

"All that was done during his (i.e., Suhrawardy's - Ed.) regime was the reduction of the targets. ...

The (Noon - Ed.) Government scaled down the size of the development programme from Rs. 1,160 crores (i.e., 11,600 million rupees - Ed.) as originally stipulated, to 1,080 crores (i.e., 10,800 million rupees - Ed.), affecting both the private and public sectors. The 'realistic appraisal' of the resources was, however, not accompanied by an equally realistic reassessment of the use to which these resources were to be put, the new version of the Plan 'retaining all the distinctive features' of its original."

(Mushtaq Ahmad: *ibid.*; p.78).

[The 1954 Provincial Elections in East Bengal](#)

In an effort to increase the influence of the Awami Moslem League - and so of the national bourgeoisie of East Bengal, whose interests this political party represented - beyond the eastern province, its leader [Suhrawardy](#) had, towards the end of 1952, organised a conference in Lahore together with dissident groups (mainly of landlords) in

other provinces. This conference set up what was intended to be an all-Pakistan party, the [Jinnah Awami Moslem League](#), as a loose confederation, But the difference of class interests represented in it caused it to collapse in the following year.

The national bourgeoisie of East Bengal then turned their attention, as a first step, to winning control of the provincial legislature. The report of the Basic Principles Committee of September 1950 had angered public opinion in the province and as a result the Awami League (as it was renamed in September 1953) experienced a great increase in its support. This enabled it to form a ["United Front"](#) with two smaller parties - [the Krishak Sramik Party and the Nizam-el-Islam \(Islamic Order\) Party](#). The [Communist Party](#) gave the United Front its support.

The [programme](#) of the United Front, in the drafting of which the Awami League, as the strongest party in the coalition, played the leading role, was embodied in a 21-point Charter the main points of which were:

- a) complete autonomy for East Bengal in all matters except defence, foreign affairs and currency;
- b) recognition of Bengali as a second official language on equal terms with Urdu;
- c) consultation between East Bengal and the Centre on the allocation of foreign exchange,
- d) dissolution of the existing Constituent Assembly and its replacement by a directly elected body;
- e) repeal of repressive legislation.

Around this Charter, the United Front organised a large-scale campaign for the holding of [provincial elections](#) in East Bengal. The central government finally agreed to this demand, in the hope that the influence of the "Bengali" landlord /comprador bourgeois clique would be reduced as a result of their expected losses insuch an election.

The provincial elections took place in March 1954, and resulted in the [rout of the Moslem League](#) which won only 10 seats, in a House of 310. Ex-Chief Minister Nurul Amin was defeated by an 18-year-old student with a majority of more than 7,000, and many of the Moslem League candidates lost their deposits.

The United Front won 223 seats out of 310, while the Communist Party gained 4 of the 10 seats it contested, another 23 members of the Communist Party were elected as candidates representing other parties.

The central government's plan to weaken the political influence of the "Bengali" landlord /comprador bourgeois clique had succeeded - but at the cost of bringing into the East Pakistan legislative assembly a [majority representing the interests of the national bourgeoisie](#) of that province. [Prime Minister Mohammad Ali](#) made haste to declare that

the provincial election results would in no way affect the composition of the central Constituent Assembly!

In April 1954 the leader of the Krishak Sramik Party, Fazlul Huq, was invited to form a provincial government, but the central government took immediate steps to bring about its removal. Almost at once violent fighting, in which several hundred people were killed, began between Bengali and non-Bengali workers in plantations and factories, and, according to the "Pakistan Times", was without any doubt brought about by agents-provocateurs in the pay of the central government.

On May 30th, therefore, the Governor-General imposed Governor's Rule over the province. on the pretext that an "emergency", which the provincial government had been unable to prevent, threatened the security of East Bengal. Major-General Iskander Mirza Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Defence, and a firm supporter of the "Karachi" landlord /comprador bourgeois clique, was flown into Dacca and sworn in as the new Governor of East Bengal. The leaders of the Awami League were arrested, ex-Chief Minister Fazlul Huq was placed under house arrest, and Suhrawardy prudently went abroad for medical treatment.

In June all political meetings were prohibited in East Bengal, and in July the Communist Party was banned, first in East Bengal, then throughout the country. By July 17th, it was officially stated, 1,292 people had been arrested.

The Coup of October 1954

A month after the chastening rout of the Moslem League in East Bengal, the Moslem League parliamentary party adopted the so-called "language formula", under which Bengali would have equal status with Urdu as an official language. In June the Constituent Assembly endorsed the "language formula".

On September 21st, 1954, the "Bengali" clique, which was still represented in the central Constituent Assembly by the group headed by Khwaja Nazimuddin, staged a parliamentary coup against the pro-US "Karachi" group. With the cooperation of the Speaker, Tamizuddin Khan, a member of the "Bengali" clique, they arranged for the Assembly to meet an hour earlier than normal, the necessary papers being delivered to Constituent Assembly members outside the group by hand during the night. Then, in a lightning 10 minute session in which only 40 out of the 80 members of the Constituent Assembly were present, they repealed PRODA (used as an instrument of coercion against them by the "Karachi" clique) and adopted an amendment to the Government of India Act, 1935, depriving the Governor-General of his power to dismiss a government at will.

The "Karachi" clique sought to fight back by taking advantage of the contradictions between the Bengali national capitalists, and the Bengali landlord/comprador bourgeois

class - the "Bengali" clique represented in the Constituent Assembly by the Nazimuddin group.

The Governor-General approached Suhrawardy, the leader of the Awami League, suggesting that the latter would benefit by, and should support, action by the Governor-General to dissolve the Constituent Assembly and arrange for the election of a new, more representative one by the provincial legislative assemblies, since this would mean that the seats in the Constituent Assembly allotted to East Bengal would be occupied predominantly by representatives of the Awami League. Suhrawardy agreed, and issued a statement to this effect from his Zurich hospital.

Assured of this support, the "Karachi" clique acted quickly. On October 24th, 1954 the Governor-General declared a state of emergency and dissolved the Constituent Assembly. He then instructed Prime Minister Mohammad Ali to reconstruct his government by bringing in a number of new Ministers who had not been elected to the Constituent Assembly, the most important of these being Major-General Mirza as Minister of the Interior, General Mohammad Ayub Khan (Commander -in-Chief of the army) as Minister of Defence, and Dr. Khan Sahib, an Independent, as Minister of Communications.

As Mushtaq Ahmad says:

"From 24th October 1954, to 7th July 1955, when the new Constituent Assembly was convened, he (i.e., Prime Minister Mohammad Ali - Ed.) continued to head a government which could only be described as the Governor-General's Council."
(Mushtaq Ahmed-, "Government and Politics in Pakistan"; Karachi, 1963; p.57).

The Speaker of the old Constituent Assembly, Tamizuddin Khan, challenged the constitutional legality of the Governor-General's action in the courts, and a long legal wrangle ensued. It was ended only in May 1955, when the Federal Court ruled that the action was 'valid', but that the law required the election of a new 'Comtituent Assembly.

Splitting the United Front

After winning the support of the Awami League leadership for its coup of October 1954, the "Karachi" clique turned its attention to splitting the United Front in East Bengal, offering to the two other parties in the coalition - the Krishak Sramik Party and the Nizam-e-Islam Party - the opportunity to be invited to form a provincial government in East Bengal if they would break with the Awami League.

The offer was accepted, and in February 1955 these two parties severed their association with the Awami League, but continued the link between themselves under

the name of the "United Front".

In June 1955 the Governor-General revoked Governor's rule over East Pakistan (as the province of East Bengal was officially renamed in March 1955), and Abu Hussain Sarkar of the Krishak Sramik Party, was invited to form a United Front provincial government - with the Awami League in opposition.

"One Unit"

In the autumn of 1964 the "Punjabi" landlord clique began to campaign for the fusion of the various provinces of West Pakistan into a single administrative unit - the so-called "One Unit" scheme. This would have increased the political power of West Pakistan in relation to East Pakistan, and would, without modifications, have made the "Punjabi" landlord clique the strongest political force in West Pakistan.

The "Karachi" clique now offered a deal to the "Punjabi" clique under which the former would support the "One Unit" scheme, provided the latter would agree:

- a) to the limitation of Punjab representation in the West Pakistan legislative assembly;
- b) not to oppose the incorporation of Karachi, the capital, in West Pakistan; and
- c) not to oppose the establishment of joint electoral rolls throughout the country.

The first two of these concessions were, of course, designed to strengthen the political position of the "Karachi" clique in relation to the "Punjabi" clique, the third concession was to be one of the points of a deal to be offered to the leadership of the Awami League. The deal was concluded. In November 1964 Prime Minister Mohammad Ali announced that the government intended to put "One Unit" into force. In December the Punjab provincial assembly adopted a "self-sacrificing" resolution to limit its representation in the new West Pakistan provincial assembly to 40% of the seats (on a population basis, the Punjab would have been entitled to 56%), and the government announced that Karachi, hitherto a Federal area, would be incorporated in the new united province of West Pakistan.

Meanwhile the "Karachi" clique had been offering a deal to the leaders of the Awami League. The basis of this was that if Suhrawardy would enter the government and work in support of "One Unit", the "Karachi" clique would arrange for the Awami League to participate in a coalition government at the Centre, with Suhrawardy as Prime Minister, and would see that joint electoral rolls were established throughout the country.

The question of joint electoral rolls or separate religious rolls was an important one for the national capitalists of East Pakistan. Unlike the West, the East contained a large, nine million Hindu minority, comprising 18.4% of the population. This minority could exert

a much stronger political influence on the basis of separate representation for Hindus than if Hindus voted alongside the Moslem majority in each electorate.

Thus, in return for supporting "One Unit" within the government (a concession which would weaken the position of the national bourgeoisie of East Pakistan, the interests of which the Awami League represented) the leaders of the Awami League were offered two actions (participation in the government and joint electorates) which would appear to strengthen the position of the national bourgeoisie of East Pakistan.

The deal was accepted, and in December 1954 [Suhrawardy](#) entered the "Governor's Council" as Minister of Law, in which capacity he played the leading role in drafting the legislation for "One Unit".

The Federal Court having in May 1955 resolved the "Tamizuddin Khan Case" in favour of the Governor-General, a new Constituent Assembly was indirectly elected in June by the provincial assemblies on the basis of 40 members each from West and East Pakistan.

The Role of Mirza

In August 1955 [Governor-General Ghulam Mohammad](#) was granted leave of absence for health reasons, and another nominee of the "Karachi" clique, [Major General Iskander Mirza](#), was elevated from the position of Minister, of the Interior to that of Acting Governor-General. In the following month Mirza became Governor -General.

The representation of the three main parties/party groups in the new Constituent Assembly was now as follows:

Moslem League	33
United Front	16
Awami League	13
Other parties/groups ...	18
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>80</u>

Since no party/party group held a majority in the Constituent Assembly, the only possible government which could command the confidence of the Assembly would be a coalition government. This placed the "Karachi" clique in a strong political position, since its nominee, Mirza, held the position of Governor-General (later President), at whose behest governments could be formed and dismissed. Mirza had, before his appointment as Governor-General, openly expressed his contempt for "parliamentary democracy", and he used his powers astutely to discredit it, as well as the -various political 2arties, in order to prepare the ground for the establishment of a military dictatorship on behalf of the "Karachi" clique:

"After he got himself elected, the sanctity of the Constitution was violated by more subtle and devious means of keeping the governments in office at his suffrance through a skilful manipulation of parliamentary support. In the making and unmaking of Ministries, his hand was throughout visible.

His dictatorial leanings were not revealed for the first time in office, but were known long before he was elected to it. As Governor of East Pakistan and Minister of the Interior he had given public expression to his contempt for democracy".

(Mushtaq Ahmad: "Government and Politics in Pakistan"; Karachi, 1963; p.39, 42).

"The view is held that he deliberately set out to discredit and destroy parliamentary democracy so that he could establish a lifelong dictatorship. This appears to be a harsh view, but it could be said with greater justice that he contributed more than anyone else to the creation of those conditions of political confusion which he used as an argument in support of the alleged failure of the Constitution and his action in abrogating it." (Ex-Prime Minister Chaudhri Mohammad Ali: Report of the Constitution Committee, 1962, in: Mushtaq Ahmad: *ibid.*; p.40-41).

"The President had thoroughly exploited the weaknesses in the Constitution and had got everyone connected with the political life of the country utterly exposed and discredited. I do not think he ever wanted to hold general elections; he was looking for a suitable opportunity to abrogate the Constitution. Indeed, he was setting the stage for it."

(Mohammad Ayult Khan: "Friends not Masters: A Political Autobiography"; London 1967; p.56-57).

The 1956 Constitution

In August 1955, as Mirza took up the post of Governor-General on behalf of the "Karachi" clique, the "Punjabi" landlord clique struck back. As a result of this clique's domination of the Moslem League parliamentary party since the eclipse of the "Bengali" clique, this body elected a nominee of the clique, [Chaudhri Mohammad Ali](#), as leader of the party in place of [Prime Minister Mohammad Ali](#), the nominee of the "Karachi" clique. This forced Mohammad Ali to resign as Prime Minister. The "Punjabi" clique now sought to counter the deal made between the "Karachi" clique and the Awami League by making a deal with the United Front. The leaders of the latter were offered:

- a) participation in a coalition government at the Centre;
- b) a Constitution that would give East Pakistan parity of representation in the National Assembly with West Pakistan and would give Bengali the status of an official language on equal terms with Urdu, and
- c) the establishment of a National Economic Council having for its

declared policy the maintenance of uniform standards of development in all parts of the country.

In return the United Front would drop its demand for complete provincial autonomy for East Pakistan.

The deal was accepted, and Chaudhri Mohammad Ali proceeded to form a government consisting of 5 Ministers from the Moslem League, 5 from the United Front, and 1 Independent - Dr. Khan Sahib. Significantly [General Mohammad Ayub Khan](#), the nominee of the "Karachi" clique, was omitted from the government.

In September 1955 the new Constituent Assembly, meeting at Murree, a hill town in the Punjab, adopted the "One Unit" scheme for West Pakistan, which formally came into being in October.

In January 1956, in accordance with the agreement between the "Karachi" clique and the United Front, a [National Economic Council](#) was set up with the declared policy already agreed upon.

In February 1956 the Constituent Assembly approved the [Constitution Bill](#). Pakistan was to be a [Federal Republic, to be called "The Islamic Republic of Pakistan"](#); its President, who was required to be a Moslem, was to be elected for a term of five years by an electoral college consisting of the National Assembly and the provincial legislative assemblies. The President was named as supreme commander of the armed forces and was to be given wide powers "in case of emergency". The Bill provided for a single National Assembly of 300 members, drawn in equal numbers from East and West Pakistan, to be directly elected for five years on the basis of adult suffrage. Urdu and Bengali would have equal status as official languages.

During the Third Reading of the Bill members representing the Awami League and the Pakistan National Congress walked out of the Assembly in protest against the Islamic provisions in the Constitution and the failure to give full provincial autonomy to East Pakistan.

In March the National Assembly (as the Constituent Assembly was now called) elected [Major-General Mirza](#) as President of the Republic and resolved that Pakistan would remain within the Commonwealth.

The Islamic Republic of Pakistan formally came into existence on March 23rd, 1956.

[The Creation of the Republican Party](#)

The replacement of the nominee of the "Karachi" clique as leader of the Moslem League and Prime Minister by the nominee of the "Punjabi" clique in August 1955 made it clear

that, if the "Karachi" clique was to achieve complete political power, the Moslem League had to be destroyed - at least in its existing form as a political party representing the interests of the "Punjabi" clique.

The arena chosen for this operation was the new, "One Unit" province of West Pakistan.

In April 1955 [Governor-General Ghulam Mohammad](#) had designated, on behalf of the "Karachi" clique [Mushtaq Ahmad Gurmani](#) as Governor of the new province, and [Dr. Khan Sahib](#) as Chief Minister.

In January 1956, however, indirect elections were held for the new West Pakistan legislative assembly, with the former provincial assemblies acting as electoral colleges. Following these elections, a Moslem League parliamentary group for the provincial assembly was formed, which claimed 245 members out of a House of 310. In April this parliamentary group threw down a challenge to the "Karachi" clique by adopting a resolution to, the effect that only a member of the Moslem League would be acceptable as Chief Minister ([Khan Sahib](#) being an Independent). The "Karachi" clique were prepared for the challenge.

Two days later the Governor confirmed the appointment of Khan Sahib as Chief Minister and the latter had, in the meantime, announced the formation of a new political party to be known as the [Republican Party](#). It was made clear that the new party had the full personal backing of President Mirza (of whom Khan Sahib was a personal friend) and within days a majority of Moslem League members both of the National Assembly and of the West Pakistan legislative assembly had deserted the Moslem League and joined the Republican Party.

The Republican Party was thus created as the open parliamentary party of the "Karachi" clique. It was a purely parliamentary machine, with the vaguest of programmes, and it was distinguished from the Moslem League only by the fact that it was controlled by the "Karachi" clique, while the latter had been controlled by the "Punjabi" clique.

"The organisation of the Republican Party to keep Dr. Khan Sahib in office in West Pakistan, and to enable him (the President) to retain his hold over a substantial membership of the National Assembly was a measure of his involvement in politics, despite his protestations to the contrary.

The Republican Party provided him with a convenient tool to establish his supremacy both over the Parliament and the Prime Minister. Since it had the largest following in the House, the Prime Minister was always a nominee of the President.

At his instance the Party gave and withdrew its support from successive governments, and in each crisis people were given the impression that the President alone was the one and only force of stability in the country.....

Neither at the Centre nor in the provinces had it a policy or a programme, and

its members in the legislatures had no bond of loyalty save their common stake in the government. No matter of principle or ideology being involved in their secession from the Moslem League, the party whose ranks they had swollen was hardly distinguishable from its parent body.

The party thus functioned within the four walls of Parliament. ...

The Republicans acquired the reputation of being considered the party of the palace. The reputation was not altogether baseless as on several occasions party meetings were held in the President's House

Created by the government, the Republican Party had no entity apart from the government."

(Mushtaq Ahmad: "Government and Politics in Pakistan"; P.3()-40, 156, 158, 179, 182).

The Creation of the National Awami Party

The United Front in East Pakistan had now been broken up, but the Awami League remained as the political party of the national capitalists of East Pakistan. The smashing of the Moslem League in West Pakistan had weakened the political power of the "Punjabi" landlord clique, but this clique continued to exercise a powerful influence in the provincial Republican Party within unified West Pakistan.

The next tasks of the "Karachi" clique on its road to complete state power were, therefore,

- 1) to split the Awami League,
- 2) to weaken still further the political power of the "Punjabi" clique.

These tasks were accomplished by the formation of a coalition government at the Centre in which the Awami League could be gravely compromised.

As a result of the defection of his Moslem League Ministers to the Republican Party, by September 1956, Prime Minister Chaudhri Mohammad Ali was left as the only member of the Cabinet remaining in the Moslem League. On September 8th, 1956, finding this position untenable, he resigned both as Prime Minister and from the Moslem League.

Meanwhile, the leaders of the Republican Party had reached agreement with the leaders of the Awami League that, if the latter would join them in a coalition government, they would support the enactment of legislation to establish joint electoral rolls throughout the country - this question having been left unresolved in the Constitution Act of February 1956.

On September 10th, 1956, therefore, President Mirza invited Suhrawardy, leader of the Awami League, to form a government, and a coalition government of 5 Republicans and 4 Awami League members came to office, with Suhrawardy as Prime Minister.

For tactical reasons, the electorate issue was dealt with in two stages.

First, in September 1956, the National Assembly adopted the Electorate Bill, providing for joint electoral rolls in East Pakistan and separate religious electoral rolls in West Pakistan. Then, in April 1957, it adopted the Electorate Amendment Bill, abolishing separate electorates in West Paki'stan and establishing joint electorat rolls throughtout the country.

On other issues, such as foreign policy, the Awami League Ministers were compelled either to follow the policy of the dominant Republican Party (that is, of the "Karachi" clique) or resign. They chose the former course, and Suhrawardy became a skilled exponent of the "necessity" for Pakistan to maintain and develop its dependence on US imperialism.

"The policies he (i.e., Suhrawardy - Ed) pursued had to be evolved in consultation and agreement with the senior partners in the Coalition.

Although the foreign policy pursued by Mr. Suhrawardy was admittedly not his own, he decidedly proved its abler exponent than the two Mohammad Alis who had preceded him. He argued that Pakistan's membership of the military alliances was a condition of its survival, and neutrality the surest invitation to aggression. ...

He was a staunch champion of the West.

Indeed, he went far out of his way to support the West."

(Mushtaq Ahmad: "Government and Politics in Pakistan"; Karachi; 1963; P.66, 68).

The pro-US imperialist policy of the Awami League Ministers aroused considerable indignation among the national capitalists of East Pakistan, whose interests the Awami League had been founded to represent, as well as among anti-imperialist rank-and-file members of the party.

In October 1956, therefore, President Mirza went to Dacca where:

"Strangely he conferred with Maulana Bhashani".

(D.N. Banerjee: "East Pakistan: A Case-study in Muslim Politics"; Delhi; 1963;. p.93).

Mirza's offer to Bhashani, who was President of the Awami League, was that if he (Bhahani) - taking advantage of the dissatisfaction with the foreign policy of the Awami League Ministers - formed a breakaway party which would include in its programme the dismemberment of West Pakistan, the Republican Party would support it.

Shortly after his meeting with Mirza, Bhashani began to criticise openly, this policy of the Awami League Ministers. In March 1967, Bhashani resigned as President of the

League. In July 1957, together with [Mian Iftikharuddin](#), leader of the [Azad Pakistan Party](#), he sponsored a convention of "democratic forces" in Dacca, which set up the [National Awami Party \(NAP\)](#).

The programme of the National Awami Party included the following points:

- Full provincial autonomy for all provinces (including those at present incorporated in West Pakistan);
- Development of an industrialised economy, through the encouragement of a national enterprise;
- The abolition of landlordism in the countryside;
- Uncompromising opposition to all foreign alliances, better conditions for the working class in the fields of wages, education, health, etc;

Thus, the appeal of the N.A.P. was directed towards the landlords in the former provinces of Sind, North-West Frontier Province and Baluchistan (now dominated with "One Unit" by the "Punjabi" landlord clique), and towards the national capitalists, peasantry, petty bourgeoisie and workers in both West and East - with particular emphasis on drawing the support of these latter classes in the East away from the Awami League. Although the appeal of the N.A.P was directed towards these social strata, objectively it was a party which served the interests of the "Karachi" land-lord /comprador bourgeois clique. While the Republican Party was the open party of the "Karachi" clique, the National Awami Party was its concealed instrument.

From the viewpoint of practical politics, the key point in the policy of the N.A.P. was that of working for the dismemberment of West Pakistan.

"In the organisation and membership of the party itself, opposition to One Unit played the most important and decisive part."
(Mushtaq Ahmad: *ibid.*; p.162).

It was this which particularly appealed to the landlords in Sind, the NorthWest Frontier Province and Baluchistan. The Frontier area soon became the largest unit in the new party, most of its members there being the personal followers of landlord [Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan](#) (the brother of the Republican leader [Dr.Khan Sahib](#)).

In face of the situation created by the breaking away of a section of their party to form the National Awami Party, the leaders of the Awami League approached the leaders of the Krishak Sramik Party with the proposal that a new "united front" should be established between the two parties. To counter this move, the representatives of the "Karachi" clique offered a deal to the K.S.P. leadership to the effect that, if the Awami League's proposal were rejected, the K.S.P. would be invited to participate in a coalition government at the Centre. The result of these manoeuvres was that the K.S.P. also split: one section, headed by [Azizul Huq](#) and [Yusuf Ali Chaudhur](#), favoured a "united front"

with the Awami League, the other section, headed by [Hamidul Huq Chaudhury](#), favoured coming to terms with the "Karachi" clique in order to gain the opportunity of participating in the central government.

In September 1957, following the agreement to "work together" between the leaders of the Republican Party and those of the National Awami Party, the West Pakistan legislative assembly adopted a resolution in favour of the dismemberment of West Pakistan into four separate provinces. The resolution was moved by those representatives who were now members of the National Awami Party and supported by most of the Republican Party members.

Even [Tariq Ali](#), a Trotskyite supporter of the National Awami Party, is compelled to admit:

"The National Awami Party indulged in a certain amount of political intrigue in West Pakistan with the extreme right-wing Republican Party... It was prepared to make unprincipled alliances to undo One Unit in West Pakistan."

The Communist Party of Pakistan was by now completely dominated by revisionism, and the National Awami Party became the principal field of work of "communists", some of whom obtained influential positions.

The Awami League was opposed to the dismemberment of West Pakistan, since this would destroy the whole basis of the deal by which they had gained parity between East and West in the National Assembly. But the usefulness of the Awami League leaders to the "Karachi" clique was now at an end, and in October 1957 the Republican Party withdrew its support from the coalition government on the grounds that Prime Minister [Suhrawardy](#) was not putting into effect the resolution of the West Pakistan provincial assembly recommending the dissolution of "One Unit".

On October 11th, [Suhrawardy](#) resigned as Prime Minister at the demand of [President Mirza](#), on the grounds that, with the withdrawal of Republican support, his government no longer commanded the support of a majority of members of the National Assembly. ["Parliamentary Democracy" in the East Wing](#)

Meanwhile in East Pakistan, the provincial government of [Abu Hussain Sarkar](#) - opposed by the Awami League, the Pakistan National Congress and the Schedule Caste Federation - had been in a position to be overthrown on a vote of confidence as soon as the provincial assembly was called together. For this reason, the provincial assembly was not called together for almost a year, and in the meantime, in March 1956, [Governor-General Mirza](#) - to strengthen the shaky position of the Sarkar government - appointed as Governor of East Bengal [Fazlul Huq](#), leader of the Krishak Sramik Party, the principal party in the "United Front".

The need to have the provincial budget approved by the assembly, made it necessary to summon the provincial assembly on May 22nd, 1956. Speaker [Abdul Hakim](#) (another member of the K. S. P.) saved the day by adjourning the House without permitting the budget to be presented. On May 26th, on the advice of Governor Fazlul Huq, Mirza (now President) imposed Governor's rule on the province. On June 1st, having himself authorised provincial expenditure for three months, he revoked Governor's Rule, and reinstated the Sarkar Ministry.

The next meeting of the provincial legislative assembly was fixed for August 13th, 1956. Four hours before the session was due to begin, Governor Fazlul Huq prorogued it. The Sarkar Ministry finally resigned and Governor's Rule was once more imposed on the province.

In September, 1956, after a demonstration had been fired upon by the Dacca police, killing four people, and a general strike had been called in protest, [Aaur Rahman Khan](#) of the Awami League was invited to form a provincial government. This was a coalition government which included Ministers from Ganatantri Dal and the Pakistan National Congress, and - with intermittent periods of Governor's Rule and two unsuccessful attempts to reinstate the Sarkar Ministry - it continued in office until the military coup of October 1958.

[The Final Phase of "Parliamentary Democracy"](#)

Now that the attack on "One Unit" had been opened by the National Awami Party and the Republican Party, the Moslem League replied by opening an attack upon the principle of joint electorates - claiming that these had only been accepted on the basis of "One Unit".

In August 1967 the [Nizam-e-Islam Party](#) broke away from the Krishak Sramak Party on the issue of separate religious electorates (which the former supported and the latter opposed), and the "United Front" ceased to exist. In May 1958 the Nizam-e-Islam Party merged with the [Tahrik-i-Istehkam-i-Pakistan](#) (a small party formed by ex-Prime Minister [Chaudhri Mohammad Ali](#)) into a new Islamic party under the former's name. The Republican Party (which had brought about the downfall of the Suhrawardy government ostensibly on the grounds that its Awami League Ministers had failed to put into effect the resolution of the West Pakistan provincial legislature recommending dismemberment of "One Unit") now entered into an agreement with the Moslem League to form a coalition government with it on the understanding that the question of "One Unit" could be postponed indefinitely, and that the Republicans would support legislation to establish separate religious electoral rolls.

In December 1957 ex-Prime Minister Chundrigar revealed that:

"The President had given his word on behalf of the Republican Party to the effect that they would support a Bill ushering in separate electorates". ("Dawn", Karachi- December 19th, 1957).

The leaders of the Krishak Sramik Party were then persuaded to reverse their position on separate electorates in order that they might participate in the coalition government to be formed.

On this basis, on, October 18th, 1957 a coalition government composed of the Republican Party, the Moslem League, the Krishak Sramik Party and the Nizam-e-Islam Party was formed, with [Ismail Ibrahim Chundrigar](#) of the Moslem League as Prime Minister, it consisted of 7 Republicans, 4 Ministers from the Moslem League, 3 from the K.S.P., 1 from the Nizam-e-Islam Party, and 1 Independent. The Moslem League, said Prime Minister Chundrigar:

"... had entered the Government to save the ideology of Pakistan, which was menaced by joint electorates". ("Dawn", Karachi; November 3rd, 1957).

The new government proceeded immediately to introduce a Bill for the establishment of separate religious electorates for the promised General Election, now postponed until November 1958.

The Republican Party now reversed its policy once more - its Central Committee declaring that the party could not, after all, support the introduction of separate religious electorates. Having lost the support of the Republicans, the Chundrigar government was compelled to resign, two months after, taking office, on December 11th, 1957.

On December 16th, 1957, [President Mirza](#) invited [Malik Firoz Khan Noon](#), the new leader of the Republican Party, to form a government. On the basis of the party's new policy of defending joint electorates, Noon was promised the support of all the parties in the House which favoured joint electorates - the Awami League, the National Awami Party, the Pakistan National Congress, the Schedule Caste Federation, and the section of the Krishak Sramik Party headed by Hamidul Huq Choudhury.

The new government was composed initially of 7 Republicans, 1 Minister from the K.S.P., and 1 Independent

Suspecting that the new government would proceed to dismember West Pakistan, the Moslem League - still dominated by the "Punjabi" landlord clique and strengthened by some defections from the Republican Party, -- on this issue - now organised a para-military force of some 60,000, the [National Guard](#) which began to parade the streets of the cities armed and uniformed.

But the plans of the "Karachi" clique to establish a military dictatorship were now reaching their final phase.

In March 1958 [President Mirza](#) warned:

"Law and order have deteriorated; general administration has weakened, provincialism is working its venom unabated."
("Pakistan Times"; March 24th, 1958).

In May 1958 [Dr. Khan Sahib](#) founder of the Republican Party, was assassinated, and in July the General Elections were further postponed from November 1958 to February 1959.

On September 20th, 1958 the Speaker of the East Pakistan legislative assembly, [Abdul Hakim](#), a member of the Krishak Sramik Party, named several Awami League members for disorderly conduct, whereupon fighting broke out in the chamber and the Speaker was forced to leave. The Deputy Speaker, a defector from the K.S.P., then permitted a motion to be carried declaring the Speaker to be of unsound mind. On September 23rd, opposition members attacked the Deputy Speaker when he attempted to take the chair, and he was fatally injured. Several opposition members, including former Chief Minister Sarkar, were arrested. The provincial budget was passed in the absence of the opposition, and the assembly adjourned.

In the same month, September 1958, the government imposed a ban on all private paramilitary organisations, pre-censorship of all newspapers and periodicals, a ban on meetings of more than 5 persons, and the death penalty for a whole range of offences, including the publication of material "calculated to provoke feelings of enmity".

The Working Committee of the Moslem League replied on September 28th by adopting a resolution accusing the government of trying to create lawlessness and bloodshed as a pretext for postponing the elections, and declared that it was the duty of the people and the Moslem League to overthrow any government bent on introducing despotism, "if need be, by extra-constitutional means".

On the pretext of strengthening the government to meet the "threatening situation", Noon brought into the Cabinet 8 Ministers from the Awami League, a further member from the Republican Party, and a further member of the Krishak Sramik Party - so creating 26 Ministers out of a House of 80. When these Awami League members were allotted minor portfolios, however, they resigned in protest five days after joining the government.

The "Revolution" of October 1958

The "Karachi" clique were now satisfied that the existing political parties, and "parliamentary democracy" itself, had been sufficiently discredited by their manoeuvres

to abolish "parliamentary democracy" and establish a military dictatorship.

On the evening of the day on which the Awami League Ministers resigned from the government, [President Mirza](#) issued a proclamation:

"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 condition. I have decided that:

- 1) The Constitution of March 23rd, 1956, will be abrogated;
- 2) the Central and Provincial Governments will be dissolved with immediate effect;
- 3) the National Assembly and the Provincial Assemblies will be dissolved;
- 4) all political parties will be abolished; and
- 5) until alternative arrangements are made, Pakistan will come under Martial Law".

[General Mohammad Ayub Khan](#), commander-in -chief of the Pakistan army was appointed Chief Martial Law Administrator.

Meetings, strikes, and the publication of any material not passed by the military censor, were prohibited under penalty of many years' imprisonment.

On October 27th, 1958 President Mirza announced that he had:
"decided to step aside and hand over all powers to General Ayub Khan".
("Pakistan Times", October 28th, 1958),

and [Ayub Khan assumed the post of President](#). He abolished the office of Prime Minister and appointed a Cabinet of which the President was the head.

Such was the character of what came officially to be called
"the revolution of October 1958".
The "Karachi" landlord /comprador bourgeois clique had established its military dictatorship.

PART FOUR: PAKISTAN AS A SEMI-COLONY OF U.S. IMPERIALISM **SECOND PHASE: MILITARY DICTATORSHIP** **Continued Dependence upon U.S. Imperialism**

The establishment in October 1958 of the military dictatorship of the "Karachi" clique brought about an increase in U.S. "aid", but no change in the basis of Pakistan's foreign policy:

"The Martial Law Regime had no quarrel with the basic assumptions of the foreign policy followed by the previous governments."
(Mushtaq Ahmad: "Government and Politics in Pakistan"; Karachi,1963; p.231).

In March 1959 a Bilateral Defence Agreement was signed between Pakistan and the United States, with the US government assuring India that it would operate only in relation to "aggression from Communist countries".

In November 1959 a "Treaty of Friendship" was signed between Pakistan and the United States. One of its primary aims was stated to be "the encouragement of US investment in Pakistan", for the purpose of which special facilities were granted to US firms and businessmen in Pakistan.

In December 1959 US President Eisenhower visited Pakistan, and was decorated with the country's highest order in recognition of his "noble achievements for the free world". A joint communique expressed the satisfaction of both governments with "the increasingly close cooperation" between them, and emphasised the importance with which they regarded the CENTO and SEATO pacts.

In March 1961 US Vice-President Lyndon Johnson visited Pakistan for talks with President Ayub Khan.

The Pressure for a Rapprochement with India

The US imperialists were, during this period, placing considerable pressure upon the Pakistan government to make concessions to India upon points of conflict between the two states, with the overall aim of drawing the whole Indian subcontinent into the military orbit of the USA.

As a result of this pressure, in May 1959 President Ayub Khan proposed Indo-Pakistani cooperation for "the defence" of the sub-continent. In September 1959 he met Indian Prime Minister Jawaharwel Nehru in Delhi, and paid public tribute to the latter's "outstanding personality". In October 1959 an Indo-Pakistani Ministerial conference settled the principal outstanding border disputes in relation to the East Pakistan border with India, and in January 1960 a further Ministerial conference performed the same task in relation to the West Pakistan border.

In September 1960 Prime Minister Nehru visited Pakistan to sign the Indus Waters Treaty, agreed after nine years of negotiation through the "mediation" of the US-controlled World Bank.

The Indus Waters settlement had the added effect of removing the basis of one of Pakistan's complaints about Indian occupation of part of Kashmir.

The Hindu Maharajah of Kashmir, [Sir Hari Singh](#), had in October 1947 acceded to India, although the Kashmiri population was predominantly Moslem. Pakistani troops then entered Kashmir and during 1948 fighting occurred between Indian and Pakistani forces, ending in a cease-fire in July 1949 -- after the question had been referred to the Security Council of the United Nations. Since then the northern and western half of Kashmir had been occupied and administered by Pakistan,, and was known as [Azad \(Free\) Kashmir](#), the remainder by India.

India had repudiated her original pledge that the dispute should be settled by a [plebiscite](#) of the population of Kashmir, and in January 1957 had formally incorporated that part of Kashmir under its administration into the Indian State. In November 1962 US [Assistant Secretary of State Averell Harriman](#) emphasised, in talks with Nehru and Ayub Khan, the importance with which the US government regarded attempts to solve the Kashmir question. However, Ministerial talks between India and Pakistan which followed between December 1962 and May 1963 failed to make any progress.

Following the death of Nehru in May 1964, Ayub Khan made a fervent broadcast appeal in June for friendship between the two States. In October 1964 Indian [Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri](#) visited Pakistan for talks with President Ayub Khan.

But the Kashmir dispute remained a continuing source of antagonism between the two States.

"Threats" from Karachi

The fact that the US imperialists were exerting pressure upon the Pakistan government to make concessions to the Indian government on outstanding questions, rather than the other way round, was primarily because they regarded India as a more valuable member of the US-dominated bloc:

"The entire diplomatic thinking in the State Department was dominated by the overriding consideration that India had to be built up as a bulwark against China and entitled to all the material assistance and moral support from America to equip her for the leadership of Asia."

(Mushtaq Ahmad: *ibid*; p.234).

The Pakistani Foreign Minister, [Mohammad Ali](#), told an emergency session of the National Assembly in November 1962 of a secret agreement made in 1951 between India and the United States:

"As far back as 1951 the US Government had agreed to provide arms and equipment to India, and the Indian Government had entered into a formal agreement which amounted to her being for all practical purposes in an agreement similar to that under the SEATO Pact".

The Ayub regime was extremely concerned at the fact that, despite its subservience to the USA, the US imperialists were engaged in building up the strength of the state which it regarded (in the words of Ayub Khan in a broadcast of October 1964) as its "worst enemy".

In 1961 [President Ayub Khan](#) felt it necessary to make a public protest about US policy towards India. He told an Associated Press correspondent that the Pakistan government was "concerned, upset and disappointed" about what he still obediently referred to as the "possibility" of US military aid to India, and said threateningly that Pakistan was in process of "re-examining" its membership of CENTO and SEATO, Visiting Washington for talks with [President Kennedy](#) in the same month, he pleaded to a joint session of Congress:

"If there is real trouble, there is no other country in Asia where you will be able even to put your foot in, The only people who will stand by you are the people of Pakistan".

And in an interview on American television, he declared:

"Pakistan may slide towards neutrality if forced by circumstances or dictated by requirements of security. There is grave concern about the ramifications of the new American policy. Smaller Asian countries like Pakistan are apprehensive. If India becomes overwhelmingly strong militarily or economically, these countries will look for protection elsewhere."

Neither Ayub's pleadings nor what Washington regarded as his empty threats, had any effect upon United States policy towards India. The [Indian aggression against People's China in October 1962](#) provided the pretext for the [public announcement](#) of "massive US military "aid" to India. In November [Ayub](#) denounced this action as a "betrayal" of Pakistan, while Foreign Minister [Mohammad Ali](#), at an emergency session of the National Assembly, declared that it posed "a threat to our safety and security", adding:

"Should we find that membership of these pacts is no longer in the national interest of Pakistan., we shall not hesitate for a moment to get out of them."

[Rapprochement with China](#)

[The People's Republic of China, in which Marxist-Leninists were at this time in leading positions](#) (see "Report of the CC of the MLOB on the Situation in the People's Republic of China", in RED FRONT, January 1968) was at this time threatened with [encirclement](#) by a bloc of hostile powers allied overtly or covertly with US

imperialism:

The Soviet Union (under the Khrushchovite revisionist leaders who were restoring capitalism), Japan, India and Pakistan.

The Chinese leaders correctly strove to break this encirclement by seeking to take advantage of the contradictions between these states - in particular of the contradictions between India and Pakistan. Thus, they strove to establish a rapprochement at state level with Pakistan.

Faced with the threat of war with an India armed with the latest US weapons, the Pakistan government welcomed the opportunity of rapprochement with China - not as an alternative to its alliance with the USA imperialists, but as a means of strengthening their bargaining position within it.

"Pakistan's own security, therefore, lay in seeking an arrangement with the power which could effectively check the expansionist tendency (i.e., of India -Ed.) and the only power that could do so was China".
(Mushtaq Ahmad: *ibid.*; P.239).

When Foreign Minister Mohammad Ali died in January 1963, his successor [Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto](#) was instructed to make a rapprochement with China a cardinal point of Pakistan's foreign policy.

In March 1963 an agreement was signed between Pakistan and China which "finally" settled the frontier between China and Kashmir.

In July 1963 [Ayub Khan](#) declared that if India continued to receive massive military aid from the Western Powers, the small nations of Asia would be compelled to "take refuge under China". And in the same month Foreign Minister Bhutto told the National Assembly:

"Pakistan will not be alone if she becomes the victim of any aggression. It would involve the largest State in Asia."

In August 1963 Pakistan signed an agreement with China for the establishment of airline communications between the two countries. The US government immediately denounced the agreement as "an unfortunate breach of free world solidarity", and announced the suspension of a \$4.3 million loan to Pakistan for improvements at Dacca airport.

In September 1963 Pakistan signed a trade agreement with China.

In the same month [US Assistant Secretary of State George Ball](#) visited Pakistan for talks with [President Ayub Khan](#). According to an inspired leak from the US State Department, Ball told Ayub that any close relationship between Pakistan and China would nullify the sense of any alliance between Pakistan and the United States.

In February 1964 [Chinese Prime Minister Chou En-lai and Foreign Minister Chen Yi](#) visited Pakistan and signed a communique affirming China's support for Pakistan's viewpoint on the Kashmir issue, namely that the future of Kashmir should be settled by a free plebiscite of the Kashmiri people.

In February 1965 the Chinese government granted Pakistan an interest-free loan of US \$ 60 million. In March 1965 [President Ayub Khan](#) visited Peking and signed a cultural agreement, while in April [Prime Minister Chou En-lai](#) again visited Pakistan for talks with Ayub Khan.

In March 1966 [Chinese President Liu Shao-chi](#) visited Pakistan, accompanied by [Foreign Minister Chen Yi](#). A joint communique reaffirmed China's support for Pakistan's viewpoint on the Kashmir issue, and Pakistan's support for the admission of China to the United Nations.

On March 23rd, 1966 Chinese-built T29 tanks and MIG-19 fighter planes took part in the Republic Day parade in Karachi alongside US-built equipment.

In June 1966 Chinese [Prime Minister Chou En-lai](#) paid a further visit to Pakistan for talks with Ayub. In the same month a Sino-Pakistani scientific and cultural agreement was signed, followed by trade agreements in July and August, and an agreement on maritime transport between the two countries in October.

That the policy of the Ayub military dictatorship in fostering closer relations with China was to try to pressure the US imperialists into more favourable treatment, and not a change in the basis of Pakistan's dependence upon US imperialism, is shown by the official statement issued after the visit of [US Assistant Secretary of State Ball](#) to Pakistan in September 1963:

"We are still loyal members of the military alliances with the United States. We have not changed sides in the cold war",

and by Bhutto's declaration to a journalist in April 1966:

"We have always been close (i e., to the United States - Ed.); perhaps in the final analysis we have gone even closer to the United States by going closer to others".

[The Economic Pattern](#)

The military dictatorship of the "Karachi" clique had no wish to change fundamentally the colonial-type economic structure of Pakistan:

"The new Plan (i.e., the Second "Five Year Plan", 1961-65 - Ed.) did not radically differ from the previous one in its motivation and conception. Its authors did not think that there was anything basically wrong with the first Plan."
(Mushtaq Ahmad: "Government and Politics in Pakistan", Karachi; 1963; p.219).

The economy continued to be based on private enterprise:

"It has long been one of the cardinal policies of the Government to allow free enterprise full play in the development of the country. ...
The Government proposes not only to maintain this policy, but to reinforce it and try to give it still greater scope."
(Ayub Khan: Speech at the Advisory Committee of the Ministry of Commerce. April 29th, 1959).

The military dictatorship of the "Karachi" clique did indeed give greater scope to industrial capitalists, particularly those connected with the clique, and by its policy of playing off to some extent one foreign power against another was able, despite its fundamental dependence upon US imperialism, to develop Pakistan's industries to a higher level:

"New incentives and facilities were given to private enterprise in the form of reduction in the rate of super-tax and extension of the tax holidays. Foreign exchange was made available to it for the import of raw materials, spare parts and machinery. ...
The most important concession of all was the withdrawal of controls, first from a few items and later a total decontrol of the economy. ...
The decision to set up two steel mills with a total capacity of 450,000 tons, one in each wing of the country, was evidence of the Government's determination to develop heavy industry. ...
With the same object in view, an oil refinery was planned to be set up in Karachi and search for underground oil was intensified with the cooperation of Russia. ...
The industrialists received a much better deal from the Martial Law Regime, which gave them more incentives than they had ever enjoyed before."
(Mushtaq Ahmad: *ibid.*; p.216-217, 246).

"The Ayub decade has seen ... an increase in industrial production of something like 50%."
(Neville Maxwell: "Ayub Khan Takes a Hard Line with Political Opponents", in: "The Times", London: November 14th, 1968).

The semi-colonial status of East Pakistan continued. The Second "Five Year Plan" made the following allotments:

For investment in the public sector:

East Pakistan: 1,251 m. rupees (44.8%)

West Pakistan: 1,539 m. rupees (55.2%.)

For exports to foreign countries:

East Pakistan: 1,260 m. rupees (59.5%)

West Pakistan: 857 m. rupees (40.5%)

For imports from foreign countries

East Pakistan: 1,219 m. rupees (30.5%)

West Pakistan: 2,773 m. rupees (69.5%)

This pattern continued under the Third "Five Year Plan" (1966-70). In the first eighteen months of Pakistan's Third Five-Year Plan, industrial investment worth 2,240 m. rupees was sanctioned. Two-thirds of it went to West Pakistan. Of the foreign exchange allotted, 70% went to West Pakistan. According to [Sheikh Mujibur Rahman](#), even the official data of the Plans underestimate the semi-colonial exploitation of the East:

"If even 25% of these paper schemes were to be transformed into reality, East Pakistan would now be safely on its way to an economic El Dorado. ...

The truth is that projects - conceived and sanctioned almost simultaneously in both the wings - do not appear to make any headway in East Pakistan, while they have either been finally implemented or are nearing the stage of completion in West Pakistan. The Government is always ready with one excuse or another in order to hide the basic fact of un-willingness to develop East Pakistan and thereby keep it economically backward - an appendage to a highly industrialised West Pakistan. It is paradoxical indeed that a number of projects in the Eastern wing, which according to the statistical claims of the Government, are receiving a large share of foreign aid, are not being implemented 'owing to foreign exchange difficulties', while no such difficulties ever arise in the case of West Pakistan projects".

(Mujibur Rahman, cited in: Subhash C. Kashyap: *ibid.*; p.41-42).

Under the military dictatorship, Bengalis remain for the most part excluded from the armed forces and the higher ranks of the civil service:

"After twenty-one years, Bengalis account for barely 15% in Central Government services and less than 10% in the defence services."

(Mujibur Rahman: Text of Radio broadcast of October 28th, 1970, in "Dawn", Karachi, October 29th 1970).

"All but 20 000 men out of a Federal Army of 500,000 are recruited in the West". ("Financial Times"; March 18th 1969).

This picture is confirmed in an extensive study of East Pakistan made by [Hanna Papanek](#), of the Centre for International Affairs, Harvard University, USA:

"The Civil Service of Pakistan includes only a very small proportion of Bengalis, especially in top positions. ...

Since 1958 it has been especially important to note that the armed services of Pakistan also include very few Bengalis".

(Hanna Papanek: " Sources of Economic Exploitation of East Bengal", in "Young Indian", April 15th, 1971).

In a radio broadcast of October 29th, 1970, [Sheikh Mujibur Rahman](#) summed up the pattern of twenty years:

"To turn now to the appalling record of economic disparity, it is seen that during the last twenty years out of a total revenue expenditure of the Government - only about Rs. 1,500 crores (i.e., 15,000 m. Rupees - Ed.) (that is, only one-fifth of the total) was spent in Bengal. ...

Of the total development expenditure during the same period, Rs. 3,000 crores (i.e., 30,000 m. rupees - Ed.) (that is, only one-third of the total) was spent in Bengal. ... Over twenty years West Pakistan has imported goods worth more than Rs. 3,000 crores (i.e., 30,000 m. rupees - Ed) as against its own foreign exchange earnings of barely Rs. 1,300 crores (ie., 13,000 m rupees - Ed). Imports into West Pakistan have been three times the value of imports into Bengal.

It was made possible for West Pakistan to import goods worth Rs. 2,000 crores (i.e., 20,000 m. rupees - Ed.) in excess of its export earnings by allocating to it Rs.500 crores (i.e., 5,000 m. rupees - Ed.) of the foreign exchange earnings of Bengal and allowing it to utilise over 80% of all foreign aid. ...

The Fourth Five Year Plan allocations (i.e., 1971-75 - Ed.) are a confession of the failure of the Central Government ... to redress past injustices."

(Mujibur Rahman: Text of Radio Broadcast of October 28th, 1970; in: "Dawn", Karachi; October 29th, 1970).

"By 1969, according to economists in the provincial planning department in Dacca, East Pakistanis were on average 20% worse off than their less numerous compatriots in the West. By 1968 the disparity had widened (according to the same source) to 40%".

("Financial Times", March 18th,1969)

As a result of the semi-colonial status of East Pakistan, industrial development has been much more rapid in the West than in the East:

"Manufacturing industry has been at least twice as important in the economy of West Pakistan as in that of East Pakistan throughout the entire period since 1947. The more complex and advanced industries have been mainly located in West Pakistan, while many of East Pakistan's industries consist of jute and cotton mills."

(Hanna Papanek: "Sources of Economic Exploitation of East Bengal", in: "Young Indian". April 5th, 1971).

Furthermore, the major part of the industries that have developed in East Pakistan are owned or financed by West Pakistani capital:

"East Pakistan's dominant businessmen and industrialists are largely non-Bengali.

The eastern wing's dominant non-Bengali entrepreneurs are seen as part of a domination of the province's governmental and economic institutions by West Pakistanis. This is particularly serious in the case of the largest industrial and commercial enterprises.

The absence of Bengalis from the new class of industrialists in Pakistan is particularly notable at the top. Among the twenty-nine largest 'Houses' (or family-controlled enterprise groups) ranked in terms of net worth, there are two Bengalis near the bottom of the list. All of these Houses, with the exception of the few owned by Karachi Parsis, are owned and controlled by West Pakistani Moslems. Most of the twenty-nine are of Punjabi or western Indian origin; many are post-1947 immigrants. All of the Houses have headquarters in West Pakistan, with the exception of the two Bengalis and the Adamjee and Ispahani groups of enterprises. ...

Out of all industrial assets, ... Bengali Moslems owned and controlled only 2.5% ... Most of the heads of enterprises are residents of West Pakistan. The 'commanding heights of the economy' ... are controlled, in both East and West Pakistan by a very small group of families, almost none of whom is native to East Pakistan. ...

The early decision to locate the national capital in Karachi has been extremely important in affecting the location of industrial plants and business headquarters, since proximity to government agencies in charge of licences and foreign exchange was of the greatest importance to industrialists. ...

The lack of Bengali businessmen and industrialists assumes its particular importance only in the context of the severe disparity between East and West Pakistan in terms of political power and economic resource distribution. Bengalis are lacking in the country's economically powerful class as well as in its governing structure."

(Hanna Papanek- "Sources of Economic Exploitation of East Bengal", in: "Young Indian", April 5th, 1971)

The "Karachi" clique used its control of the military dictatorship in order to advance particularly the wealth and economic power of members of the clique - not least that of [Ayub Khan's](#) own family. As a result, there has developed the notorious, although stunted, state-monopoly capitalist group of finance capitalists of some twenty families, which (according to [Dr. Mahbubul Hug](#), chief economist of the Planning Commission, and [M. Raschid](#), Governor of the State Bank, in 1968) owned 66% of industry, 79% of insurance and 80% of banking. According to an article in "Life" magazine:

"In Karachi, Pakistan's commercial centre, it had been known in certain circles that Ayub's family and his cabinet had been getting rich with the aid of government loans and licences. Now his government is unabashedly accused of corruption. The son of [Altaf Hussain](#), Pakistan's Industr Minister, has been given a major share in a steel-polling mill. [Ghulam Faruque](#), Ayub's canny Commerce Minister, had acquired large stockholdings in companies that he helped to promote as Chairman of the Pakistan Industrial Development Corporation, and so on. [Ayub](#) himself is a large landowner, with citrus orchards near Rawalpindi and sugar lands in Sind. Near the site of the latter the Army Welfare Association has erected a sugar mill and has been buying the President's output. [Gohar Ayub](#), the President's stocky, mustachioed son, has become a millionaire. With the help of government financing, Gohar led a syndicate which bought out General Motors shares of an assembly plant in Karachi. He has since extended his holdings and was recently granted exclusive rights for the distribution of Toyota cars in Pakistan."

(Article in "Life". cited in the "Times of India"; January 29th, 1967, P.7).

By 1965 the total capital of the Ayub family had been unofficially estimated at 250 million rupees, not including money in foreign bank accounts.

Repressive Measures

In November 1958 Public Safety Ordinances were promulgated in both provinces, empowering the authorities to detain persons without trial and to censor or ban newspapers and periodicals.

In April 1959 an ordinance was promulgated empowering the government to change the ownership or management of any newspaper which "in the opinion of the government contained matter detrimental to the defence, external affairs or security of Pakistan". Two days later the government took over Progressive Papers Ltd., proprietors of the "Pakistan Times". In January 1962 the company was resold to an "approved" businessman, [Chaudhri Mohammad Hussain](#), Chairman of the Lahore Municipality.

In August 1959 followed the Elective Bodies (Disqualification) Ordinance (EBDO), under which tribunals could try persons who had taken part in political activity for "misconduct", "subversive activities", "actions contributing to political instability" etc., with power to bar

such persons from political activity for seven yey July 1961 75 politicians had been officially disqualified from political activity under EBDO.

In April 1960 the Press and Publications Ordinance rendered newspapers and periodicals liable to pay a substantial deposit to the state, subject to forfeiture (as well as banning of the periodical concerned) in the event of any matter being published tending "to bring the Government into hatred or contempt" or "to incite disaffection against the Government".

In January 1962, in an effort to reduce opposition to the new dictatorial constitution being prepared, Suhrawardy, leader of the Awami League, was arrested and detained without trial. When attempts were made to secure his release through a writ of habeas corpus, the military government promulgated in February an ordinance barring the courts from hearing applications for habeas corpus in relation to persons detained without trial.

In September 1963 the issue of the second Press and Publications Ordinance laying down that newspapers and periodicals must be edited in accordance with "recognised principles of journalism and patriotism", was followed by a one-day strike of journalists and newspaper employees.

"Land Reform"

In keeping with the facade of presenting the military coup of October 1958 as a "revolution", within two weeks of its establishment the military dictatorship appointed a Land Reforms Commission, headed by Akhtar Hussain, Governor of West Pakistan. The Commission's report was issued in February 1959 and was put into effect later that year in West Pakistan, where its provisions were meant to apply.

The Commission recommended compulsory acquisition by the State, in return for "fair compensation" amounting to 80 million rupees, of all landholdings in excess of 500 acres of irrigated land or 1,000 acres of non-irrigated land. This land was to be sold to peasants, with existing tenants having the first option to purchase.

The State acquired under this "land reform" 2.2 million acres of land. Of this, however, only 0.6 million acres was assessed as "cultivable land"; 1.2 million acres was classed as "cultivable waste" (in India 15% of land classed as "cultivable waste" is accounted cultivable, but no comparable estimate is available for Pakistan); and 0.4 million acres as "unfit for cultivation". After the "land reform" some 6,000 landlords retained 7.4 million acres of land (i.e., three times the amount of land taken from them). The land assumed by the State was resold to 150,000 peasants.

As Mushtaq Ahmad comments:

"That more than three times the area given to one and a half lakh (i.e., 150,000 - Ed.) tenants is retained by 6,000 landlords shows the disparity in ownership that still persists. Landlordism has by no means been abolished. Their (i.e., the landlords' - Ed.) power, and prestige remain unaffected. That their political influence had not diminished was borne out by the election results. They retained their predominant position in the West Pakistan Assembly and also in the representation of West Pakistan in the National Assembly".
(Mushtaq Ahmad: "Government and Politics in Pakistan"; p.199,246).

An article in "Pakistan Today" confirms this analysis:

"The reform measures which have been announced ..., will leave untouched the fundamental problem of our agrarian economy, which is the divorce between ownership and cultivation. ... The landholdings of some of the biggest landholders will be reduced in size, in return for 'fair' compensation, and the excess land will be available for those who can buy it - the existing tenants being given the first option, but who may quite likely prove unable to buy it. The basic structure of our agrarian economy remains unaltered".
("Pakistan Today"; March/April 1959; p.2,27).

The figures of land ownership given on page 5 relate to the position after the "land reform".

"Basic Democracy"

In April-September 1959 a series of Governors' Conferences, chaired by President Ayub Khan, elaborated a new system of local government called "Basic Democracy". In October 1959 Ayub Khan promoted himself to the rank of Field Marshal, and on the following day promulgated the Basic Democracies Ordinance. In the same month Rawalpindi was designated the interim capital of Pakistan, pending the construction of a new capital city on a site near Rawalpindi to be known as Islamabad.

The system of "Basic Democracies" consisted of five tiers of councils from Village Councils at the bottom to two Provincial Development Advisory Councils at the top. Each lower council was subordinated to its appropriate superior council. The lowest tier of councils was partly elected, partly appointed, the 80,000 elected members being known as "Basic Democrats" (BD's); the higher tiers were made up of appointed members only.

Designed to give a "democratic" facade to the military dictatorship, the system of "Basic Democracy" in reality consolidated the power of the dictatorship throughout the country. As an article in "Pakistan Today" points out:

"Far from being a system of democratic decentralisation, the picture that emerges from a survey of the various features of the new system is that of centralisation of control and a consolidation of bureaucratic power. Through the hierarchical system of councils subject to effective surveillance and tight control at every level, we can see a most effective extension of the arm of the bureaucracy, reaching down into every individual village and linking up with the local power of the landed gentry who dominate the countryside. It strengthens the landed gentry by linking it up closely and effectively with the official machinery.

The fact that the councils at the lower level are subordinated to those at the higher levels, and the fact also that the councils at the higher levels consist entirely of officials and nominated persons, is quite sufficient to ensure official control of the entire system. However, as an added precaution, the law has designated officials at an appropriate level as the 'Controlling Authority' for councils at each level. These officials have been given sweeping powers of direction and control over the councils under their jurisdiction. They can forbid particular actions by the councils, and they can also ask them to undertake any specified action. They may suppress particular councils and take over their functions. The Controlling Authority may remove any particular member of a council.

Direct elections are to be restricted.... to the lowest bodies in the hierarchy." ("The Basic Democracies" in- "Pakistan Today", summer 1960; p.9,13).

The "Basic Democrats" were intended also to form an Electoral College under a new Constitution. Through this means the President, the National Assembly and the Provincial Assemblies were to be indirectly elected by a tiny electorate of 80,000 out of a population of 94 million, an electorate dependent upon the continued approval of the military dictatorship for lucrative positions within the framework of "Basic Democracy".

"It is obviously easier to corrupt a small electorate than a whole population." (Mushtaq Ahmad: "Government and Politics in Pakistan" p.226).

In December 1959-January 1960 elections were held to elect 80,000 "Basic Democrats". In January 1960 President Ayub Khan promulgated an ordinance for a ballot of the "Basic Democrats" to indicate their confidence in his leadership. The Election Commissioner later announced that 95.6% of the votes cast were in favour of President Ayub Khan, who was then sworn in as "elected" President.

The 1962 Constitution

Immediately after his "election" as President in January 1960, Ayub appointed an 11-man Constitution Commission, headed by Justice Mohammad Shahabuddin of the Supreme Court, to draft a new Constitution. The Commission presented its report in May 1961. In March 1962 the President promulgated a new Constitution which utterly

disregarded the findings of the Constitution Commission, which had earlier favoured the immediate establishment of a Parliamentary system.

"The Constitution as it emerged was by and large a product of the President's own thinking."

(Mughtaq Ahmad: "Government and Politics in Pakistan". Karachi 1963, P.254).

While the 1956 Constitution had described Pakistan throughout as a "Federal Republic" with a "Federal Government", the preamble to the 1962 Constitution states vaguely that the State "should be a form of federation" but nowhere outside the preamble is the term "Federal" used: the "Federal Republic" and "Federal Government" of the 1956 Constitution have in the 1962 Constitution become the "Republic" and the "Central Government" respectively. The new Constitution gave dictatorial powers to the President on behalf of the "Karachi" clique:

"The executive authority of the Republic is vested in the President. Members of the Presidential Cabinet, ... known as the Council of Ministers, are appointed by him and are removable by him. He has a free hand in selecting his team. ... The Constitution places no restriction on his discretion except that the Ministers must be eligible for membership of the National Assembly, but not necessarily its members. ... The members of the Presidential Cabinet are more like advisers of the President than his colleagues. Their advice may be accepted or rejected or not sought at all, even on important national affairs. ...

As master of the Cabinet, the President also has complete control of the Central Administration. ... The Pakistan President is free to fill high military, civil and judicial posts with men of his own choice

The President is not only the head of the executive branch but also an integral part of the legislature. The Central Legislature consists of the President and one House known as the National Assembly. ... No bill can become law without his assent unless the veto is overridden by a two-thirds majority in the National Assembly, and even after such a vote the President can hold a referendum on the disputed bill in the electoral college.

When the Legislature is not in session, the President has the power to promulgate ordinances over any field of Central Legislation, and the ordinances have the full force of law until revoked by the Assembly. Besides, he enjoys wide financial powers in respect of charged and committed expenditure, which the Assembly may discuss but on which it cannot vote. This will enable him to run the administration and implement the projects already in hand without the danger of supplies being cut off by the assembly.

The most important weapon the President has in his armoury is the power to dissolve the National Assembly in case the differences between them become irreconcilable. ... The threat of dissolution can be used as a lever to enforce the President's will in legislation.

The Presidency is constructed on the theory that in the legislative as well as in

the executive sphere the President can maintain his supremacy.
The validity of laws passed by the Legislature cannot be questioned in a court of law, even if the law in question has been passed in excess of the jurisdiction of the legislature. ...

The Constitution, as it stands in Pakistan, affords no remedy against the passage of laws that may violate fundamental rights, since of their validity the Legislature is the sole judge."
(Mushtaq Ahmad: *ibid.* p.256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 263).

The powers of the Central Government over the Provincial Governments were absolute:

"In the event of a conflict of jurisdiction, Central legislation will prevail over Provincial legislation."
(Mushtaq Ahmad: *ibid.*, p.260).

The President, together with the National Assembly and the two Provincial Assemblies, was to be indirectly elected by an Electoral College consisting of the 80,000 "Basic Democrats":

"A vital respect in which the new Constitution differs from the old, and in fact from the constitutions of other countries, is its faith in the efficacy of indirect elections." (Mushtaq Ahmad: *ibid.* p.263).

Introducing his dictatorial constitution as "a blending of democracy with discipline", **President Ayub Khan** declared:

"The Parliamentary system ... we tried and it failed We have not yet attained several, sophistications that are necessary for its successful operation".

In April 1962 indirect elections took place for the National Assembly. 70 landlords were elected (58 from West Pakistan, 12 from East Pakistan) in a House of 156. Although political parties remained banned, a large number of leading figures in the former political parties, not specifically barred by Elective Bodies (Disqualification) Ordinance (EBDO), were returned:

"Despite the ban on political parties for the election 44% of the individuals named in the Assembly are members of proscribed political groups, and many are critical of the new Constitution's curb on legislative and judicial authority."
("New York Times", May 4th, 1962).

In May 1962 new Provincial Assemblies were elected on the same pattern as the National Assembly. As the new National Assembly met in June 1962 at Rawalpindi, **Ayub Khan** was sworn in as first President of the Second Republic. On the same day the Martial Law (Repeal) Ordinance was promulgated repealing Martial Law

after almost four years.

In July 1962 an Advisory Council on Islamic Ideology was appointed.

The Revival of Political Parties

The 1962 Constitution envisaged a National Assembly, and a country, without political parties. That this had been, as Ayub Khan expressed it later - :

"a miscalculation",
(Mohammad Ayub Khan: "Friends not Masters. A Political Autobiography",
Oxford; 1967; p.221)

was demonstrated in June 1952. In this month nine politicians from East Pakistan - headed by three former Chief Ministers of the Province: Nurul Amin, Abu Hussain Sarkar and Ataur Rahman Khan - issued a statement calling for "political action" to secure a new Constitution. This statement was widely interpreted as a call for extra - constitutional political action, that is, for political action outside the machinery of "Basic Democracy" controlled by the military dictatorship. The "Karachi" clique saw as a danger signal:

"The disposition of boycott which is crystallising in the political circles of East Pakistan. ... This is a dangerous situation and threatens to force a gulf between the East and the West."
(Editorial, "Pakistan Times", July 24th, 1962).

Six days after the issue of this threatening statement, on June 30th, 1962; the government secured the adoption in the National Assembly of the Political Parties Bill, permitting the formation of "approved" political parties - those which, in the opinion of the government, were not guilty of "propagating any opinion, or acting in a manner prejudicial to the integrity or security of Pakistan" or of being "in receipt of foreign aid".

The basic motives behind this move were to create a political party dominated by the "Karachi" clique in order to broaden the base of support for the military dictatorship, and to divert opposition political action from the building of a mass movement outside the constitution into the harmless channels of a "parliamentary opposition" within the machinery of "Basic Democracy" controlled by the military dictatorship. In July 1962 Ayub told a press conference that he

" ... would like right-minded people from both wings of the country to meet at a convention and form a broad-based political party."
("Dawn" July 21st, 1962).

In August was reported that:

"The formation of a broad-based national party, which will in all probability be named the Moslem League, was discussed at a special meeting or the Presidential Cabinet today. The meeting was presided over by President Ayub Khan."

("Pakistan Times", August 17th, 1962).

In September 1962 the ["Moslem League"](#) was formally revived at a Convention held in Karachi, becoming known as the ["Conventionist Moslem League"](#). In May 1963 President [Ayub Khan](#) joined the party, and in December 1963 was elected its [President](#). As [Mushtaq Ahmad](#) comments:

"The Conventionist Moslem League is a party behind the power rather than a party in power. The initiative in calling a Convention of the Moslem Leaguers held at Karachi in September 1962 was taken by Ministers, who were closely associated with its proceedings and decisions. By the fact of being a pro-Government party it is also a pro-Constitution party."

(Mushtaq Ahmad: *ibid* ; p.282).

The formation of the Conventionist Moslem League as a "President's Party" in such a blatantly crude manner, a Party openly serving the interests of the "Karachi" clique and its military dictatorship, was deliberately designed to force former Moslem League politicians associated with the "Punjabi" and "Bengali" cliques (figures such as [Mian Mumtaz Mohammad Khan Daultana](#) and [Khwaja Nazimuhhin](#)) to dissociate themselves from it and form an opposition party which could rally other opposition parties into the constitutional framework of "Basic Democracy". This design was successful.

In October 1962 the former Council of the Old Moslem League met in Dacca and revived what it claimed to be the "true" Moslem League, which became known as the ["Council Moslem League"](#). Its President was [Khwaja Nazimmudin](#), its General Secretary [Sardar Bahadur Khan](#), brother of [President Ayub Khan](#).

In July 1962 [Sardar Bahadur Khan](#) had issued an appeal for a "united front" of all parties, groups and individuals who wished for the restoration of "parliamentary democracy", and in October, under the leadership of [Suhrawardy](#) (who had been released from prison in August) such a "united front" was formed under the name of the ["National Democratic Front" \(NDF\)](#). To evade the operation of EBDO, Suhrawardy insisted that the N.D.F. was not a political party, but a "movement":

"We are not working on a party level, but we are all united for the cause of the democratisation of the Constitution."

(H.S.Suhrawardy: Address at Mymensingh, October 27th, 1962).

The Awami League, in fact, envisaged the National Democratic Front as a movement operating primarily outside the constitutional machinery of "Basic Democracy" controlled by the military dictatorship. To meet this threat, in January 1963 the government promulgated two ordinances: one provided that a person disqualified under Elective Bodies (Disqualification) Ordinance (EBDO) could be sent to prison for participating in any political activity, including addressing a meeting, issuing a leaflet or holding a press interview; by the other the President was empowered to waive disqualification of any EBDO politician (i.e., of any who were prepared to direct their political activity along the constitutional lines approved by the military dictatorship). As Suhrawardy said of these two ordinances:

"This is the most blatant form of corruption on the one hand, and coercion and suppression on the other."
("The Times", London; January 9th, 1963).

These ordinances did not, however, prevent the holding of a meeting later in January 1963 at Suhrawardy's residence in Karachi at which the National Democratic Front was extended to West Pakistan. The 35 politicians who took part in this meeting were arrested and charged with sedition.

With the death of Suhrawardy, its leading figure, in December 1963, the NDF ceased to play a significant role.

The government followed the ordinances of January 1963 with concessions to the opposition designed to give support to the view that fundamental reforms could be effected constitutionally. In March 1963 it sponsored the Constitution (First Amendment) Bill, which sought to win the support of the conservative mullahs by renaming the state "The Islamic Republic of Pakistan", and to placate the opposition by making fundamental rights justifiable in the courts (except for 21 laws adopted by the Martial Law Administration!). This measure was successful in persuading Khwaia Nazimuddin to instruct the Council League Members of the National Assembly to vote with the government on the Bill. The dictatorship also sought to soften the hostility of the East Pakistan national bourgeoisie by supporting, in April 1963, an opposition motion to set up a Parity Committee with the official aim (which was never put into effect) of removing West/East disparity in the services, and by making Dacca, in East Pakistan, a "subsidiary capital" of Pakistan.

The revival of the National Awami Party and the release from prison in November 1962 of its leader Maulana Bhashani, provided the military dictatorship with a political arm the objection function of which was to mobilise "left" support for it.

[The Role of the National Awami Part](#)

In September 1963 the leader of the [National Awami Party](#), [Maulana Bhashani](#), travelled to West Pakistan for a meeting with [President Ayub Khan](#), following which he was appointed to lead a government delegation to China in November. On his return the party gave its support to the regime "with reservations", on the grounds of its "pro-Chinese" and "anti-imperialist" foreign policy.

"President Ayub appointed him (i.e., Bhashani - Ed.) to lead a delegation, and that journey from which he returned this week appears to have changed all his ideas. The achievements of China ... had so impressed him that, realising how backward Pakistan was in comparison, he was inclined he said, to spend the rest of his life in prayers. He was calling off the civil disobedience movement."
("The Times", London, December, 4th, 1963).

"The role of the National Awami Party leadership seems to fit in more on the Government side than on the opposition side, and yet it happens to be sitting in the opposition in the National Assembly and the provincial legislatures. Maulana Bhashani visited China with the blessing of the government. On his return, in Chittagong, he said what would become a loyal pro-government spokesman,"
("Outlook", Karachi December 28th, 1963; P.4).

Trotskyite [Tariq Ali](#) is a supporter of Bhashani, of whom he says:

"Bhashani was a spokesman for the future, for a Pakistan which was run by the workers and peasants under a socialist system of government."
(Tariq Ali; "Pakistan: Military Rule or People's Power?" London; 1970; P.199).

He gives the following account of Bhashani's meeting with Chinese "left" revisionist leaders [Mao Tse-tung](#) and [Chou En-lai](#):

"Soon after Maulana Bhashani was released from prison ... he agreed to go as the leader of a government delegation to the October celebrations in Peking. There he had discussions with the Chinese leaders, including Mao Tse-tung and Chou En-lai. According to the Pakistan Ambassador to China at that time, [General Raza](#), who was present during the Maulana's discussions with Chou, the latter said in no uncertain terms that the Chinese would welcome a rapprochement between the National Awami Party and the Ayub regime. According to Raza the Maulana agreed. ...
When I was in East Pakistan in June 1969 I asked the Maulana during the course of a tape-recorded conversation:

'When you went to China, what did Mao discuss with you when you met him? '

The Maulana's reply was quite unequivocal, and does seem to confirm General Raza's impression:

'Mao said to me that at the present time China's relationship with Pakistan was extremely fragile and that the United States, Russia and India would do their utmost to break this relationship. He said,
"You are our friends, and if at the present moment you continue your struggle against the Ayub government, it will only strengthen the hand of Russia, America and India. It is against our in principles to interfere with your work, but we would advise you to proceed slowly and carefully. Give us a chance to deepen our friendship with your government".
(Tariq Ali, *ibid.*; p. 140-141).

Members of the [Communist Party](#), as has been said, had long made open work within the [National Awami Party \(NAP\)](#) a principled field of their activity and had won influential positions in it. By this time the leadership of the Communist Party had become completely revisionist and the "Communists" working in the N.A.P. had, in general, no disagreement with the latter party's policy of support "with reservations" for the military dictatorship.

In April 1964 the opposition journal "Outlook" published an interview with an unnamed "Communist" (whose reported views coincide with the viewpoint of the leadership of the Communist Party), who declared that he would vote for [Ayub](#) at the next election because of the latter's "development of friendship with China", and went so far as to say:

"Basic democracies could become training schools for soviets".
(Dialogue with a Communist, in: "Outlook", Karachi, April 24th, 1964).

[Tariq Ali](#) sums up the role of the National Awami Party by admitting:

"Of course, many pro-Peking members of the N.A.P. could argue that while some of them had suffered imprisonment in the pre-Ayub days, they had for some time been allowed to do political work by the government, and for them that was the acid test. In fact, during the last five years of the Ayub regime (i.e., from 1964 to 1968 - Ed.) they had not engaged in any radical activities. Since they spent 99% of their time attacking bourgeois politicians and ignoring Ayub, there was no reason why the regime should arrest them."
(Tariq Ali; *ibid*; p.142)

The 1965 "Elections"

In August 1964 the [Conventionist Moslem League](#) adopted [Ayub Khan](#) as its candidate for the 1965 Presidential "elections".

In the same month the principal opposition parties were persuaded by [Khwaja Nazimuddin](#), the President of the [Council Moslem League](#), to form a 'united front' called the "[Combined Opposition Party](#)" (COP) to test out the possibilities of "Basic

Democracy" by contesting the Presidential "elections". The COP was made up of the [Council Moslem League, the Awami League, the National Awami Party, the Jamaat-i-Islami Party and the Nizam-i-Islam Party.](#)

By participating in the COP, the leaders of the [Awami League](#) placed themselves in the contradictory position of, on the one hand, denouncing "Basic Democracy" as the completely undemocratic machinery of the military dictatorship and, on the other hand, suggesting, by their participation in this machinery, that it could be used to bring about fundamental constitutional changes.

That the COP election campaign was not a serious one is shown by the adoption as Presidential candidate of [Miss Fatima Jinnah](#) the sister of the late [Mohammad Ali Jinnah](#), knowing that the prospect of a woman as president would be repugnant to moslem public opinion.

The COP adopted a 9-point programme limited to aspects of the restoration of "parliamentary democracy" and ignoring questions of foreign policy.

The "elections" for, the Electoral College of "Basic Democrats" took place in October-November 1964, and the Presidential election in January 1965.

Although nominally a part of the Combined Opposition Party, the leaders of the National Awami Party took no active part in the election campaign:

["Maulana Bhashani](#) leader of the National Awami Party, ... did not campaign actively for Miss Jinnah, probably because he did not want to upset Ayub's foreign policy, which was veering steadily towards increasing friendship with China."

(Khalid bin Sayeed; "The Political System of Pakistan"; Karachi; 1967; cited in: Tariq Ali, *ibid.* p.128).

[Tariq Ali](#) himself puts this more diplomatically (although the inverted commas are his):

"... 'Illness' prevented him (i.e., Bhashani - Ed.) from campaigning effectively for Miss Jinnah".

(Tariq-Ali: *ibid.*, p.128).

Ayub was, of course, "elected" President in January 1965, the published voting figures being:

	<u>West Pakistan</u>	<u>East Pakistan</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>Ayub Khan</u> :	28,939	21,012	49,951
<u>Miss Jinnah</u> :	10,257	18,434	28,691
<u>Majority:</u>	<u>18,682</u>	<u>2,578</u>	<u>21,260</u>

One of the factors which induced many "Basic Democrats" in East Pakistan to vote for Ayub was that the regime had poured money into the rural areas through the Rural Public Works Programme. East Pakistan had received 2,000 million rupees in 1963-64 as compared to 100 million rupees for the same programme in West Pakistan. This 'generosity' towards East Pakistan in the pre-election year had a purpose, as Basic Democrats were the agents for the planning and execution of the Rural Public Works Programme, with plenty of scope for patronage and corruption.

In the indirect elections for the National Assembly, held in March 1965, and in those for the Provincial Assemblies, held in May, the Conventionist Moslem League won large majorities.

The Combined Opposition Party then disintegrated.

The War with India-Indo-Pakistani War 1965

The Indian government had for some years taken its stand on the position that Kashmir was an integral part of India and so could not be the subject of negotiation with any other State.

In May 1965 Pakistan Foreign Minister Bhutto signed in London a SEATO, communique which gave full support to the US aggression in Vietnam. The Ayub regime judged that this support (which contrasted sharply with the official Indian criticism of the role of US imperialism in Vietnam) would be sufficient to ensure at least a benevolent neutrality on the part of Washington towards Pakistan in the event of war with India. The revisionist leaders of the Soviet Union had long been collaborating with the US imperialists, and in April 1965 President Ayub Khan and Foreign Minister Bhutto paid an official visit to the USSR, during which agreements were signed on trade, economic cooperation and cultural exchange. Furthermore, the predominantly Moslem population of Indian-occupied Kashmir were clearly hostile to their Indian rulers.

Taking all these points into consideration, the "Karachi" clique judged that there could hardly be a more favourable moment for an attempt to "solve the Kashmir question" in what appeared to be the only possible way in which it could be settled to the advantage of Pakistan - by force.

After a "trial run" in the Rann (desert) of Kutch on the West Pakistan border in April, in August 1965 the Special Forces (with officers trained at Fort Bragg, North Carolina) entered the Indian-occupied zone of Kashmir and commenced a guerilla type warfare against the Indian forces. It was then announced in Karachi that a revolution had broken out in Kashmir, and regular Pakistani troops went in "to assist the revolutionary forces". Heavy fighting then began between Pakistani and Indian troops, and a state of emergency wa declared in Pakistan.

The calculations of the "Karachi" clique had however, been seriously at fault. The Kashmiri people showed no more enthusiasm for their Pakistani "liberators" than for their Indian oppressors. The pro-US imperialist revisionist clique in the Soviet Union, headed by [Khrushchov](#), had been overthrown in the coup of October 1964, and the new [Brezhnev-Kosygin clique](#) was bent on reorientating Soviet foreign policy in the direction of building up an anti-US imperialist bloc in which, it was planned, India would play an important role. Furthermore, as a result of the activity of the CIA, the US imperialists were already looking forward to the counter-revolutionary "cultural revolution" of 1966-68 in China, which was aimed at ousting Marxist-Leninists from leading positions, establishing a military dictatorship on behalf of the national capitalists, and reorientating People's China into rapprochement with Washington. (See "*Report of the C.C. of the MLOB on 'Centrist' Revisionism*", in *RED FRONT*, March 1970).

The Indo-Pakistani war of September 1965 thus came at a most inconvenient time for both the US and Soviet imperialists at a time when the process of building up new world-wide military blocs on the part of each of these Powers was just beginning. Thus, the US imperialists cut off "aid" to both India and Pakistan, while they and the Soviet imperialists acted together to stop the war.

As a result of these action of these Powers, a cease-fire was imposed, and the leaders of the two countries involved were summoned in January 1966 to a conference at Tashkent, capital of the Soviet republic of Uzbekistan, where Soviet Premier [Alexei Nikoyevich Kosygin](#) "mediated" an agreement under which both sides were to withdraw their forces to the lines of August 1965..

The failure of the [Ayub](#) regime to "settle" the Kashmir question satisfactorily was attacked by most of the opposition parties (except the [National Awami Party](#)) as a "sell-out". On January 22nd, 1966, [Miss Jinnah](#) declared:

"What the blood of our brave soldiers achieved was thrown away at the conference table,"

and on February 5-6th, 1966 a conference of 700 delegates from the [Council Moslem League, the Awami League, the Nizam-e-Islam and the Jamaat-i-Islami](#) adopted a resolution condemning the [Tashkent Agreement](#).

US-Pakistani relations now returned to "normal". In December 1965 President [Ayub Khan](#) visited the United States and made due apologies for his naughtiness, and in June 1966 [the US imperialists resumed economic "aid" and the sale of arms to Pakistan](#). In December 1967 US [President Lyndon Johnson](#) visited Pakistan for talks with Ayub, followed in January 1968 by [President Tito](#) of US-dominated Yugoslavia. In August 1969 US [President Richard Nixon](#) visited Pakistan for talks with Ayub's successor as [President, General Yahya Khan](#).

The "Six Points"

In February 1966 [Sheikh Mujibur Rahman](#) the President of the Awami League, put forward a [six-point programme](#),

- 1) The Constitution of Pakistan must be federal, with a parliamentary form of government and a legislature directly elected on the basis of adult franchise,
- 2) Federal subjects to be limited to defence and foreign affairs only;
- 3) There should be:
 - i) separate currencies for the two wings, freely convertible into each other, or,
 - ii) in the alternative, one currency subject to statutory safeguards against flight of capital from the East to the West wing;
- 4) Power of taxation and revenue collection to be vested in the federating States; the Centre to be financed by allocation of a share in the States, taxes,
- 5) Separate foreign exchange accounts to be kept for East and West Pakistan: the requirements of the Federal government to be met by the two wings in equal proportions or on any other fixed basis as may be agreed upon,
- 6) self-sufficiency for East Pakistan in defence matters: an ordnance factory and a military academy to be set up in the East wing, the federal naval headquarters to be located in, East Pakistan".

The six-point programme crystallised the economic and political demands of the East Pakistan national capitalists

But as important as the programme itself was the method proposed to achieve it. [Sheikh Mujibur Rahman](#) suggested no repetition of the COP farce of the 1965 "elections", of seeking to bring about fundamental constitutional changes through the machinery of "Basic Democracy" controlled by the "Karachi" clique's military dictatorship. Instead he called upon the mass of the people in East Pakistan to build a "relentless, democratic mass movement" outside this machinery.

The six-point programme aroused the immediate attacks of the military dictatorship, which sought to represent its call for regional autonomy for East Pakistan as a call for secession.

Speaking at Rajshahi in East Pakistan on March 16th, 1966, [President Ayub Khan](#) attacked the programme as aimed at bringing about "...a sovereign Bengal", and added:

"Fulfilment of this horrid dream would spell disaster for the country and turn the people of East Pakistan into slaves".
("Dawn", Karachi, March 17th. 1966).

On March 20th, at a session of the Council of the [Conventionist Moslem League](#) in Dacca. he put forward blatantly the course which the "Karachi" clique would adopt in the event of serious danger of the six-point programme being put into effect:

"We should be prepared to face even a civil war, if forced upon us to protect the sovereignty and integrity of the country (i.e., to maintain the semi-colonial status of East Pakistan - Ed.)
("Dawn", Karachi; March 21st, 1966).

In May 1966 [Sheikh Mujibur Rahman](#) was arrested, and in June an official ban was placed on any mention in the press of the six-point programme.

[The Effect of the Sino-U.S. Rapprochement](#)

With the counter-revolutionary "cultural revolution" in China and the establishment of the military dictatorship of the Chinese national capitalists, a rapprochement began to develop between the Chinese rulers and the U.S. imperialists. This ended the possibility of the Ayub regime being able any longer to use the threat of closer relations with China as a means of putting pressure upon Washington.

Faced with the fact of the relative decline in the economic power of U.S. imperialism in the 1960s, the U.S. imperialists proceeded to take advantage of the above development, calculating that the dependence of the "Karachi" clique could now be purchased more cheaply than hitherto.

In April 1967 the U.S. State Department announced the cessation of military "aid" to Pakistan, although restrictions on the sale of most types of U.S. weapons to Pakistan were lifted. U.S. President [Nixon](#) put this new attitude into International perspective when he said in Guam in July 1969:

"As far as the problems of international security and military defence are concerned, ... the U.S. has a right to expect that this problem will be increasingly handled by, and the responsibility for it assumed by, the Asian nations themselves."

In August 1969, as has been said, he visited Pakistan for talks with Ayub's successor as President, [General Yahya Khan](#).

Pakistan, in this new situation, continued to develop closer relations with China.

In 1967 the \$60 million loan granted to Pakistan by China in February 1965 was increased to nearly \$ 67 million.

In September 1968 a highway connecting the Chinese province of Sinkiang with West Pakistan was opened, followed by a second all-weather road, the Karakoram highway, in February 1971.

In December 1968 an agreement on economic and cultural cooperation between China and Pakistan was signed, providing for a further interest-free loan to Pakistan of Pounds Sterling PS17.6 million.

In November 1970 President [Yahya Khan](#) paid an official visit to China, during which an agreement between the two countries on economic and cultural cooperation was signed.

In the new situation of developing Sino-U.S. rapprochement, there was now only one Power in relation to which the threat of closer relations could be used by the Ayub regime as a means of pressure on Washington - the [Soviet Union](#). In September /October 1967 President [Ayub Khan](#) paid an official visit to the U.S.S.R., and in April 1968 [Soviet Prime Minister Kosygin](#) paid an official visit to Pakistan.

As a result of these exchanges, in May 1968 Pakistan [Foreign Minister Arshad Hussain](#) told the National Assembly that, the Pakistan government had served notice on the U.S. government to close its aerial espionage base at Peshawar (from which [Gary Powers](#) had taken off in his ill-fated U2 in May 1960). Following this gesture towards the Soviet government, a Pakistan military mission headed by General [Yahya Khan](#), commander-in-chief of the army (and soon to replace Ayub as President) visited Moscow and signed an agreement for the supply of limited quantities of Soviet arms to Pakistan.

The Pakistan Democratic Movement

At the beginning of 1967 the disqualification from political activity imposed on many opposition politicians under Elective Bodies (Disqualification) Ordinance (EBDO) expired.

In May 1967 those opposition parties which stood for participation in the machinery of "Basic Democracy" controlled by the military dictatorship combined to form a new "united front" to replace the now disintegrated Combined Opposition Party of the 1965 "elections". This was the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM), composed of the Council Moslem League, the Nizam-e-Islam Party, the Jamaat-i Islami Party and the remnants of the National Democratic Front.

The process of formation of the PDM led, however, to a further split in the Awami League. While the main forces of the party stood firm on the six-point programme and the principle of extra constitutional mass action put forward by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, a minority, headed by Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan, favoured modifying the six-points to make them acceptable to the other opposition parties and joining with these in seeking to work within the framework of "Basic Democracy". This minority broke away from the Awami League proper to join the PDM.

The main points in the Pakistan Democratic Movement's 8-point programme related to the restoration of "parliamentary democracy", but it made some attempt to win support in East Pakistan away from the Awami League by calling for limited autonomy for the province and for parity between the wings in the civil service and armed forces.

The National Awami Party, that "leftist" front for the military dictatorship, attacked the Pakistan Democratic Movement as:

"an organisation of feudalists and capitalists".
("Pakistan Times", May 23rd, 1967).

The Splits in the Communist and National Awami Part

The split within the international communist movement between right Revisionists on the one hand, and "left" revisionists and Marxist-Leninists on the other, was reflected in December 1966 in a split in the underground Communist Party of Pakistan (CPP).

A section of the C.P.P. broke away to form a rival Communist Party which at first adhered to the on the whole Marxist-Leninist line put forward by the Communist Party of China in 1962-1966.

By this time, however, the counter-revolutionary "cultural revolution" in China was eliminating Marxist-Leninists from leading positions and establishing a military

dictatorship on behalf of the Chinese national capitalist class. The new Communist Party in Pakistan, however, continued to follow the leadership of Peking and quickly degenerated into a "left" revisionist party.

"Communists" continued to make the National Awami Party a principal field of their activity. The split in the underground Communist Party therefore precipitated a split in the National Awami Party the grounds for which had been laid over some years by the dissatisfaction of its landlord members in the former North-West Frontier Province and Baluchistan with the party's support of the "Karachi" clique's military dictatorship and its pro-U. S. imperialist foreign policy.

In the spring of 1967, therefore, a section of the National Awami Party, headed by Khan Abdul Wali Khan, (the son of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan) broke away to form a new party under the same name serving the interests specifically of the landlords of N.W.F.P. and Baluchistan, who looked to dependence on the Soviet imperialists for their liberation from the dominant "Karachi" clique. The right revisionists, who looked to Moscow for their inspiration, naturally joined the breakaway N.A.P. headed by Wali Khan, and "Communist" Professor Mozaffar Ahmed became one of the leading figures in the "right" N.A.P.

The Maoists, on the other hand, remained within the original N.A.P. machine, which continued to be led by Bhashani and to function as a "leftist" instrument of the military dictatorship. As Tariq Ali says:

"Owing to the Pakistani-Chinese rapport, the pro-Peking section of the N.A.P., headed by Maulana Bhashani, had virtually ceased opposing the government of President Ayub Khan both in East and West Pakistan."
(Tariq Ali: "Pakistan: Military Rule or People's Power?"; London; 1970; p.174),

The role of the "left" N.A.P. was greatly assisted by the official propaganda from Peking where the "left" revisionists, headed by Mao Tse-tung, were now, as the "cultural revolution" developed, free to expand China's previous diplomatic support for Pakistan at state level to open political support for the Ayub military dictatorship. Speaking at Lyallpuk in October 1966, the leader of a Chinese "labour" delegation, Wang Chieh, was reported as saying that:

"Pakistan had made impressive progress during a short span of time, and its achievements in various fields of national economy promised a bright future for the people. He added that a strong and prosperous Pakistan would play an important role in stabilising peace in Asia. The Chinese trade union leader said that during his tour of Pakistan he noted that the workers were imbued (sic) with a spirit of self-reliance and were determined to strengthen the economy of their country."
("Pakistan Times"; October 31st, 1966).

The leader of a Chinese trade delegation, [Chia Shih](#), made similar remarks in the reply to an address of welcome at a lunch arranged by the [Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry](#) in October 1967:

"Under the inspiring leadership of President Ayub, Pakistan has made a remarkable progress in the industrial and agricultural sectors, and the day is not far off when Pakistan will achieve complete economic independence."
("Pakistan Times", October 29th, 1967).

And while the military dictatorship was, in November 1968, shooting down demonstrating students in the streets of Rawalpindi, [General Huang Yung-sheng](#) Chief of Staff of the [Chinese People's Liberation Army](#), was saying at a banquet in honour of the visiting Commander-in-Chief of the Pakistan army, [General Yahya Khan](#):

"Friendship and cooperation between our two countries have been growing constantly over the last few years and there has been increasingly friendly contacts between the armed forces of our two countries. ...
In recent years the Pakistani people, under the leadership of President Ayub Khan, have fought unremittingly to safeguard national independence".
("Pakistan Times"; November 10th, 1968).

[The People's Party](#)

As has been said, the [Tashkent Agreement of January 1966](#) had been followed by outspoken opposition and demonstrations against the regime in West Pakistan:

"West Pakistan's reaction to the Tashkent agreement was violently hostile".
("The Economist", January 22nd, 1966; p.296).

This had convinced [Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto](#), Foreign Minister in the Ayub regime, that the national capitalists of West Pakistan, frustrated by the subservience of the "Karachi landlord /comprador bourgeois clique to US imperialism, was beginning to stir politically and that this was the class with which the political future of an ambitious politician lay. Accordingly, in June 1966, [Bhutto](#) (who had been a Minister in Ayub's Cabinet continuously since the military coup of October 1958) had withdrawn from the Cabinet "for health reasons".

Soon [Bhutto](#) became an outspoken critic of the military dictatorship and of its "betrayal of the national interest" at Tashkent. After an extensive speaking tour of the country, he founded in November 1967 a new party, [the People' Party](#). This was a social-democratic party, claiming to stand for the restoration of "parliamentary democracy" (as the road to "Islamic socialism"), for nationalisation of foreign-owned and monopolistic

enterprises, and for the breaking away from dependence on US imperialism to pursue an independent foreign policy.

The People's Party was thus a political party which objectively represented the interests of the West Pakistan national capitalists but which directed its appeal also towards the petty bourgeoisie and working class.

The "Agartala Conspiracy" or The "Islamabad Conspiracy Case"

Pursuing its offensive against the leaders of the Awami League, in January 1968 the government announced the discovery of a new "conspiracy". It was alleged that a number of Bengali army officers and civil servants had met agents of the Indian secret service at Agartala in India to plot to bring about the secession of Pakistan. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the leader of the Awami League, already in detention, was named as one of the conspirators.

In June 1968 the case of the State versus Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and 28 other defendants began before a special tribunal in Dacca. The case was officially called the "Agartala Conspiracy Case" , but Rhman always referred to it as the "Islamabad Conspiracy Case", as

"that is where the conspiracy was hatched".

The trumped-up nature of the case was fully exposed when the second witness for the prosecution, one Kamaluddin Ahmad, broke down in court, admitting that his evidence had been completely false and that he had testified falsely only after prolonged torture by intelligence officers of the military dictatorship.

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, giving evidence in January 1969, said that neither he nor the Awami League stood for the secession of East Pakistan, but for its autonomy within the Pakistan state.

The Upsurge Begins

The defection of Bhutto from the Ayub regime and the formation of the People's Party released a great explosion of popular anger in West Pakistan towards the end of 1968.

The upsurge began on November 7th, in the capital Rawalpindi, where students organised a demonstration in support of Bhutto, who was visiting the city. The police opened fire on the demonstration, killing a student, and the government then closed down all colleges in the capital.

On November 10th, 1968 a student fired two shots during a meeting addressed by [Ayub](#) in Peshawar.

On November 13th [Bhutto](#), Chairman of the People's Party, was arrested for "inciting the masses, particularly students, to violate the law and create disorder", together with [Wali Khan](#), President of the ["right" National Awami Party](#).

The three opposition leaders who stood for extra-constitutional political action - [Rahmart, Bhutto and Wali Khan](#) - having been detained, on November 26th, and also believing that the students had been sufficiently intimidated, the government reopened the Rawalpindi colleges. But the students reassembled and issued a call to the workers for a general strike. The response was almost total, and students and workers began to fight back with sticks and stones against police violence.

By the beginning of December 1968 this spontaneous upsurge had spread to East Pakistan also.

[The Operation to Save the "Karachi" Clique](#)

On February 14th, 1969, the London "Times" wrote:

"With the entry of the working class into the revolt, hitherto limited to the students and political parties, observers are beginning to doubt whether the government or the opposition can control the forces unleashed in Pakistan".

But the political representatives of the "Karachi" clique had seen this danger to their rule at the beginning of December 1968. Realising that their apparatus of repression was no longer adequate to contain this spontaneous popular upsurge against their hated military regime, they proceeded to mount an astute series of political manoeuvres, which took the following form:

[Manoeuvre 1: To draw the Awami League and the "right" National Awami Party \(the leadership of which could transform the spontaneous popular upsurge into an organised revolutionary national-democratic movement\) into a "united front" with the constitutional opposition parties:](#)

The constitutional opposition leaders were already combined in the [Pakistan Democratic Movement \(PDM\)](#). At the beginning of January 1969 the National Executive of the P.D.M. resolved to boycott the elections, to endorse "in principle" the six point programme of the [Awami League](#), and to build a mass movement. They then approached the [Awami League and the "right" National Awami Party](#) with the proposal to establish a "united front" on this basis. As a result of the acceptance of this proposal, the [Democratic Action Committee](#) was set up, with a nine-point programme as follows

- 1) Repeal of the University Ordinances (banning students from political activity);
- 2) Restoration of "parliamentary democracy" and direct elections on the basis of universal adult suffrage.
- 3) Freedom of the press from state censorship;
- 4) Full autonomy for East Pakistan;
- 5) Establishment of a sub-federation for West Pakistan, giving full autonomy to North-West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan;
- 6) Nationalisation of the banks, insurance companies and large industrial firms;
- 7) Immediate ending of the state of emergency, restoration of the right to strike;
- 8) Release of all political prisoners and abandonment of the "Agartala Conspiracy Case", and
- 9) An independent foreign policy, including withdrawal from SEATO and CENTO.

Manoeuvre 2: To utilise "leftist" political leaders to divert the mass movement from the objective of overthrowing the military dictatorship of the "Karachi" clique.

The "leftist" political leaders involved were found principally in the leadership of four organisations:

- 1) The "left" National Awami Party, headed by Maulana Bhashani;
- 2) The "East Pakistan Students' Union (leftist)", formed as a breakaway organisation from the East Pakistan Students' Union in 1965 and headed by Maoist Rashed Khan Menon: it was this organisation which invited Tariq Ali to come to Pakistan to "lead the movement";
- 3) The "East Pakistan Workers' Federation" (EPWF), a "leftist" breakaway organisation from the East Pakistan Federation of Labour, headed by Siraju Hossain (who had been released from prison in December 1967).
- 4) a section of the student movement in West Pakistan, most influential in Rawalpindi, headed by Raja Anwar.

In West Pakistan, these "leftist" leaders strove to divert the mass movement for the overthrow of the military dictatorship of the "Karachi" clique along the lines of a demand merely for the removal of Ayub Khan:

"Throughout Pakistan the fires still raged, but the student movement made no effort to coordinate, to set up a province-wide organisation.
Not a single comprehensive programme containing the demands of the students, movement of West Pakistan ever appeared
It seemed that since the chief object of hatred was Ayub, and since his removal had become the main demand, the students felt that there was no need for ideological clarity on their part. ..
Their (i.e., the West Pakistan students' ... Ed.) main demand now became that Ayub should quit. They were unclear as to the alternative, and preferred not to

talk about it." (Tariq Ali: "Pakistan- Military Rule or People's Power?" London; 1970; p.196).

In East Pakistan, where political consciousness was on the whole higher than in West Pakistan, these "leftist" leaders strove to disrupt the mass movement for the overthrow of the military dictatorship of the "Karachi" clique by means of the Trotskyite slogans of "Socialism Now".

"The Left (i.e., the "leftist" leaders of the student movement in East Pakistan Ed.) argued that this struggle (i.e., the national-democratic struggle Ed.) ... must be viewed as part of the struggle for socialism. The Right (i.e., those who did not support the above "leftist" line -- Ed.) argued that this was the first stage The right-wing argument was a typical Menshevik /social -democratic analysis of the situation. It could only lead to right-wing deviations.

The E.P.S.U. (leftists) were forced to struggle against the political position of ... the E.P.S.U...

In East Pakistan ... a Student Action Committee had been established and its leaders had adopted an eleven-point programme of demands which was anti-capitalist in content."

(Tariq Ali; Ibid. p.180,181-, 197).

Manoeuvre 3: To make such concessions to the Democratic Action Committee as would enable the constitutional opposition leaders to press the genuine extra-constitutional leaders represented on the Committee into acceptance of negotiations with the military dictatorship.

On February 1st, 1969 President Ayub Khan, in a broadcast, invited "responsible political leaders" to meet him for talks on the country's future.

The Democratic Action Committee replied that they were willing to meet the President if some preliminary concessions to their demands were made as a gesture of good faith.

On February 12th censorship of the press was abolished. On February 14th, it was announced that the state of emergency in force since 1965 would end on February 17th, and that all persons detained under the emergency regulations would be released. On February 20th the urban curfew was ended. On February 21st Ayub announced that he would not contest the next Presidential "election". On February 22nd the "Agartala conspiracy case" was dropped, and all the defendants, including Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, were released.

This series of concessions had barely commenced when, on February 16th, the D.A.C. accepted Ayub's invitation for talks. After a preliminary meeting a Round Table Conference with the President was fixed to open on March 10th.

Manoeuvre 4: To organise, with the objective assistance of the "leftist" political leaders, widespread acts of terrorism unchecked by the state, in order to frighten the national bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie into accepting a compromise settlement at the Round Table Conference which would save the political power of the "Karachi" clique under Martial Law, at the cost of replacing **Ayub Khan** as President by the commander -in - chief of the army and the promise to restore "parliamentary democracy"

During the first stage of the development of spontaneous student militancy in November 1968, the "left" National Awami Party had remained inactive.

"The pro-Peking N.A.P. had remained aloof from the struggle in West Pakistan for a whole month.

The Left faction of the N.A.P. in West Pakistan contained all the pro-Peking Communists in West Pakistan and many of these were in leading positions in the party. Their attitude towards the upsurge was initially one of hostility."

(Tariq Ali: "Pakistan, Military Rule or People's Power?" London; p. 174, 192).

Then, in the first week in December 1968, the leaders of the "left" N.A.P. suddenly became outspoken opponents of Ayub. Maulana Bhashani began to tour the country, making inflammatory speeches about blood and fire.

"Only Bhashani was able to keep up with the rapidly developing radical consciousness.

Maulana Bhashani called a funeral meeting on Sunday, February 16th, 1969. It was at this meeting that the eighty-six year old peasant leader ended his oration with the call "Bangla Jago, agun jelo' (Bengalis awake and light the fires). No sooner had the Maulana said these words than smoke was seen rising from the city centre. ...

The leadership of the left N.A.P. was meeting at a house in Eskaton. The old Maulana was pacing up and down in the garden, ... weeping as he heard the sound of machine-gun fire - the other 'leaders' were debating how to escape if the army should raid the house. At one stage, workers ran to the house and asked Bhashani for guns to use against the army, but none were made available.

At this crucial moment, Maulana Bhashani left his political base in East Pakistan and embarked on a tour of the western province. In West Pakistan he visited three cities and made extremely inflammatory speeches, which caused his enemies to say that he was acting in league with the army and deliberately exacerbating the situation to provide an excuse for Martial Law.

The army had quite clearly made up its mind to 'save the nation' once again. ...

They obviously used some of Bhashani's statements to scare the West Pakistani middle class".
(Tariq Ali: ibid. p.176,207,208,214).

The military dictatorship gave the "leftist" leaders every assistance in their actions:

"The students virtually controlled Dacca.....
Numerous acts of violence occurred in the towns.
The state of anarchy was most intense in the villages.
The provincial and local authorities made little attempt to maintain order.
... Police patrols in Dacca were, on March 19th reported to have been completely absent from the streets of the city for a whole fortnight, and village police were said to be remaining in their barracks in many parts of the province.
Leaders of the Opposition political parties alleged that the authorities were permitting and even encouraging the disorders to provide a pretext for imposing martial law." ("Keesings Contemporary Archives", p.23354-55).

It was against this background that the constitutional opposition leaders within the **Democratic Action Committee** repudiated the agreement on which the Committee had been set up, aided by **Bhutto** and **Bhashani**, who had been brought into the Round Table Conference by the President.

On March 10th, 1969 the Convenor of the Committee, Awami League renegade **Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan**, put forward to **Ayub Khan** two demands on which the political leaders represented at the Conference now agreed: the restoration of "parliamentary democracy" and the election of a National Assembly and Provincial Assemblies by direct vote on the basis of universal adult suffrage.

Three days later, **Ayub Khan** "accepted" these two demands.

On March 25th, 1969, in a broadcast, **Ayub** declared that he had refused to accept the demand for full regional autonomy for East Pakistan "because the opposition leaders were not agreed on this demand" and because

"... the acceptance of this demand would have spelled the liquidation of Pakistan. I have always told you that Pakistan's salvation, lay in a strong Centre. I accepted the parliamentary system because in this way also there was a possibility of preserving a strong Centre. ...
It is impossible for me to preside over the destruction of our country."

Speaking of the "fast deteriorating situation in the country", **Ayub** declared:

"The situation is no longer under the control of the Government. ...
Every problem of the country is being decided in the streets. Except for the

armed forces there is no constitutional and effective way to meet the situation. The whole nation demands that [General Yahya Khan](#), the Commander-in-Chief of the Pakistan Army, should fulfil his constitutional responsibilities. ... In view of this, I have decided to relinquish today the office of President."

[Ayub Khan's](#) resignation announcement was followed by a proclamation from [General Agha Mohammad Yahya Khan](#), in which he declared Martial Law and assumed the position of Chief Martial Law Administrator, saying:

"My sole aim in imposing martial law is to protect the lives, liberty and property of the people and to put the Administration back on the rails, ... I have no ambition other than the creation of conditions conducive to the establishment of a constitutional government. It is my firm belief that a sound, clean and honest Administration is a prerequisite for the smooth transfer of power to the representatives of the people elected freely and impartially on the basis of adult franchise. It will be the task of these elected representatives to give the country a workable Constitution."

Under the various Martial Law regulations issued, "mutiny, rebellion or rioting" were punishable by death, participation in strikes, including student strikes, and the spreading of reports "liable to create alarm or despondency" by 14 years, imprisonment, the holding of political meetings without permission by 7 years' imprisonment.

The [Awami League](#) had meanwhile withdrawn from the [Democratic Action Committee](#) in protest against the betrayal of the agreement upon which it had entered the Committee, and on the evening of the day on which Martial Law was declared, the Committee dissolved itself on the grounds that ".... its basic objectives have been achieved".

Simultaneously, the "leftist" leaders - their "basic objectives" having also been achieved - immediately called off their campaign of incitement.

On March 31st 1969, [General Yahya Khan](#) assumed the post of President.

In the "Black Dwarf" of April 18th, 1969, [Tariq Ali](#) wrote:

"The struggle has been victorious".

[Preparations for the Restoration of "Parliamentary Democracy"](#)

In August 1969 [President Yahya Khan](#) appointed a 7-man civilian cabinet.

In November 1969, in a broadcast, President Yahya Khan announced that a General Election would be held on October 5th, 1970 for a new National Assembly which would

formulate a new Constitution, and that permission would be given for "Political activity" from January 1st, 1970.

In the same month the Industrial Relations Ordinance restored freedom of trade union association for workers and the right to strike.

The restricted nature of the "political activity" to be permitted was revealed in a regulation issued in December 1969: in this rules were laid down for the conduct of political parties, and its most important provision read:

"No political party shall propagate opinions or act in a manner prejudicial to the ideology, integrity or security of Pakistan".

In March 1970 the Legal Framework Ordinance was promulgated. By this Pakistan would once more be known as "The Islamic Republic of Pakistan", and the new National Assembly would consist of 300 seats, plus 13 reserved for women (the latter elected indirectly).

The "Karachi" clique now decided that - with the "Punjabi" landlord clique challenged politically by the West Pakistan national capitalists (represented by the People's Party) and by the landlords of the former North-West Frontier Province and Baluchistan (represented politically by the "right" National Awami Party) - their own position was strong enough to cancel the concession made to the "Punjabi", landlord clique in the shape of "One Unit", and to reduce the political influence of this clique by dismembering West Pakistan into separate provinces. In April 1970, therefore, a Presidential ordinance divided West Pakistan into the four separate provinces of the Punjab, Sind, the North-West Frontier Province and Baluchistan.

In August 1970 President Yahya Khan postponed the General election for two months, until December 7th, 1970.

The 1970 General Election

In December 1970 the General Election for a new National Assembly took place - the first General Election with adult suffrage in the twenty-three years of Pakistan's existence.

The two key political parties contesting the election were the People's Party, led by Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, representing the interests of the national capitalists of West Pakistan and the Awami League, led by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, representing the interests of the national capitalists of East Pakistan.

Because of the similar class interests which they represented, the programmes of these two parties were similar in many respects. Both stood for the nationalisation of banking

and key industries, the development of cooperative farming, and an independent foreign policy, including the withdrawal of Pakistan from the SEATO and CENTO pacts.

But the two parties differed on one important issue. The [Awami League](#) took its stand on [Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's](#) six points, that is, for full political and economic autonomy for East Pakistan, now amplified to embrace control over its own foreign trade. But the national capitalists of West Pakistan, while wishing to win power from the "Karachi" landlord / comprador bourgeois clique, were at one with the "Karachi" clique in seeking to maintain - for their own benefit - the semi-colonial status of East Pakistan as the basis for their own national capitalism: thus the [People's Party](#) stood for "a strong Central Government" with only very limited autonomy for East Pakistan.

T

he "Karachi" clique had calculated that in the existing political circumstances in Pakistan, the General Election would produce a National Assembly in which no party would have a majority. Thus, any government which could command the confidence of the Assembly would have to be a coalition government, giving the "Karachi" clique the opportunity - through their nominee, President [Yahya Khan](#), and their own political party, the [Conventionist Moslem League](#) - to play off one party against another, to make and break governments, just as their previous nominee, [President Mirza](#), and their previous political party, the [Republican Party](#), had done so astutely,

The only party which could theoretically win a majority of seats in the National Assembly was the [Awami League](#), but the opponents of the Awami League needed to obtain only 12 out of the 162 seats in East Pakistan to prevent this.

It was calculated that, when the [Awami League](#) was challenged by the [Conventionist Moslem League](#), the [Pakistan Democratic Party](#) (representing the "Bengali" landlord / comprador bourgeois clique), and various religious parties - with women voting for the first time - [the "Karachi" clique anticipated that these would poll well in East Pakistan] there could be no reasonable doubt that 12 of the 519 candidates standing against the [Awami League](#) would be elected.

The result of the General Election was, however, not as the "Karachi" clique, had expected.

The "President's Party", the [Conventionist Moslem League](#), won only 2 seats in the whole country, none at all in East Pakistan. The [Pakistan Democratic Party](#) won one seat only, in East Pakistan, where its leader, [Nurul Amin](#), was elected. The religious parties won no seats whatever in East Pakistan. The result was that the [Awami League](#) won 160 seats out of the 162 seats in East Pakistan.

In West Pakistan, the [People's Party](#) did somewhat better than had been anticipated. It won a majority in the Punjab and in Sind, but its total was only 87 out of a total of 313 seats in the Assembly.

The shock of the election for the "Karachi" clique was that the [Awami League](#), with 162 seats in a House of 313, had an absolute majority in the National Assembly and so, constitutionally, could frame a new Constitution along the lines of the six-point programme - that is, along lines unacceptable in principle both to the ruling "Karachi" clique and to the national capitalists of West Pakistan.

The events which followed demonstrated the Marxist-Leninist truth that "parliamentary democracy" is never anything more than a false facade hiding the real face of the State as an apparatus of coercion.

[Preparations for the Military Attack upon East Pakistan](#)

On January 3rd, 1971, [Sheikh Mujibur Rahman](#), leader of the [Awami League](#), addressing a crowd in Dacca estimated at 2 million, said that the future Constitution would be drafted in accordance with the six point programme of the Awami League.

On February 17th, 1971, however, [Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto](#) leader of the [People's Party](#), announced that his Party would not participate in the new National Assembly, in view of the fact that the [Awami League](#) held a majority of the seats.

At a press conference on February 24th, [Sheikh Mujibur Rahman](#) said that the opponents of the Awami, League were concerned, not with maintaining the territorial integrity of Pakistan, which was not at issue, but with maintaining the semi-colonial status of East Pakistan, so that it could continue to be exploited by vested interests in the West. These "dark, conspiratorial forces", he warned, were now engaged in "a last, desperate bid" to frustrate the adoption of a Constitution by the elected representatives of the people, and it was this attack on democracy which was threatening the territorial integrity of Pakistan and destroying the last opportunity for the peoples of Pakistan to live together within one State.

On March 1st, 1971 [President Yahya Khan](#) postponed indefinitely the session of the new National-Assembly, which was due to open on March 3rd, on the grounds that, without the participation of the [People's Party](#), the Assembly could not be "representative".

On the following day, a general strike began in East Pakistan, called by the [Awami League](#) and embracing all sections of workers.

On March 6th, [President Yahya Khan](#) declared in a broadcast:

"Let me make it absolutely clear that, no matter what happens, as long as I am in command of the Pakistan armed forces and Head of State, I will ensure the complete and absolute integrity of Pakistan".

On March 15th, in the third week of the total general strike in East Pakistan, [President Yahya Khan](#) arrived in Dacca for "negotiations" with the leaders of the [Awami League](#) in which he was later joined by [Bhutto](#).

While [Yahya Khan](#) was pretending to "negotiate" with the Awami League leaders, troops were being poured into East Pakistan by sea and air.

On March 25th, when these military preparations had been completed, [Yahya Khan](#) abruptly broke off the "negotiations" and returned to West Pakistan the following day.

Immediately on arriving back in West Pakistan, [Yahya Khan](#) promulgated ordinances banning the [Awami League](#) (which he denounced as a party of "traitors"), prohibiting strikes and all political activity throughout the country, and imposing complete press censorship, together with an indefinite curfew in East Pakistan.

He then announced that the Pakistan Army had been instructed to "re-establish the authority of the Government in East Pakistan."

"Operation Genocide"

The initial offensive of the Pakistan Army against the people of East Bengal lasted three weeks. Its aims were to exterminate actual or potential opponents of the "Karachi" Clique's military dictatorship, to re-establish the authority of the dictatorship and to intimidate the population at large into acceptance of this authority.

In an attempt to prevent the extreme brutality of the operation from becoming known to the outside world, 35 foreign journalists who were in East Pakistan when the offensive began were detained in the Intercontinental Hotel in Dacca for 48 hours and then deported, after all film and documents in their possession had been confiscated. However, two foreign correspondents escaped the round-up and deportation: [Simon Dring](#), a "Daily Telegraph" correspondent, and [Michel Laurent](#), an Associated Press photographer. They managed to make an extensive tour of Dacca before sending reports from outside Pakistan.

Dring's despatch, published in the "Daily Telegraph" of March 29th, described Dacca as "a crushed and frightened city" after "24 hours of ruthless shelling by the Pakistan army". He estimated that more than 75,000 East Bengalis, had been killed - more than 7,000 in Dacca alone, where the first target had been the university where 200 students had been butchered outright in the students' union headquarters:

"Troops had occupied the university ... and were busy killing off students still in hiding".

The second target of the troops had been the densely populated old city, where 700 men, women and children had been killed and the greater part razed to the ground:

"Fires were burning all over the city".

Dring's account was confirmed in all essentials by a despatch from Laurent, published in "The Times" of March 30th.

Three months later the report of a World Bank mission headed by [Peter Cargill](#), director of the Bank's South Asia Department, described:

"... a continuing reign of terror in the East Wing conducted by some 70,000 West Pakistan troops stationed there. The army has been given a free hand to deal with 'secessionists'. Any Hindu or member of the Awami League is said to fall under this heading. ...

The mission found towns with only 10% of the population remaining. The rest had been killed, dispersed to India or fled to villages. Troops had shelled and destroyed public buildings. Bazaars and commercial life were at a standstill." ("The Guardian"; June 28th, 1971; p.3).

[Reginald Prentice](#), MP, a member of the British parliamentary delegation which visited both East and West Pakistan about the same time, wrote:

"In East Pakistan there is bound to be continuing repression, using the most brutal methods, simply because this is the only way in which a few thousand troops can maintain power over 70 million hostile people."

(R. Prentice: "The Repression in Bengal", in "Sunday Times"; July 11th, 1971; P. 10).

"Sunday Times" correspondent [Murray Sayle](#), describes the regime imposed by the Pakistan Army in East Bengal as:

"a regime of paid informers, bigots and thugs answerable to no one and apparently above whatever law is left in East Pakistan".

(M. Sayle: "A Regime of Thugs and Bigots", in "Sunday Times", July 11th, 1971; p.13),

and declared:

"There is an atmosphere of terror in East Pakistan. ...

There are now, according to the military authorities, 5,000 razakars (i.e.,

special constables - Ed.) in East Pakistan, .. They are paid three rupees a day (about 25p at the official rate) and receive seven days' training. .., Their work consists of 'security checks' - guiding the West Pakistan troops to the homes of supporters of the Awami League.

These people are, in fact, representatives of the political parties which were routed at the last elections, with an admixture of men with criminal records and bigoted Muslims who have been persuaded that strong-arm methods are needed to protect their religion - a mixture strangely reminiscent of the Orange Lodges, "B Specials", and political terrorists of Northern Ireland.

A military directive states that complaints against razakars are to be investigated by the military authorities.

It is clear that only a very brave or very foolish refugee would even try to return as things are."

(M. Sayle, *ibid.*- p.11,13).

This picture is confirmed by all reliable sources. By September 1971 some 10 million refugees had fled from East Bengal into India.

The Democratic-Republic of Bangladesh

The military offensive by the Pakistan Army against the people of East Bengal made it clear that any prospect of obtaining full autonomy within a Pakistan dominated by the military dictatorship of the "Karachi" landlord/ comprador bourgeois clique was an illusion.

As the attack began, and just before his arrest by the occupying forces, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, leader of the Awami League, called for the setting up of "the sovereign, independent Democratic Republic of Bangladesh" (i.e., of the Bengali nation).

On March 28th, a clandestine radio broadcast an Order of the Day by the Commander - in- Chief of the Liberation Army of Bangladesh (called at first the Mukhti Fauz, later the Mukhti Bahini, Major Zia Khan, in which he declared:

"I order the freedom fighters of Bangladesh to continue the struggle till ultimate victory",

and asked for international recognition of the Republic.

On April 12th, a six-member provisional government of Bangladesh was set up, with Sheikh Muii~ur Rahman (now in prison) as President, Syed Nazrul Isla, Vice-President of the Awami League, as Vice-President and Tajuddin Ahmed as Prime Minister and Foreign Minister.

On April 17th, 1971 the Democratic Republic of Bangladesh was formally proclaimed at a ceremony, at Mujibnagar.

On April 18th, the Deputy High Commission in Calcutta, staffed predominantly by Bengalis, declared its allegiance to the Democratic Republic of Bangladesh and announced that its office would in future function as the diplomatic mission of Bangladesh in India. Later a number of other Pakistan diplomats switched their allegiance to Bangladesh.

The Liberation Army of Bangladesh then began the first stage of its war of liberation against the Pakistan military dictatorship in the shape of guerilla warfare, at the same time training considerable numbers of guerilla fighters, principally from among the refugees who crossed the border into India.

The Attitude of Foreign Powers

The attitude of foreign powers to the war of liberation of Bangladesh has been dictated by the relations between the Pakistan military dictatorship to these powers in the new world line-up which is in process of development (see: "*Report of the Central Committee of the MLOB on 'Centrist' Revisionism*" in RED FRONT; March 1970; Part 3).

As a member of the US-dominated bloc of states, the Pakistan government has received the support of the United States imperialists and their ally, the military dictatorship of the Chinese capitalist class.

Despite its claim to support national liberation movements everywhere, the Chinese government, in particular, gave open and unreserved support for the repressive actions of the Yahya Khan dictatorship in East Bengal, repeating verbatim the propaganda put out by that dictatorship.

While the Pakistan Army was still carrying on its initial offensive against the people of East Bengal, Chinese Prime Minister Chou En-lai sent on April 12th 1971, a message to Yahya Khan expressing the full support of the Chinese government for Yahya Khan's:

" ... useful work in upholding the unification of Pakistan and in preventing it from moving towards a split. We believe that, through the wise consultations and efforts of Your Excellency... the situation in Pakistan will certainly be returned to normal.

The Chinese government holds that what is happening in Pakistan at present is purely the internal affair of Pakistan".

The counter-revolutionary position of the Chinese government on this issue gave rise to further rifts within the maoist parties and groups throughout the world.

In West Bengal, India, one section of the maoist "[Communist Party of India \(Marxist-Leninist\)](#)", headed by [Ashim Chatterjee](#), called for guerilla attacks upon the liberation army of Bangladesh, while another section of the party, headed by [Charu Mazumdar](#), advocated neutrality.

The maoist "[Communist Party of Britain \(Marxist-Leninist\)](#)", loyal to its Chinese backers, obediently supported the Peking counter-revolutionary line, while the maoist "[Irish Communist Organisation](#)", citing an article from "Peking Review", declared:

"The only meaning to be got from the article is that the people of Pakistan are standing against foreign subversives who are trying to break up the territorial state of Pakistan. But it is clear that the actual situation is nothing remotely like this. ...

The 'Peking Review' article bears no resemblance to the facts. It repeats the propaganda of the West Pakistan Government, which is attempting to hide the fact that it is trying to establish a naked dictatorship over the Bengalis." ("Irish Communist". June 1971, P.5,8).

The maoist "[Finsbury Communist Association](#)" sneered at its fellow maoist groups for their confusion over the issue of East Bengal:

"Particular difficulties are posed for the various Maoist parties and groups in England, The Communist Party of China has given them no lead (Sic!). So are they to affirm solidarity of the British working class for Pakistan based on 'the traditional friendship of the British and Pakistani peoples' or for East Bengal based on 'the traditional friendship of the British and Bengali peoples' ?" ("Finsbury Communist", July 1971; p.3).

This body sought to dissociate itself from this "confusion" by dismissing the war of liberation of Bangladesh as a "foreign matter" of no concern to the British working class. The fundamental contempt which maoism has, in reality, for the working class came for once to the surface when it declared:

'The English 'left' knows damn well that the working class is not interested in international solidarity".
(Ibid.; p.4)...

The maoist "[Working People's Party of England](#)", throwing overboard its pretence of being a "Marxist-Leninist organisation speaking with a single voice" put forward two opposite viewpoints for its supporters to choose from. [Alex Hart and John North](#) sought to excuse the attitude of the Chinese government, while [Paul Noone and Michael Mouzouros](#) cried in pathetic despair:

"What of People's China? Why the support of butcher [Yahya Khan](#)? Why the failure to support Bangladesh, and the people's liberation fight? Some so-called Maoists in this country try to condemn the Bengali people's struggle or belittle it. This is ludicrous opportunism.

In fact, [People's China](#) has OFFICIALLY condemned Bangladesh, supported a 'united Pakistan', complimented [Yahya Khan](#) on his action, and allowed Pakistan to overfly Chinese territory with troop planes.

This is a tragic error.

This is a set-back for all revolutionaries who look to [Mao Tse-tung](#) and the [Communist Party Of China](#) for world leadership."

("Worker's Broadsheet"; April /May 1971; p.10).

On the other hand, the powers which are lining up in a bloc opposed to that dominated by US imperialism supported the Bangladesh liberation movement as a force tending to weaken the Pakistan state, a member of the US dominated bloc.

On March 31st 1971, the Indian Parliament adopted a resolution denouncing the actions of the Pakistan Military dictatorship, and expressing support for the Bangladesh liberation movement:

"This House records its profound conviction that the historic upsurge will triumph of the 75 million people of East Bengal will triumph. The House wishes to assure them that their struggle and sacrifices will receive the whole hearted sympathy and support of the people of India".

(Text of Resolution of the Indian Parliament, March 31st, 1971, cited in; L.M. Singhvi (Ed.) "Bangla Desh", Part 2; Delhi: 1971; p.103-104).

The Soviet Union, as the leading power in the developing anti-US imperialist bloc, naturally aligned itself with India in supporting the Bangladesh national movement.

[The Indian Intervention](#)

The policy of the Indian government towards the Bangladesh liberation struggle was dictated not only by the desire to weaken its traditional enemy Pakistan, but also by the fact that a part of the Bengali nation forms an oppressed nation - West Bengal - within India. The presence of Bangladesh freedom fighters and several million refugees from East Bengal on Indian soil, the possibility of the emergence of Bangladesh as a genuinely independent state as a result of the war of liberation, aroused the fear, that these factors would stimulate Bengali nationalism within their own frontiers.

It was all these factors which led the Indian government, in November 1971, to order Indian armed forces to intervene actively "in support of the Bangla-Desh liberation army", with the aim of securing the establishment of a Bangla Desh which would be nominally "independent" but in reality dependent upon India.

"The ideal solution in the opinion of some Indians would be to have Bangladesh independent but bourgeois, and deeply dependent on India for trade and defence." ("The Observer"; August 8th; 1971: p.5).

The advance of the Indian army in East Bengal was rapid and effective. On December 14th, 1971, the East Pakistan government resigned, and two days later [President Yahya Khan](#) accepted the Indian terms of unconditional surrender.

National-Democratic Revolution in East Pakistan

The collapse of the Pakistan army in the east led to a virtually bloodless national-democratic revolution in the west. The dominant national bourgeoisie, represented politically by the [Pakistan People's Party](#) headed by [Zulfiqar Bhutto](#) was able to oust the ruling comprador-bourgeois clique, headed by [Yahya Khan](#), and on December 20th, 1971, installed [Bhutto](#) as President and Chief Martial Law Administrator in succession to [Yahya Khan](#).

The new government released [Sheikh Mujibur Rahman](#) from prison, the latter significantly flying to London for talks with the British government before returning to Dacca.

On January 1st 1972, the Bhutto government confiscated the passports of leading members of the comprador-bourgeoisie and ordered them to bring home the large capital sums they held abroad. On the following day it announced the nationalisation of key industries.

In March 1972 the new government announced a land reform directed at "eradicating the curse of feudalism". Ceilings for land ownership were reduced by 70%, the excess to be made available to poor and landless peasants.

The remains of the artificial state of Pakistan was however, faced immediately with internal dissension from the national bourgeoisies of North-West Frontier Province and Baluchistan, who are supported by the Soviet imperialists. In April 1972 martial law was abolished, and a new constitution brought into force giving measures of autonomy to these areas.

"Parliamentary Democracy" in Bangla Desh

On January 12th, 1972, two days after his return to Bangladesh, [Sheikh Mujibur Rahman](#) announced a provisional constitution for the new state, setting up a "parliamentary democracy" based on cabinet government. He promptly resigned as President and took over the position of Prime Minister, together with the portfolios of Home Affairs, Defence, Cabinet Affairs and Information, thus making himself the Minister responsible for the army, the police and the paramilitary forces.

One of the first acts of the new government was to demand that the [Mukhti Bahini](#) should surrender their arms to the state, a demand which was only partially complied with.

By March 1972 the new state had been recognised by all major governments, except for those of the United States and China. In April, Bangladesh joined the [British Commonwealth](#).

By March 1972 the last Indian troops had left the country, but the economic plight of the country - most of its factories deserted by their West Pakistani managements, its transportation system virtually destroyed - provided the pretext for the government to call for foreign "aid". This was provided in the first place by India and the Soviet Union, enabling these powers to bring about at an early stage a measure of dependence of Bangladesh on these powers.

[The Revolutionary Process in Pakistan](#)

The scientific definition of the concept "nation" was put forward in 1913 by Stalin:

"A nation is a historically constituted stable community of people formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture."

(J.V.Stalin: "Marxism and the National Question", in: "Works", Vol.2; Moscow;1953, p.307).

A nation comes into being out of a pre-national community as a result of the development of the capitalist mode of production:

"A nation is ... a historical category belonging to a definite epoch, the epoch of rising capitalism".

Stalin: *ibid*, p 31.

In a multi -national state, nations which have been "pushed into the background" are hindered from developing into independent national states by the ruling strata - which are usually the ruling strata of the dominant nation or nations:

"The nations which had been pushed into the background and had now awakened to independent life, could no longer form themselves into independent national states; they encountered on their path the very powerful resistance of the ruling strata of the dominant nations, which had long ago assumed control of the state."

(J.V. Stalin. *ibid*.p.315).

Thus, the young oppressed nations are compelled to struggle for their independence:

"Thus arose the circumstances which impelled the young nations on to the path of struggle.

The struggle began and flared up, to be sure, not between nations as a whole but between the ruling classes of the dominant nations and those that had been pushed into the background. ...

The bourgeoisie of the oppressed nation, repressed on every hand, is naturally stirred into movement, ...

Thus the national movement begins.

The strength of the national movement is determined by the degree to which the wide strata of the nation, the proletariat and the peasantry, participate in it." (J.V. Stalin: *ibid.*, p.315, 317).

In the last two quotations cited above, Stalin is speaking specifically of the multi-national states of Eastern Europe in the late 19th and, early 20th centuries. But his description is equally valid for the multi-national states of the Indian sub-continent in the mid-20th century.

Marxist- Leninists hold, of course, that the Indian sub-continent is inhabited not by a single "Indian nation", but by peoples of many different nationalities:

"Today India is spoken of as a single whole. But there can scarcely be any doubt that in the event of a revolutionary upheaval in India (N.B.: Stalin is speaking of India under British colonial rule - Ed.), scores of hitherto unknown nationalities, having their own separate languages and separate cultures, will appear on the scene."

(J.V. Stalin: "The Political Tasks of the University of the Peoples of the East", May 1925 in "Works", Vol. 7; Moscow; 1954; p.141).

When the leadership of the Communist Party of India was still faithful to Marxist-Leninist principles, this view of India as inhabited by peoples of many different nationalities, some of them developing into nations, was accepted by the party as a matter of course:

"Every section of the Indian people which has a continuous territory as its homeland, common historical tradition, common language, culture and psychological make-up and common economic life would be recognised as a distinct nationality with the right to exist as an autonomous state within the free Indian union or federation, and will have the right to secede from it if it may so desire. This means that the territories which are homelands of such nationalities and which today are split by artificial boundaries of the present British provinces and of the so-called 'Indian states', would be reunited and restored to them in Free India. Thus Free India of tomorrow would be a federation or union of autonomous states of the various nationalities such as Pathans, ... Punjabis, ... Sindhis, Bengalis; ... etc."

("On Pakistan and National Unity": Resolution adopted by the enlarged Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India, September 1942).

At the same time as the Communist Party of India was putting forward this Marxist-Leninist analysis of the multi-national character of the Indian sub-continent, British revisionist [R. Palme Dutt](#) was asking:

"Can the diversified assembly of races and religions, with the barriers and divisions of caste, of language and other differences, and with the widely varying range of social and cultural levels, inhabiting the vast sub-continental expanse of India, be considered a 'nation '?"

(R.P.Dutt: "A Guide to the Problem of India"; London; 1942 p.80),

and was answering the question in the affirmative, in terms acceptable to the dominant section of the Hindu capitalists:

"In the modern period the reality of the Indian nation can in practice no longer be denied."

(R.P. Dutt: *ibid.*p.99).

In contrast to this revisionist line, the [Communist Party of India](#), its leadership then still loyal to Marxist-Leninist principles, recognised the existence of a single Bengali nation:

"Our first formulation is that the Bengalis form a nation and so should be given the right to self-determination. ... It is correct to say that the Bengalis are a nation and Bengal should have its own separate state."

(C. Adhikari: "Pakistan and National Unity", published by the Communist Party of India, 1943).

The Bangladesh liberation movement must therefore be seen as the most developed section of the national-liberation movement of the Bengali nation as a whole, part of which is dominated by the Indian state.

The Bangladesh national liberation movement must also be seen as the first stage in a whole series of national-liberation movements that are developing throughout the Indian sub-continent, movements in which the aim of the national capitalists, who at present constitute the leading force in these movements, is to redraw the existing state boundaries of the Indian subcontinent along national lines, and secure the establishment of a number of national capitalist states.

While the working class has an objective interest in supporting these national-liberation movements, its interests are served not by the establishment of new national-capitalist states on the Indian sub-continent, but by the establishment of a federation of socialist states in which the exploitation of the working class has been abolished and in which the

working class is the ruling class.

The objective interests of the working class lie, therefore, in working for the transformation of the these national -democratic revolutions into socialist revolutions.

This transformation is possible only if the working class gains the leadership of the national-democratic revolutions from the national capitalists, and if the working class itself is led by a Marxist-Leninist Party which has rid itself of all revisionist trends.

The formation of Marxist-Leninist Parties of the working class in Pakistan and in India is thus an urgent necessity for the working class.

Central Committee, Marxist-Leninist Organisation of Britain;
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