

# POLITICAL SITUATION IN PAKISTAN

*By*

**ZULFIKAR ALI BHUTTO**

- \* *Islam is our faith*
- \* *Democracy is our polity*
- \* *Socialism is our economy*

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This paper was written in April, but due to a variety of reasons, best left unsaid, its publication was unavoidably delayed. Important events have been incorporated up to the time of printing to keep abreast of the galloping developments.

Z. A. Bhutto.







**Mr. Z. A. Bhutto addressing the Security Council  
September 1965**



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Pakistan is caught in a whirlwind. As we look back on the twenty years of our existence, we had a dangerous tendency for international and sub-continent problems to get fused together. To maintain the view that crisis is the order of the day, a natural phenomenon of this restless age is pointless. The prevailing danger could tend to be reversed.

I

Since the birth of Pakistan every government has appealed for national unity. Pakistan has run into crisis after crisis, each graver than the preceding, and unity has eluded us despite all the fervent appeals made. There must be serious reasons why crises should exist in abundance and not unity. Those reasons need to be examined.

Our country has been threatened by two sorts of crises — a general one affecting the world, but particularly Asia; and the other casting its gloom over the the sub-continent. There is an obvious connection between them. Of whatever sort the crisis may be and whether simple or manifold, the situation has to be understood properly.

The world in which we live is moving towards a culmination which might be a universal catastrophe. It will not be just another Dien Bien Phu. This is the difference between Dien Bien Phu and the present crisis, between 1954 and 1968. We are on the edge of a precipice. Below lies the valley of death. Must we let ourselves fall into it consciously by marching ahead to disaster or should



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*1958-8/10/57* Pakistan is caught in a whirlwind. *from R. 11/7* As we look back on the twenty years of our existence, we find a dangerous tendency for international and sub-continental problems to get fused together. To maintain the view that crisis is the order of the day, a natural phenomenon of this restless age is pointless. The prevailing demoniacal trend requires to be reversed.

Ours is not the only country caught in the vicious circle of crises. Many countries have been able to settle similar problems and move on with added strength to other matters. The strength to move forward comes from the resolution of basic internal issues. Unlike many other countries, Pakistan has unfortunately not yet been able to resolve many of its basic internal problems — issues affecting the people, their destiny, the lives of their children and the future shape of their society. The problems which affect the people and are near to them have never really been referred to them for settlement. Mohamed Ali Jinnah pledged that Pakistan would have a government and a constitution chosen by the people. That promise has yet to be redeemed.

There will be no end to our troubles until the people of the country determine their future freely. The present deadlock can no longer be broken by more manipulations. The next step has to be taken unburdened by past errors.

Out of the welter of confusion a crystallisation is

taking shape. A growing body of people, with the younger generation at their head, believe that the old ways are no longer sufficient to surmount the problems of Pakistan. Each epoch has its own political significance; its own seismic pattern. This epoch, exciting and full of challenge, requires a fresh approach for building society anew on the finest aspirations of the entire population of Pakistan. We are not prepared to return to the past. Nor are the people willing to tolerate the present conditions much longer. For this reason, the Pakistan People's Party declares: "All power to the people!"

It is imperative to resolve internal differences by consensus and consent. The long debate on the form of government and the constitution must be brought to an end. The wisdom of the people cannot be questioned in this age of enlightenment. Pakistan has seen many experiments in government and constitution. Their collective wisdom, enriched by the experience of twenty years, makes the people pre-eminently fit for deciding their own fate.

Quite clearly, Basic Democracy, which is another name for fascism, will not do. Independent institutions are needed capable of outlasting their creators and resisting capture by individuals lusting for power and avid for money. They must so function as to inspire confidence, which means that they must protect the rights of society against the exercise of arbitrary power. The law must function as an instrument of the people and not as a shield protecting an unjust status quo. The people when they come into their own, will build a just



society out of existing shambles. They will create a free fraternity of equal men and women, the fulfilment of their ideals.

The people of Pakistan alone must decide, for good and bad, whether the State should be a federation or unitary; what should be the relation of the two wings to the centre and to one another; whether regions should enjoy autonomy; whether the form of government should be parliamentary or presidential or one combining features of both. The federal and the unitary forms are both compatible with democracy, and the same can be said of the presidential and the parliamentary systems. This is all the more reason why the views of the people must be ascertained on issues to which answers cannot be deduced by debates on abstract principles. The legislative assemblies must be elected directly by the adult population entitled to vote and not by electoral colleges. The system of indirect elections lends itself most readily to the exercise of coercion and corruption. It is impossible to browbeat a whole population though it is comparatively easy to influence individuals composing an electoral college by menaces or favours. The right to vote must be exercisable unhindered and not limited by property or educational qualification, and it should be open to both sexes.

In an environment of freedom, the people will feel unhindered to exercise their best judgment. The individual and collective rights of the people require to be recognized constitutionally. It is a slave society where civil liberties do not exist or exist only in name. Fundamental rights, brought into the constitution by accident,

have been abrogated by design. The war which lasted for about 17 days was over in 1965. It was followed by the Tashkent Declaration and by a reduction in the expenditure on defence in the budget of 1967-68. With the recent indications of a new turn in our relations with India allowing for the construction of a step-by-step ladder to amity, there remains no reasonable justification to maintain the Defence of Pakistan Rules.

Instead of exposing abuse of power, the cancerous growth of corruption and open-door smuggling among other evils, a curtain of ignorance has been drawn between the people and the reality. Crime and violence are increasing menacingly. Corruption has reached a peak. The ordinary man is unable to earn sufficient wages to afford a decent livelihood. The burden of taxation grows, telling heavily on the middle-classes. Not much different from the conditions of the Kuomintang regime of China, a marriage has taken place between the industrialists and the bureaucracy to share economic and political power. Life in the villages has become unsafe. The worst sort of ghetto conditions prevail in the cities and slum areas are spreading far and wide, affecting the health and hygiene of the people. Hospitals are unable to provide treatment for the graver diseases. Spurious drugs that put an immediate end to their lives are administered to the sick. Racketeers who fearlessly adulterate food and swell their ill-gotten wealth by blackmarketing goods have lost fear of punishment. The operation of the public transport system is scandalous. Accidents are so frequent that the highways have become death alleys. Trains are held up in broad day-light and passengers



robbed whilst regular gun battles rage for hours between dacoits and the police. The riverain and forest tracts have become haunts of gangsters. Innocent young boys are forcibly netted into slave labour camps which abound in the country-side near town settlements. Witnesses are murdered in the precincts of courts of law in large cities like Lahore. Members of the Legislative Assemblies are assaulted and shot at, but the miscreants escape undetected.

The press is in chains and the printed word is in disgrace. Political leaders are victimised and political parties suppressed. Abusive language is employed against those who fought for Pakistan and those who defended Pakistan's honour in its gravest hour. There is no right to strike and no solace for the poor. The working classes are bled to fill the bank vaults of the new industrialist class. The law and order situation is crumbling under the heels of an oppressive bureaucracy which is taking an increasingly unsavoury part in politics. The legal structure has been tampered with to make confusion worse confounded.

The students have become the central butt of this Government. Our youth, in whom we repose all faith for the future, is distrusted. Oppressive ordinances have been promulgated to put in cage the flower of Pakistan's manhood. Degrees, that is, proof of the acquirement of knowledge which is inalienable, are taken away as forfeited — it is a dacoity of the mind being officially committed. Instead of daring to trust the younger generation, the Government is suspicious of our students and fears this segment of the population more than any other.

Along with all the other freedoms, academic freedom has been taken away. The universities are thus made subservient and deprived of autonomy. At this rate in the end it is the police alone that will dictate what is to be taught. If the Government, with all the control it exercises over propaganda, is unable to muster the support of the students, how can the students be misled by those who are denied access to them? The students form a community that is learning to think for itself and is therefore not easy to be led astray. The regime, being estranged from the people, is incapable of understanding the youth and the yearnings of the people generally. Thus, this Government has disillusioned the present and lost the future generation.

Little wonder that the press has been muzzled and the opposition silenced. The Government's voice alone is that of truth and it is spread nauseatingly by a Nazi-style propaganda in the controlled press, over the radio and on the television. Turn in whatever direction you please and you will encounter dissatisfaction. The poor cannot much longer endure the growing burden of corruption, nepotism and lawlessness. The exploitation has reached a climax.

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**II** Civil liberties hold the key to our future happiness. It is the first essential in the many imperatives that will lead to a harmonization of interests. All fundamental rights are important and stand or fall together. The structure of a free society rests collectively on all rights that are fundamental. Genuine freedom of speech cannot function genuinely without freedom of the press or without a proper opportunity for free association. The function of the press is to inform and not to misinform the public. Our press is being ordered to tell lies, to mis-inform and to slander. At present the press is paid to deceive and punished if it does not. In the existing circumstances it becomes the duty of the people of Pakistan to struggle for the restoration of the freedom of the press. If all democratic forces join hands in firm resolve, the people cannot lose. If however some members of the press think only of advertisements and the patronage of Government, it would mean a betrayal of their own cause. The choice has to be made between commerce and the cause. It is for the press to choose.

The present conditions must give way to a



democratic dispensation in which the entire population participates, feels that it is doing so and takes pride in it. In the same sweep, it is essential to restore fundamental rights and mobilize the people of Pakistan to build an egalitarian society serving the needs of the people and at their command. All power must pass to the people. This can only be done by democracy. That is why 'democracy is our polity'.

Democracy is essential but is not an end in itself. In the struggle to establish democracy we must never lose sight of the economic objectives, which remain paramount. Without economic progress a nation cannot find satisfaction in democracy alone. Democratic freedom is essential, but economic equality and justice are supremely important. Profound changes in national life cannot come without economic changes. Economic problems remain pivotal. Democracy must go hand-in-hand with enlightened socialism if the servitude of the people is to be ended. The limited resources of this overpopulated country are being wasted and the falling commodity prices in the international market diminishes its capacity to purchase essentials from industrial countries. In such a situation socialism is the only answer to our economic problems. Socialism offers the only way to end exploitation and to foster unity. Unity will remain a slogan and an illusion until exploitation is ended.

We are on the brink of an economic catastrophe. A new class, small in number, of capitalist barons, is unabashedly plundering national wealth. The disparity between the rich and the poor keeps on growing. There

are no anti-cartel or anti-monopolistic laws to prevent the abuse of privilege. There is not the slightest pretence of giving the system the appearance of humane capitalism, as is done by the more intelligent capitalist governments. Here, in Pakistan, there is free loot. On the pretext of encouraging private initiative, scandalous incentives are given to facilitate massive exploitation.

The country has not yet created an industrial base that can support itself. Not only is foreign aid required to build factories but it is also necessary for keeping these very factories going. Now that aid has been curtailed, Pakistan's industries grind to a halt or work one shift only. To get what foreign exchange it can, the regime has taken to subsidising exports. In the last analysis, the subsidy comes from agriculture and the industrial worker who must pay correspondingly higher prices for his basic necessities.

It might be thought that foreign aid could rescue the nation, but there is no hope of that. The war of Viet-Nam and the mood in the United States Congress towards large foreign aid means that Pakistan must content itself with a few crumbs. Nor is it worthwhile receiving this kind of aid; for it is so unproductive that the nation is being bled white to pay the debts it has incurred. Thus we have the sorry spectacle of a regime that claims to be the most reliable one to which foreign aid can be entrusted, begging for a reduction of the rates of interest it has to pay and even suggesting that it should be permitted a moratorium on its repayments.

It is not only the higher rate of interest as such that makes the value of aid questionable. A good deal



of aid comes in the form of commodity aid. Some years ago Government was not interested in wiping out the deficit in agricultural production. It chose instead to depend on the import of American wheat under PL-480. We are now paying dearly for that myopic policy. But commodity aid has also the disadvantage of being immediately consumed, which means that the future generations will have to repay for what they have not received.

The heavy burden on debt servicing, added to the foreign exchange expenditure on essential imports including military equipment have driven the Government frantic. Indeed, so frantic has the regime become that it has suddenly turned away from industry to agriculture for a miracle and behold we have a miracle rice and a miracle wheat — a miracle for either Wing! The immediate outlook is bleak. With restricted foreign aid inflation must enter. Already prices have risen faster than expected. From now on the pace must increase.

### III

Only socialism, which creates equal opportunities for all, protects from exploitation, removes the barriers of class-distinction, is capable of establishing economic and social justice. Socialism is the highest expression of democracy and its logical fulfilment. The range of socialism is as wide as conceivable. Apart from those that have undergone the process of revolution, there are many countries, among them even constitutional monarchies, where socialist requirements have been progressively realised without violent changes. The universality of the precepts of socialism is essentially due to two reasons: firstly, the basis of modern socialism is objective; secondly, socialist thinking is relevant to all countries in every part of the world in their actual economic and political condition. Socialism is therefore of direct interest to Pakistan, an under-developed country marked by internal and external exploitation.

In the scale of national wealth Pakistan stands at the lowest rung and there is nowhere else to be found an aggregate mass of human misery present in a similar area as that of Pakistan with its population of a hundred and

twenty million. The region of the earth with the highest concentration of poverty is Pakistan. This stigma has to be wiped out by socialism. The immediate task would be to end predatory capitalism and to put socialism into motion. The means of production that are the generators of industrial advance or on which depend other industries must not be allowed to be vested in private hands. All enterprises that constitute the infra-structure of the national economy must be in public ownership.

The control of the essential means of production and of the medium of exchange by the people does not mean that the private sector will be eliminated. Private entrepreneurs will be permitted to play their own useful role but will not be able to create monopolistic preserves. The private sector must flourish under conditions proper to private enterprise, namely, those of competition, and not under the shield of state protection such as at present.

Public ownership will not be allowed to degenerate into state capitalism. The workers will be encouraged to participate in the efficient running of the factories by appropriate incentives. Along with nationalisation steps will be undertaken to improve the conditions of the wage-earners by providing for proper housing, recreation, health of the worker and his family, education of the children, and by any other ways that may help to raise his standard of living and cultural level. Conditions vary from place to place. The socialism applicable to Pakistan would be in conformity with its ideology and remain democratic in nature. There will be no foreign dictation. If there can be a Scandinavian form of socialism, there



is no reason why there cannot be a Pakistani form of socialism suitable to our genius. "Socialism is our economy" because without socialism we shall not be able to attain genuine equality and unity, which are all the more precious to a nation geographically divided in two parts.

Islam and the principles of socialism are not mutually repugnant. Islam preaches equality and socialism is the modern technique of attaining it. Dr. Mohammad Iqbal, Pakistan's great poet-philosopher, dreamed of Pakistan as an Islamic State having a socialist system. Only a part of his dream has come true. Pakistan is a Muslim State but its piratical form of capitalism, which has wreaked havoc upon the people, is a violation of Islamic tenets. The Founder of Pakistan, Mohamed Ali Jinnah, declared on more than one occasion that Pakistan would be an Islamic State with a socialist form of government. In a speech in Delhi in April 1943, Mr. Jinnah visualized Pakistan as having 'a People's Government' and warned 'landlords and capitalists who have flourished at our expense by a system which is so vicious, which is so wicked, which makes men so selfish that it is difficult to reason with them..... the constitution and the government will be what the people will decide'.

'Islam is our faith', and it is the basis of Pakistan. Pakistan cannot last without the supremacy of Islam. A socialist form of government does not rival that supremacy. On the contrary, socialism will make the whole population the custodian of Islamic values. By entrusting responsibility to a handful of capitalists,



whom the Father of the Nation called 'men so selfish that it is difficult to reason with them', we are exposing the ideology of Pakistan to foreign influences. The entire population of Pakistan cannot be purchased by foreign powers. Only the vested interest having a common interest with foreign capital are susceptible to control by foreign powers. Indeed, they are the creatures of foreign powers. The hidden hand working through its agents has moved mercilessly in many under-developed nations of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Pakistan is not an exception. Foreign influence has been allowed to spread far and wide into Pakistan and, on a number of occasions, vital national interests have been compromised under foreign pressure. This must stop and it can only when the people take control. The entire population cannot be bribed or become a foreign agent. Thus, the Islamic ideology of this nation can best be preserved by the people of Pakistan and not by a handful of industrialists whose factories run on annual foreign subsidies.

Objective study shows that there is no conflict between Islam and socialism. If there were any incompatibility neither the poet-philosopher of Pakistan nor its Founder would have advocated socialism. Their views are on record and there is no point in joining issues with rootless individuals who, under the shelter of this Government, have had the audacity to contradict the Father of the Nation.

The call to unity made by every government has been progressively defied, so-much-so indeed that the present Government has begun to unearth conspiracies



striking at the root of national unity. Why should this be so when the struggle for Pakistan was waged unitedly by the Muslims of the sub-continent? At its birth the unity of Pakistan was the envy of other countries. Why has this magnificent unity been evaporating? Why is the brotherhood of Islam, which forms the basis of our unity, threatened? Everything is falling apart because under the present system the people are not trusted. Their rights have been abrogated and their views are not sought on any question affecting their fate. The gulf between the people and Government is widening.

Crass exploitation of the people is weakening national unity and creating severe tensions throughout the country. The unity of Pakistan cannot be preserved merely by exhortations nor by presidential order. For all these and many more connected reasons, the differences among the people are escalating. In every way the situation is going from bad to worse, but the relations between East and West Pakistan have reached a critical point. In the last week of February a Central Minister from Bengal analysed the causes of the trouble. Astonishingly he found the reasons for the dissatisfaction in the use of defective text books which he alleged are misleading the younger generation. As if Pakistan were a passing phenomenon, this Minister admonished the youth for having forgotten the hardships of the generation that suffered under the British and the Congress. The Minister should have known that the causes of the trouble lie much deeper. Most certainly they lie not in defective text books nor in the short memory of our people. An ideology lives for ever and the ideology of

Pakistan based on justice and equality is not a transitory factor kept alive only in the memory of those who lived under foreign domination.

Much more than memory of the past sufferings disappears when the spirit of freedom is replaced by a new form of serfdom. The conditions prevailing in every part of the country require to be vastly improved, most of all in the eastern wing.

Pakistan is one nation, an indivisible whole. The division of geography does not divide the nation. No part of it has precedence over the other, for all are equal. Pakistan was cast in one piece at one and the same time. Neither of the geographical parts has the right to the name of Pakistan to the exclusion of the other. The people of both wings have suffered and sacrificed much for the sake of freedom, for the sake of Pakistan. If West Pakistan has been deprived of extensive regions by the unjust Radcliffe decision, so has East Pakistan been deprived of its territories. All their vital interests are common and unity will return if all parts are administered with democratic equality.

The unity of Pakistan will come when the people are given their political rights including economic equality. The greater the exploitation, the more precarious will become the nation's unity. The sooner exploitation is ended, the sooner will unity emerge. These fine people with a rich and noble heritage will unite again as in the past provided their rights are restored to them. It is for this reason that the Pakistan People's Party resolutely proclaims that:—

**'Islam is our Faith'**

**'Democracy is our Polity'**

**'Socialism is our Economy'**

**'All Power to the People'**

Sustained by these four pillars Pakistan will be a strong edifice and well protected. All forms of subversion, both internal and external, will cease when these principles are applied. Under their banner Pakistan will redeem the pledge made to the Muslims of the sub-continent and emancipate the people of Jammu and Kashmir from Indian bondage.



## IV

The foreign policy of Pakistan has seen many storms. It has been built on many illusions. Pakistan has allowed itself to be left behind by events. At times we have clung to untenable notions fanatically and lightly abandoned sound ones. We have experienced one disillusionment after another, and failure upon failure. Swinging from one reach to the other, from bellicosity to submission, from arrogance to humiliation, from zeal to inertia, Pakistan's foreign policy has fallen victim to frustration and despair. In the process, two wars have been fought without the attainment of national objectives and contradictory alliances forged without the solution of disputes. Neither the interests of economic self-reliance nor of security have been served.

In the first flush of independence, when our leadership trod new ground by entering the domain of foreign relations after its denial by colonialism for over a hundred and fifty years, many irrational things were done. In the beginning Britain and the Commonwealth were treated as being of primordial importance, since it was not understood that Britain's influence was waning and that the

Commonwealth was a subterfuge meant only to prop up Britain's tottering prestige. When it at long last dawned upon our leadership that there was a change in the power structure, the course was sharply turned towards the United States of America, of which Pakistan made itself a vassal in haste. Finding anchorage in an alliance we felt overjoyed. It was believed that all our problems would be swiftly resolved by the touch of this Great Power.

At one time, without considering all the implications of foreign relations, a senile politician ineptly proposed "Islamistan" and caused unnecessary misunderstanding in the minds of Arab nations and of Indonesia, Turkey and Iran. On the one hand "Islamistan" was preached and, on the other, a Prime Minister of Pakistan derided Muslim unity, which he said meant the addition of zero to zero. Heaping insult upon injury, Pakistan entered into military alliances which the Arab States and other important non-aligned States considered inimical to them. By entering these alliances Pakistan surrendered a part of its sovereign rights, alienated Muslim nations and the Third World generally. It also incurred the wrath of the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China, the two powerful giants embracing our northern frontiers.

The foreign policy of a government that called for joint defence with India in 1959 found itself at war with that country in 1965. At one time Pakistan's foreign policy unblushingly conceded extra-territorial rights to the United States and pursued provocative policies towards the other Great Powers, but later it made such a great discovery of our geographical location as to start



demanding cordial relations with the neighbouring Great Powers. There was much talk of fraternity with Iran and yet hesitation on the subject of the Persian Gulf's being called by the name it has been known by for centuries. Relations with Afghanistan were severed, but later on Afghanistan was called 'blood brother'. Following a policy riddled with shocking contradictions, Pakistan was driven to a position of isolation.

In the grand alliance forged with the United States Pakistan proceeded on one premise and the United States on quite another. The United States wanted the encirclement of Communist States, not of India. Pakistan, on the other hand, thought that the alliances would be a bulwark against India, a myth which the war of 1965 destroyed beyond repair.

Fantastic advances in military science—the launching of sputniks, the attainment of a balance of nuclear terror and other events of momentous significance which caused re-thinking of their basic policies by every nation—all these escaped unnoticed by Pakistan. Whilst other nations made adjustments to accommodate themselves to the changes, Pakistan remained blissfully oblivious to them. Although the era of John Foster Dulles was passing away before his death, instead of adjusting itself to the changes, Pakistan clung to its attachment to the United States and suffered the pangs of a jilted romance. Pakistan got itself caught in the jaws of a nutcracker from which it has not been able to extricate itself to this day.

Little is done to resist foreign demands. What is the good of economic or any other aid if Pakistan's sov-



ereignty is to be bartered away in the bargain? Those who tried to resist the United States pressures demanding Pakistan's subordination to India and the abandonment of its just claims on Jammu and Kashmir were accused of creating complications in Pakistan's relations with the United States. Time will prove that the policy of capitulation is leading the nation to a point from which there is no return. Normalisation of relations with all the Great Powers is not attained by becoming a satellite of one of them but by refusing to become the satellite of any of them.

The Government pledges that it will not take any steps in the interest of one Great Power that would be directed against the interest of other Great Powers and yet it remains in SEATO and CENTO. It continues to indulge in blatant contradictions by granting facilities to one Great Power on its territory which the others regard as being hostile to them. This it does in spite of the fact that the United States has terminated all military assistance. Pakistan is thus committed to a gratuitous obligation which, in the event of a world war, might reduce the country to ashes. These are appalling risks.

Pakistan remains committed to the United States without a quid pro quo, yet Government proclaims a strange kind of neutrality in relations with the three Great Powers. We make declarations on bilateral relations and remain pledged to an extreme form of multilateralism. The Sino-Indian conflict opened the eyes of our rulers to the geographical situation of our country. They have at last discovered the truth that foreign policy must take account of geographical facts and

Pakistan should be on good terms with as many neighbouring countries as possible, especially when it has a serious disagreement with one of them. But for well over a decade Pakistan has had estranged relations with India (for which there are good reasons), with the People's Republic of China, the Soviet Union and Afghanistan. Until recently, our relations with Burma were not satisfactory and we had no contacts with Nepal. A country that has suddenly woken up to the imperatives of geography, was on inimical or non-existent terms with all its territorial neighbours, two of whom are Great Powers.

Pakistan does not have any disputes with the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China and yet we outclassed even the United States' NATO allies, including Britain and Germany, in our ability to provoke the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China. India, which was genuinely non-aligned under Nehru, received as much, if not more, economic assistance and food supplies as aligned Pakistan.

Pakistan's policy of complete attachment to the United States was to a considerable extent responsible for the Soviet Union's consistent partiality towards India. In spite of the fact that the principle of self-determination and India's pledges were at stake, the Soviet Union supported India's untenable position on Jammu and Kashmir. Following Pakistan's developing relations with China in the aftermath of the Sino-Indian conflict, some small signs of a better attitude of the Soviet Union towards Pakistan were discernible.

Now that there has been a freeze in Pakistan-



China relations, the Soviet Union has deemed it safe to openly return to its traditional policy and restore military assistance to India without any fear of reaction from China. A great deal of fuss was made in the controlled press of Pakistan over the Soviet decision to strengthen the war arsenal of India. The ubiquitous spokesman of the Foreign Office expressed his surprise and concern. According to him and all those who joined the chorus of lament, the Soviet assistance would further widen the military imbalance in the sub-continent and it was against the spirit of Tashkent.

There is no doubt that the increase of India's military strength will further endanger Pakistan's security. Nobody can disagree with that. There is room for anxiety and perhaps disappointment but not for surprise. The Foreign Office felt surprised because it has forgotten now to make proper appraisals. The Tashkent Declaration involves non-aligned India and an aligned Pakistan that has lost its military support from the United States and a measure of political support from China.

The Soviet Union continues to maintain its preference for India. There is every reason for it to strengthen its friendship with that country. Despite India's heavy dependence on the United States, to this day India has not conceded extra-territorial rights to any foreign power. In contrast, from the time of its inception, for over a decade, Pakistan did not take one solitary step to improve its bad record of relationship with the Soviet Union. My Oil Agreement of 1961 notwithstanding, Pakistan has not taken any significant independent and timely step based on merit and not



forced by expediency towards better understanding with its northern neighbours. Although some important developments have taken place in the last four years, Pakistan has not so much as even left the Commission on Korea as a minor gesture of its sincere intentions.

Whatever gesture the Soviet Union made towards Pakistan was chiefly motivated by China's growing relations with Pakistan and not in response to Pakistan's belated half measures forced by circumstances. The most important thing to remember is that the Soviet Union took some initiatives for an approach towards Pakistan, the most significant being that at Tashkent, not to downgrade the importance of India but to combat the influence of China in Pakistan.

The Soviet Union's decision to resume military assistance to India demonstrates how dangerously Pakistan is isolated today. It shows that the President's last visit to that country, over which the controlled press of Pakistan went into raptures, was a failure. Actually that visit exposed Pakistan's vulnerability. It was undertaken from a position of weakness. It was the third visit of the Head of State of Pakistan to the Soviet Union in two years without a reciprocal visit by the top leadership of the Soviet Union. The President of Pakistan went to Moscow to seek military assistance and, in return, the Prime Minister of the Soviet Union visited New Delhi in January 1968 to bless India with massive military assistance. This happened because the President went to the Soviet Union after the United States had terminated military assistance to Pakistan. He went there after the relations with China had

reached a saturation point. In such circumstances, no benefit could be expected. Time has shown that no benefit has accrued.

It is not possible to approve and reprove at the same time. Hardly had the din of protests against the Soviet military assistance to India died down than the Soviet Minister for Foreign Trade was accorded a warm welcome to Pakistan. The Soviet Foreign Trade Minister's visit, seen from the point of view of Pakistan's interest, was ill-conceived and ill-timed. It was undertaken in the wake of the Soviet decision to strengthen India's war potential. The willingness to equate commercial agreements with massive defence transactions does not augur well for the future. It showed how easy it is to hurt Pakistan and how simple it is to please it. The visit exposed the hollowness of Pakistan's protests. Without the slightest difficulty, in the course of one ordinary visit, the Soviet Union was able to satisfy Pakistan with a trivial commercial transaction to offset the massive military assistance rendered to India. In the circumstances the only befitting thing would have been to request the Soviet Government to postpone the visit of its Minister until a more congenial climate had been created. That would have been an honourable stand and its lesson would not have been lost on the Soviet Union. It would have given credibility to the protests. After all, twenty years have passed and the steel mill is yet to be built. A few months' delay would not have brought the skies down.

Noting the signs of Pakistan Government's weakening resolve and secure in the knowledge that Pakistan



had been reconciled to the blow of resumed military assistance to India, the Soviet Prime Minister suddenly decided to accept an oft-repeated invitation of two years' standing to visit Pakistan in the middle of April. In spite of the illness of the President from which he was recuperating after being bed-ridden for over two months, long discussions took place at Rawalpindi between the President and the Soviet Prime Minister on the world situation with emphasis on Soviet-Pakistan relations, and Indo-Pakistan affairs. In a television interview at Islamabad, a stone's throw from the trouble-torn Kashmir border, Mr. Kosygin listed Germany, Middle East and Viet-Nam as the three international points of tension requiring world attention. There were promises of collaboration in all except the military field. Much satisfaction was expressed over the agreements to expand economic and cultural co-operation. The silence on military co-operation was serious but not nearly as ominous as the political result of the visit which showed the Soviet Union's resolve to enforce its well-known views on Indo-Pakistan relations. This was the meaning of the television interview and the message of all the other important pronouncements of Mr. Kosygin. Pakistan responded with such serene understanding that the Soviet Prime Minister made an unscheduled visit to New Delhi in order to assure India publicly that Pakistan was now prepared to open a new chapter of relations with that country by resolving mutual differences on a step-by-step basis. As proof of our sincerity, a couple of days after the Soviet Prime Minister left Pakistan, a new Foreign Minister was ins-



talled in office to implement the policy of reconciliation. For the first time in the history of Pakistan a civil servant has been chosen for this high political office to implement a policy without fear of adverse political consequences. It appears that the turning point has been reached. There is something in the air resembling the early martial law days when in April 1959, barely six months after seizing power, President Ayub Khan offered joint defence to India. At that time Mr. Manzur Qadir, a brather-in-law of the newly appointed Foreign Minister and a person whose predilictions towards India were well-known, was President Ayub Khan's Foreign Minister. Had Mr. Nehru not rejected the American — sponsored scheme for joint-defence, the partition would have been as good as undone. Much has happened in the intervening years to improve the chances of the new Foreign Minister's succeeding where Mr. Manzur Qadir failed. The revival of that spirit will now be stimulated by Sino-Indian differences and encouraged by that common point in the sub-continent where the interests of the United States and the Soviet Union meet.

The cumulative effect of all things done by the Government in the past two years has resulted in a decline in Pakistan's relations with the People's Republic of China. The difference in the tenor and temper of our existing relations does not escape the notice of independent observers. Obviously there is no break in our relations with China. Outwardly cordiality is maintained. Such are the ways of diplomacy. Foreign policy changes are often imperceptible. It is like a rose bud

which opens slowly into a full flower. If there had not been undercurrent of change, reports would not have flowed from London about the proposal of the Malaysian Prime Minister for a new anti-China defence pact involving Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, Philippines, Burma, Ceylon, India and Pakistan. This information appeared in the Dawn of February 11th, 1968. Whether true or not such a proposal would not have entered the mind of the Malaysian Prime Minister during the halcyon days of Sino-Pakistan relations when China gave an ultimatum to India in September 1965. Now the possibility enters the mind of the Tengku because, like other people, he has noticed the difference. Thus, no matter how strident the denials, a change has taken place. Things are clearly not what they used to be and that is not good for us.

It is bad because with or without Soviet or any other assistance to India, there will always be a quantitative military inequality in the sub-continent. The imbalance can grow or lessen, but it will remain because of the vast difference in the resources of the two countries. For this reason Pakistan entered into alliances with the United States of America. Pakistan gambled to get committed in return for American military equipment required as a measure of protection against India. A backdoor was found for the entry of arms in order to reduce the imbalance. The United States will no longer give arms to Pakistan for the purpose of defence against India. Nor will the Soviet Union provide Pakistan with arms for defence against India.



As a token of its appreciation over Pakistan's agreement to change its attitude towards India, particularly on Kashmir, the Soviet Union might in the future provide Pakistan with some military assistance which will not be comparable to what India receives. It will be rendered for political reasons and not to strengthen Pakistan's security against India. Under certain conditions the United States might also restore military assistance, which in the altered situation in the sub-continent can be provided to Pakistan without any conflict to the United States objectives in the sub-continent.

But neither the Soviet Union nor the United States will permit the imbalance to be reduced. The People's Republic of China is the only country which will be sympathetic to Pakistan's real requirements. This is so because that country's interests in the sub-continent coincide with those of Pakistan. It is strictly a question of mutuality of interests. If we look around us the only Great Power whose objective interests coincide with Pakistan's and the only country capable of assisting Pakistan is the People's Republic of China. That country alone is capable of reducing the imbalance, either by the supply of military equipment or by political means or-both. It is the immediate neighbour of India and Pakistan and has a territorial dispute with India, which Pakistan cannot ignore. Pakistan will always need a plus-factor for coping with India. Whether the government likes it or not, it so happens that that plus-factor is the People's Republic of China. If that factor is removed Pakistan will be at the mercy of all the three Great Powers and India. The tragedy will be all the greater because many significant developments



of recent origin indicate that China is on the verge of breaking its isolation. With the change in the fortunes of the Viet-Nam war, the mood in the United States towards China is also undergoing a corresponding change. Vice-President Humphrey launched his election campaign by wanting to build bridges of peace between the United States and China. Governor Rockefeller expressed similar sentiments on entering the presidential campaign.

Independent of the immediate considerations, this Government would be well advised to take active steps to restore the relationship with the People's Republic of China which was forged after the Sino-Indian conflict of 1962 and which culminated in the Indo-Pakistan conflict of 1965. China is a Great Power with increasing strength. It is an Asian country and an immediate neighbour of Pakistan. With the completion in the coming year of the Sinkiang-Gilgit road Pakistan will be once more linked with her historic hinterland of Central Asia and her strategic position will be vastly improved. India's grave concern over this road was expressed in strong protest notes and in a statement of her Minister of State for External Affairs in the Indian Parliament. As a sign of her apprehension India went to the extent of drawing the attention of the Soviet Union to this "new threat to her security". China's influence in Asia is bound to grow. It is a country whose objective interests coincide with Pakistan's and whose assistance to Pakistan in all fields will continue to enlarge whilst that of the United States will begin to diminish.

In the not distant future the People's Republic of

China and the United States will need to arrive at an honourable modus vivendi in Asia similar to an arrangement now existing between the Soviet Union and the United States. Pakistan must have the patience to await that day and not commit errors which might cause irredeemable harm. The irony of the situation is that Pakistan Government's resolve broke down when the worst period was coming to a close. If it had held firm, it would have found itself in a satisfactory position with the United States as well as the Soviet Union.

In Indo-Pakistan relations, the policy of confrontation has been replaced by submission which is euphemistically described as co-operation. On the question of relations with India this Government and the people of Pakistan stand on widely separate positions and think very differently. Every day that passes uncovers yet another failure of the Government's policy. All entreaties addressed to India concerning Jammu and Kashmir and the exodus of Muslims from Assam have been futile. Every self-abasing gesture of this Government towards India is answered by greater threats. Since the change of policy, Indo-Pakistan disputes have become more complicated. The situation in Jammu and Kashmir and in Assam has worsened. The Muslims of India have been subjected to new waves of recurring communal riots. The Indian Prime Minister threatens Pakistan with dire consequences, which may mean that at some time in the future advantage might be taken of Pakistan's vulnerability for the sake of saving India's dissolving unity. Let it not be forgotten that the outcome of the dispute over the Rann of Kutch was a victory of the Armed



Forces] of Pakistan and a vindication of the policy of confrontation. Had the Armed Forces not confronted India in the Rann and in Kashmir, Pakistan would have been browbeaten diplomatically and by show of force.

Recently, however, under the advice of foreign friends, India has adopted a soberer attitude towards Pakistan. Does this mean that another endeavour is to be soon made to negotiate a broad settlement? This is not a new development in Indo-Pakistan relations. It has come and gone periodically. Beginning with Liaquat Ali Khan, every Prime Minister of Pakistan has had to contend with it. The spirit of reconciliation and of animosity recorded the highest and the lowest points during the regime of President Ayub Khan. Now the cycle is being repeated for the second time during his regime. This is the only difference. India is gaining time and weakening Pakistan in the process. Pakistan is writing another essay in illusion for which it stands to lose considerably and gain not an iota of advantage. With the failure of every such exercise, we have seen that it becomes more and more difficult to mobilize the people to take the right position again.

Government's resolve to seek peace in the sub-continent at all costs and on India's terms is now becoming clear as crystal. Day by day this fear is becoming more real. There are many signs of its authenticity. The Kashmir dispute, which has remained the central problem in Indo-Pakistan relations, has been by-passed ingeniously and relegated to a formal position only. In the past the Security Council was immediately approached whenever India took any serious step to



violate the basic United Nations' resolutions. From 1948 upto September 1965 every Government of Pakistan steadfastly maintained this policy. Since the Tashkent Agreement, India has taken many blatant measures to violate the United Nations' resolutions to tighten its control over Jammu and Kashmir. The Services in the State have been Indianized and the Maharaja has been made a Minister in the Central Government of India. These and many other actions of India have necessitated a reference to the Security Council, but the Pakistan Government has scrupulously avoided it. The famous September 1965 Resolution of the Security Council on Jammu and Kashmir made it obligatory on the United Nations to find a solution to the dispute after the withdrawal of forces. Ambassador Goldberg, the American representative to the United Nations, describing the commitment to the resolution said that it was "like a Bible". The armed forces' withdrawal took place two years ago. The efforts made after the Tashkent Declaration reached an impasse which blocked the settlement of Indo-Pakistan disputes. This notwithstanding, the Government refuses to go to the Security Council lest it might exacerbate its relations with India and cause annoyance to the two Super Powers who are determined to see this basic dispute submerged in an overall Indo-Pakistan settlement.

On the 1st of June a report emanating from India mentioned that the closure of the Suez Canal has brought out the need for a commercial land route between India and the Soviet Union cutting across the territories of Pakistan and Afghanistan. Naturally this

proposal has been enthusiastically welcomed by India as it gains from it a decisive political advantage more in importance than the commercial benefits. It would be the height of irony when Soviet armaments meant for the destruction of Pakistan ply unhindered on our roads and by our co-operation to reach India by a short and direct route. Indian convoys laden with intriguing merchandise including agent-provocateurs and saboteurs will criss-cross our highways to be safely offloaded and picked up at strategic points from the Wagah border to the Durand Line. This is not the only grave implication involved in the materialisation of transit facilities to India across the territory of Pakistan. If Pakistan opens its frontiers to India to promote regional commerce, would India allow Chinese convoys to use the Tibet-Nepal highway to reach East Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon through the length and breadth of Indian territory? The fruition of such a proposal would extend to cover the co-operation of the entire contiguous region but under no circumstances will India agree to it.

An overland link through Pakistan would give India access to the frontiers of the Soviet Union and undermine the strategic importance of this country. No better evidence of reconciliation need be sought if Pakistan submitted to such a proposal. This proposal has not been born out of the closure of the Suez Canal. It was made two years ago for the flow of transit traffic between Pakistan, Afghanistan and the Soviet Union. At that time the Government of Pakistan refused to permit India to benefit from the arrangement. Let us hope that it will maintain the original position, otherwise,



in view of the deadlock over the Farrakah barrage and the shadow of India falling over Agartala and India's usurpation of Kashmir, acquiescence to India's trespass over the territory of Pakistan would amount to a signature on a document of surrender.

The Government has admitted that its negotiations with India on the Farrakah barrage have been futile and that India is constructing the barrage with speed to present Pakistan with a fait accompli. Bilateral negotiations with India on Kashmir would be even more futile. Circumstances make it imperative for the Government to return immediately to the Security Council and seek its authority to fulfil its own solemn obligation made in unequivocal terms in the Resolution of September 1965.

The recent student demonstrations in Srinager have created a new wave of troubles. Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, the Indian confidant, has described the situation as "a volcano that might erupt at any moment". The Government keeps repeating that it will take the issue to the Security Council at the proper time and in this fashion it finds an escape from its responsibilities. If this is not the right time for the intervention of the Security Council, the time for which the Government is waiting will never come. Sufficient time has already been wasted. If more time is lost the Security Council may find a pretext to renege from its commitment and in this way finally shut the door on a pacific settlement based on self-determination.

Pakistan has become an international whipping boy. The government's chaotic policies have driven the country into a corner. The United States takes it once again for granted. Iran and the United Arab



Republic approach Turkey and Tunisia for the settlement of their problems and bypass Pakistan, the country which restored diplomatic relations with Malaysia on Iran's initiative. The Soviet Union no longer sees any risk in resuming military assistance to India. Every Indian who violates the Immigration Act of the United Kingdom is deliberately called a Pakistani by the British press. In contrast hordes of Indians fleeing to Britain from Kenya are called Kenyan Asians in deference to India's sensitivities. The lustre of Pakistan-China relations has been lost. Being an under-developed country, Pakistan does not have technological locus standi in the nuclear field and yet it initiates proposals of self-denial by advocating a treaty on non-proliferation which the nuclear powers are anxious to impose on the non-nuclear states. India, on the other hand, refuses to sign the non-proliferation treaty without extracting formidable concessions from the nuclear powers. In commendable contrast to the submissive attitude of Pakistan, the Indian Prime Minister has taken up a position of defiance to the entreaties of both the United States and the Soviet Union for India's agreement on the non-proliferation treaty. Premier Kosygin went personally to Delhi to win the approval of the Indian Government to the treaty. Within a day of his departure, Mrs. Gandhi declared that, because it was not in India's interest to conclude the treaty in its present form, India would not be a party to it even if it meant losing assistance from the Soviet Union and the United States. India will extract every ounce of concession whilst retaining the freedom eventually to oblige the nuclear powers. Pakistan will extract no concession because of its

self-hindering action in denying itself nuclear status. Pakistan has thus foreclosed all the advantages of a bargaining status and injured its national interests, especially in the face of India's defiance. What was the need of going one step ahead of the nuclear powers in what they seek so anxiously at the cost of non-nuclear states?

Every time the Kashmir situation becomes critical, India offers the bait of negotiation to overcome the crisis. This it did in 1953 when under the cover of negotiations with Pakistan Shaikh Abdullah was imprisoned. This it did again in 1962 during the Sino-Indian conflict. Once again it has resorted to the same tactics only because Shaikh Abdullah has created a new situation by reactivating the Jammu and Kashmir dispute. The Indian Government has been concerned by the tumultuous reception Shaikh Abdullah has received in Kashmir, so much so that the Indian Home Minister is threatening to re-arrest him. It is for this reason that the Indian Government has shown its willingness to discuss its disputes with Pakistan. Every time India is in trouble she tries to get out of it by entangling Pakistan in futile discussions. In this way she gains time to recover and to settle her problems in her own fashion. When the difficulties pass, India returns to her normal position of saying that Kashmir is an integral part of India and that there is nothing to discuss about its future. Pakistan's eagerness to fall headlong into the trap will not go unnoticed in Kashmir. It will be exploited by Indian propaganda in order to throw cold water on the enthusiasm of a people who know how

they have suffered in the past from similar means adopted by India to overcome every crisis in the valley of Kashmir. Nor will the lesson be lost on Shaikh Abdullah, a man sadly caught between India's intransigence and Pakistan's ambiguity.



## V

Much has been made of stability in Pakistan. Stability comes from the existence of permanent institutions and from continuity of policy. The sickness of the President showed that this regime is not founded on permanent institutions. The stability is a myth because there is no trace of continuity in the policies of this Government. As has been already shown, both internal and external policies have been erratic and contradictory. They have swung from one side of the pendulum to the other. Stability certainly does not mean that a regime should remain in power for a decade. It means that a government's policies should be given time to show results and not keep changing. It means that there must be institutions to provide for an orderly transfer of power from one government to another. Neither of these conditions exists in Pakistan. The President's recent illness has brought about a qualitative and a quantitative change in the situation. It has thrown open the question of succession. For over two months the government operated mysteriously and in violation of its own constitution. To give one example only, the

Speaker of the National Assembly administered the oath of office to a Judge of the Supreme Court in violation of the Constitution which gives him this authority only when he is declared as the Acting-President. Instead of being kept close to the scene, he was bundled out of the country on a delegation to avoid the embarrassment of his presence which would have put into focus his constitutional position. There are other instances of flagrant violation of the constitution.

Clearly, then the constitution and the system associated with it cannot outlast the man who created them, Internal tensions and internecine intrigues will swell until they burst the balloon. Decisions will become still more full of errors and policies still more arbitrary. There will be jockeying for power and groupings will take place increasing the uncertainty of succession. Rumours will thicken the air. In this fashion the system will crumble. As it was, the situation has been alarming, but with the illness of the President it has taken on a new ring of urgency. The President's health gave way because he carried an unbearable burden. To save himself from physical collapse he will have to shed many of his responsibilities. The system however is not fashioned for delegation and decentralisation. It is built on one pillar, the removal of which brings down the whole structure. Moreover, the men around the President do not inspire confidence that they can assume efficiently the the heavy responsibilities that may be delegated to them. The scope of the Constitution does not permit decentralisation to be effectively possible. Lacking in flexibility, the system will not be able to accommodate workable

appendages to the structure.

Attempts at this juncture to make improvisations in acquiescence to popular sentiment would only betray the nervousness of the regime and not remedy the state of affairs. The creation of the office of Vice-President would be like adding a super-adviser to the President. Already provision exists in the constitution for two advisers. The one meant for Bengal has always remained vacant and the other has been filled briefly when the constitution was introduced and now again recently when the constitution is gasping for survival. These devices have not been found sufficient to fill the void. A Vice-President would either be a shadow of the President or he would exercise de facto powers of the President. If the incumbent assumes all the powers of the President, there will be conflict at the summit. If, on the other hand, the Vice-President exercises nominal authority, then he will neither be able to control the executive and the legislature nor command the respect of the Services. His functions would encroach upon the spheres of others, causing irritation rather than achieving clarity in decisions. Unless he is elected by an electoral college as large as that of the President, he will not be able to exercise effective authority and command respect. A Vice-President elected by any other means would not enjoy moral and legal sanction.

It is likely that the Vice-President would be selected from the other wing if the ruling clique at the centre feel confident enough that it can make of him a puppet in their hands. Nevertheless, this arrangement would increase the temptation to complete the division



between the two parts of Pakistan. The way things are moving, it would mean legally sowing the seeds of rupture between East and West Pakistan. On the other hand, there will be wide-spread resentment in East Pakistan if the Vice-President comes from the same province as the President.

The decomposition of the system has begun and no measure of internal reform can save it. This was admitted by the Law Minister in a speech he made in Rawalpindi in the beginning of March this year. It was an extraordinary performance insofar as he virtually confessed that a void existed in the national life similar to the conditions of 1958 which prompted the military to intervene. The Law Minister is on record as having stated that the Pakistan Muslim League exists in name only and that it is unable to muster national support and influence the people. It was a patent admission of failure by a Minister of the government. No other interpretation can be given to his speech, because the Law Minister in his own words conceded that the ruling party was non-existent and that the conditions in the country were ripe for another intervention. Whatever makeshift, arrangements are made in the Establishment, they will last for a short duration but make the crisis more acute. The substitute arrangements, even if they are liberal, will fail to inspire confidence. The machinery of government has come to such a pass that neither is it able to make effective concessions nor can concessions be made to it. The moment any leader of the opposition comes to terms with the government without obtaining a democratic quid pro quo, his co-operation

will be of no value as he would immediately fall from the people's favour. If, on the other hand, some of the opposition leaders join the government on obtaining democratic concessions, power will pass out of the hands of the regime. The people will feel themselves stronger and circumstances will conspire to bring popular forces into such a vantage position as to remove the government by an inexorable process.

The crisis cannot be resolved by internal re-adjustments. The power nucleus within the government will have to seek an alternative outside the present structure in order to begin the task of reconstruction. There is then no democratic procedure within the system that can be utilized to overcome the crisis. The proper answer to the problem lies in a democratic solution outside the system as it stands. But this will not be entertained by the rulers because it is pre-eminently the only logical approach to the crisis.

## VI

The existing Constitution, brought into force in 1962, from which the regime draws its legal sanction, contains three articles, namely, 14, 15 and 16, regulating arrangements in the event of the President's physical or mental incapacity. While these relevant constitutional provisions exist, laying down in clear language conditions and procedure, it is interesting to note that article 16, by virtue of which the Speaker should have acted in place of the President during the long critical days of the President's illness, was not invoked. Who gave orders, who managed the affairs of State, when the President lay stricken by a grievous malady and obviously in no condition to fulfil the exacting duties of his office? We are not told. According to the Constitution, the man who should have performed the duties of the President was the Speaker. Why was he prevented from assuming the responsibility prescribed by the supreme code of the country, the Constitution itself? Who prevented him? These are not idle questions, for they go deep into the root of the whole problem.

Had the Speaker been allowed to act as President



in accordance with the Constitution. it is unlikely that he could have been more than a figure-head in view of the realities of power. Yet he was not permitted even this purely honorific role. There are probably two reasons for what happened.

In the first place, one must take into account the prejudice of certain individuals who exercise more power and influence in government than they ought to. One might compare it with the racial prejudice of the British when they ruled the country towards all natives because of colour and race.

Now, the prejudiced Pakistanis about whom we are speaking imagine that they are heirs to the British rulers. An East Pakistani Speaker acting as President under circumstances that gave no assurance as to the future, was a thought intolerable for those around the President who were deciding the arrangements during his illness. They could not possibly allow the correct action under the Constitution to be taken. The speaker, a Bengali gentleman, has before acted during the President's tours abroad. But that was a different matter; nobody took him seriously as no cases of any importance were allowed to come to him for decision when the President could give the necessary orders from abroad in all urgent matters.

Yet the Speaker is a man who has done his utmost to identify himself with the regime. When it came to the question of sharing real power, he got the same treatment the British used to give their ardent Indian supporters in similar situations: the job was among the reserved subjects, not open to natives.

We must now come to the second reason. The regime's character is authoritarian. A number of vested interests have been expressly created for the sake of maintaining personal power. It is in that sense an authoritarian regime which rests upon only one pillar. All the records of history teach the lesson that in such a system as this the central figure cannot tolerate any other person's being placed alongside him, even if on a lower pedestal.

Men are not immortal. Had the regime been based on the conception of hereditary monarchy, the question of succession would have been clear. On the face of it the Constitution provides for arrangements in case of the President's incapacity or his departure and in that respect gives the appearance of being really republican and at least superficially democratic. But since in actual practice none of the ministers was anybody at all, had no real prestige or authority, the decision to invoke the relevant articles had to come from the President himself. Any change at the top once the Constitution was brought into effective operation might have set in motion a whole train of changes. The ministers have not the backing of the people, and are only functionaries whose authority depends on the will of the President. The ministers, therefore, as well as the chosen bureaucrats, have found it more convenient for themselves to avoid the operation of the constitutional provisions. This is the second reason why the constitution has been set aside.

The second reason can be explained in another way. Although the focus of power maintains itself with the



help of vested interests, in the one-man system no individual personalities may be allowed to become prominent beyond a certain point. The downfall of Amir Mohammad Khan of Kalabagh must be remembered in this connection. Therefore when the crisis came with the President's illness, each single individual at the centre of power was too weak in himself to furnish another focal point, whereas all of them in a body were fearful of the result to which the operation of the constitutional provisions might lead. For some time at least, their common interest lies in preserving the *status quo*. Hence the talk of the institution of a Vice-President.

The creation of the post of a Vice-President is actually against the logic of the Constitution, which lays down that when the President is incapacitated he must be either temporarily or permanently relieved of his duties. If the President is truly incapacitated the solution is not that his duties should be performed by a Vice-President. The relevant provisions of our present constitution cannot be said to be impracticable; they have not been tried and it seems that they will not be in future.

What seems to be happening now is a grouping of personal interests near the seat of power. Such elements are individual persons, but each of them must seek to find support among large and powerful bodies of vested interests. The civilian ministers are in the weakest position of all. Few if any of them have support among any section of the people. They have therefore also to seek support from vested interests and at the same time to ally themselves with other power groups, such as of the Services.



The capitalist interests are not all united, but will certainly be wooed by members of the coterie. Some of the very powerful capitalists will pursue their own policy and their alliances will depend on circumstances. In any case, they are likely to favour the elements they can control, but it is by no means certain that they will consider coups d'état as being to their advantage. Both as individuals and as a class they are likely to be wooed by all the important members of the ruling coterie. Alliances already exist, but they are liable to mutations under the stress of the crisis.

Even if the future is in no exact sense predictable, nevertheless, an estimation of the various forces at play can give some idea of the likely trend of developments.

We must leave out of consideration external events beyond our control, such as war involving the Great Powers, which would certainly upset all efforts for a more or less peaceful transformation of our country's political and economic life. Even without world-war and foreign intervention, it will depend mainly, if not solely, upon the present power groups whether transformation can take place in a peaceful and orderly fashion. Some persons or groups in the body of powerful vested interests may in a mood of panic make the miscalculation of trying to use force as a solution to their own difficulties.

Of the possible developments we must consider before the others the two which depend upon forces within the regime itself :

- (1) First, the maintenance of the regime, that

is, the present system, with the help of devices and subterfuges, while preserving the facade of constitutional government.

(2) Second, a coup d'etat minus its facade.

The first development is already in process. Manoeuvrings are going on with the immediate objective in view of superseding such provisions of the constitution as might lead to changes if applied. It is being wrongly suggested that the constitution has some sort of a lacuna that must be filled by the appointment of a Vice-President. Although the constitution does provide for the contingencies of a temporary or permanent incapacity of the President in office and also for election of a President, there is, of course, a lacuna in that it provides not for succession passing smoothly to an individual of the President's own choice. The idea behind the creation of a Vice-President's post is to avoid election for a President. In this way the power groups hope to maintain their hold for several years to come, all the while administering the familiar mixture of coercion and corruption.

They cannot hold out for very long; it is highly improbable that they can succeed in their designs except for a very short time. Neither the bureaucrats nor their clients will be able to stem the rising tide of resentment, which is bound under the circumstances to burst the eroded dams of authority. The dilemma for the power groups which are trying this course lies therein that any appeal to force would bring about a new situation, which they may be able to invite but not control.



On the other hand, the constitutional trick of presidential succession without the assent of the people is fraught with grave dangers. Let us consider the solution of a Vice-President.

The post of Vice-President must be filled either by a man who will be acceptable to the power groups as successor to the President or acceptable to the same groups as a skilful manipulator who will ensure the desirable succession and the maintenance of the status quo. If he is to fulfil the conditions necessary for the requirements in question, he cannot be just a puppet of the power groups. We must therefore arrive straightaway at one conclusion, that the Vice-President cannot be an East Pakistani.

The present regime is founded upon personal authority supported by a certain pattern of vested interests. While the vested interests as a whole remain the same, the President makes and unmakes the individuals around him who carry out his behests. Observers from capitalist countries without deep insight into our conditions have been inclined to put the accent upon the familiar equation that money is power. This is true in Pakistan to some extent, but the real weight in the primitive structure which has supplanted the more evolved capitalist structure imposed by the British is in the equation power is money. The retrogression to more primitive forms is evidenced by the reimposition of the atrocious jirga system of trial. Power is money means that in order to become rich one must enjoy authority or be favoured by persons wielding authority.

In order to grasp certain possibilities of future



development in our own country, it is most important to inquire what happens when this principle is applied in the conduct of the nation's affairs by some of its own members and not by individuals or groups from outside who distinguish themselves, in one way or another, from the general body of the exploited people. The only guiding principle in a number of countries is the one mentioned—power is money. It has established itself through coup d'état in several of the smaller newly-independent countries of Africa.

The difference between poor and rich countries lies not in the prosperity of their millionaires but in the relative condition of their masses. Pakistan's millionaires can take their place with pride alongside those of the United States and Western Europe. At the time of partition the affluence of the small number of rich Pakistanis derived from the possession of landed estates. The crop of millionaires is new. An inquiry into how the great business and industrial fortunes were made within the space of a few years will reveal without the shadow of doubt that State patronage played the decisive role. It is a completely false belief fostered by official propaganda that the working of free enterprise in a liberal economy gave the chance to the exceptionally talented businessmen to reap the golden harvest of their labours.

The system adopted in our country is anything but *laissez faire*; it is not liberal in any sense of the word. All the levers are so controlled by government that it can direct the flow of wealth into the pockets of whomsoever it pleases. Now, those who control the levers can

also profit from the system to make themselves rich. In this way government servants, not to speak of ministers of government, form the managing personnel of the vast enterprise of getting rich through participation in authority.

The connexion between Big Business and government servants becomes understandable. The link is interdependence through certain types of mutual interest. Without the co-operation of government servants the capitalist entrepreneur could not hope to set up his industrial establishment or make profit by trade. The system of giving licences concerns not only the big businessman who has already amassed his pile of millions but every new-comer in the field of business. More than that, licences for the setting up of factories or for imports are often bestowed upon persons who have no intention of entering into industry or business themselves, purely as rewards for political or other services rendered, or on account of familial or tribal association. The recipient of the valuable license will offer it for sale outright, or he may enter into partnership, at a price, with some capitalist. The system (it has become indeed a system) of giving licences as a matter of favour has made the fortune of many a family. Such licences are like cheques drawn upon the collective resources of the nation; for the consumer has ultimately to pay the price at which the licences are sold.

Not all government servants are corrupt; some have not the opportunity to be so and some have not yet lost their sense of honour and duty. Almost all



government officials feel the pressure of circumstances compelling them to make compromises with their conscience. Things have gone so far that the good officials cannot hope for promotion unless they accept the prevailing state of affairs and even co-operate in giving effect to dishonest decisions from which they themselves may not wish to derive benefit. The pension of a government servant is so modest that unless he works after retirement or makes a fortune in office when the going is good, he and his family will be reduced to indigence in his old age. Moreover, pensions are insecure. If his honesty offends the government he may not receive any pension at all. He therefore cultivates relations with the circle of businessmen with which he comes in contact so that he may find a post in some firm on retirement.

The government officials in the higher echelons have a big stake in the maintenance of the status quo, which is to say, free field for predatory capitalists. The inferior government employees have had to suffer from all the nightmares of insecurity which belongs to their status and are therefore by no means attached to the status quo. In this time of crisis, however, the principal thought of those who are committed to this regime is how to find ways of ensuring its continuance. Therefore it must be expected that the top-ranking government officials will try to avoid the hazards of such changes as might follow from the exercise of voting rights by the people. The position of individual high-ranking officials depends upon favour. They must look upon their future as clouded with uncertainty. They are the element who have the most to gain by temporizing and therefore



such a solution as that of a Vice-President will appeal to them most of all.

A coup d'état is a very different thing from a revolution, for a revolution has the motor of ideals in it and the self-sacrificing adherence of a goodly section of the population. At the moment when it is made it will give the appearance that the gordian knot of political problems had been cut. In fact however it will solve no problems unless it comes with the purpose of restoring the people's rights. Otherwise, the putschists might be tempted to indulge in massacres of the kind committed in Indonesia, which will hasten the break-up of Pakistan.

In the event of a new wave of repression, the external dangers will rapidly mount to a degree which will make of Pakistan a beleaguered nation. Pakistan's neighbours will revive territorial claims, and internal discontent will furnish the occasion to foreign powers first to increase their pressure and then to intrigue with the object of destroying the nation itself.

Reliance on brute force as a means to handle the country's complicated problems would be in conflict with all the experience of the past ten years. It would be indulging in an over-simplified approach to a crisis rooted in political and economic discontent. The people of Pakistan have already seen that recourse to force has only increased their difficulties. The nation's problems being political in character require a political approach for their lasting settlement.

It does not follow from the fact that a country is ruled by a junta that it is militarily strong. None of the

great suppliers of arms will have any interest in giving more arms to Pakistan than before. The United States arms aid, as we have seen, was given to Pakistan primarily for 'internal security'. This purpose will be achieved by the simple fact that the people are suppressed. But the United States has itself somewhat changed its attitude in the question: it now demands the alliance or confederation of Pakistan with India in hostility towards China. Things are already moving in that direction under the cover of contrary propaganda.

The manoeuvring for maintaining the status quo and a coup d'état do not fortunately exhaust all the possibilities of political development in the crisis. We must consider the remaining three—

- (3) Immediate restoration of parliamentary rule.
- (4) A transition period in accordance with a definite programme for the establishment of a popular government.
- (5) Reform of the constitutional structure in order to establish a democratic system.

The failure of the present presidential regime is so evident that the cry for the immediate restoration of parliamentary rule is comprehensible. It is however hard to imagine that this can be done by some sort of governmental decree. There are people who advocate the introduction of the 1956 constitution, disregarding the fact that that constitution was framed by a government unrepresentative of the people. The establishment of any form of democratic government must be based upon the result of a genuine consultation of the masses. It should also



be realised that the choice is not limited to only two forms of constitution — the present regime and parliamentary government modelled on the 1956 constitution. The passage of time has brought into relief a number of problems of a fundamental nature, not least of all interwiring relations and, of course, the grave problem of social and economic justice. From the purely constitutional aspect, a system must be introduced with adequate checks and balances at the Centre, avoiding both the pitfalls of too much concentration of power in one hand or its dispersal to the point of being ineffective. We shall not here go into the multitude of problems that must be tackled for introducing at last a constitution that will fulfil two essential conditions — be progressive and democratic and be the result of popular consent.

The best course that can be expected as feasible is to steer through a transition period with the definite objective of establishing a popular government. This is point 4) mentioned above, which means a transition period in accordance with a definite programme for the establishment of a popular government. The legal and administrative consequence, point 5), that is, reform of the constitutional structure in order to establish a democratic system, naturally follows; for the purpose of the transition period is just this, to give the country a democratic, progressive constitution. This will not follow from point 3), which is immediate restoration of parliamentary rule, for which the present system offers no scope, whereas reversion to the 1956 constitution will simply create another crisis in a short time. In what manner the transition period will begin is a matter that cannot be foreseen at this



moment, so many imponderables being involved. The transition period, if it is to have any meaning at all, must begin with the restoration of fundamental rights, or else it will be a fraud punished by a consequent coup d'état or civil war. Without the restoration of fundamental rights, not even opposition leaders inclined towards the government can enter into negotiations with the power group without peril to themselves and their cause.

The probabilities are that the situation as at present will remain essentially unchanged, with rising internal and external difficulties, until 1969 when the period of presidential elections begins. To set the stage for elections, changes will be made in the Government, including a host of transfers in the Administration. But such permutations will be of no avail. It will become evident at election time that the bureaucrats who at present indulge in day-to-day manipulations for the regime will not be able to fill the political vacuum nor will most of the present Ministers at the Centre and in the Provinces be effective in mustering the people's allegiance. Government's control over the Provinces has weakened and the issues engaging the attention of the people are far more explosive than they were during the last elections. The mounting resentment in every part of the country will not fail to influence the electorate. Although the Basic Democracies' system is a built-in device for self-perpetuation, a majority of younger men less amenable to coercion by officials will replace the present members. Many Members of the Assemblies and other disillusioned politicians will turn

against the regime at the crucial time.

The problem in essence is the abrogation of the present system without going the way of coup d'etat and internecine strife. I believe that the [question of economic and social justice cannot be shirked without risk, rather the certainty, of Pakistan's disintegration. All patriotic people will agree with me that disintegration includes open or disguised con-federation with India. Therefore, whatever regime acceptable to the nation succeeds after the transition period or, in the alternative, after the general elections of 1969, it must be progressive by nature. Until the change begins, all progressive forces must strive, like the Pakistan People's Party, to establish a progressive, democratic and egalitarian system of government.



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