

*lisa*<sup>®</sup>

# Authentic Voices of South Asia

Editor: Usman Khalid



Published by  
*london institute of south asia*

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books

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*This book is dedicated to*

250,000 Sikhs &  
90,000 Muslim Kashmiri

*Martyrs*

*And many more who have been killed in  
All parts of India notably Assam,  
Maharashtra and Gujerat*

*by*

*Hindu mobs or the Indian Police & Armed Forces*

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# Authentic Voices of South Asia

## Preface

South Asia is the only major region in the world with unsettled frontiers. This is not because the states that emerged from the end of British colonial rule in the sub-continent have no 'principle' or 'agreement' to draw on for settling their disputes, it is because the largest country – India – has simply resiled on the agreements it made. The 'core' dispute in the area is over the future of the State of Jammu and Kashmir. India took the matter of its 'ownership' of the State to the UN Security Council which ordered a cease fire but rejected its claim; it upheld the UN Charter and secured an agreement of both India and Pakistan that the people would decide which country their state would join – India or Pakistan – in a UN supervised Plebiscite. India used the cease-fire to consolidate its military position and then went back on its agreement in 1953 to hold the Plebiscite on the specious grounds that Pakistan had signed a bilateral defence agreement with the US and introduced a 'foreign' element that India found unacceptable.

The root cause of all the problems in South Asia is India's self view as an 'imperial' power with a role to keep order in the region. India acts like the US did when it exercised control over South and Central America under the Monroe Doctrine or the Soviet Union exercised control over East Europe under the Brezhnev Doctrine. India does not recognise the sovereign equality of states of South Asia; it acts as if it operated a 'doctrine of limited sovereignty' of sorts in the region. India is resented and abhorred by all its neighbours for that reason. India became a 'strategic partner' of the Soviet Union during the Cold War and is now a 'strategic partner' of the US and Israel. It chose its 'partners' with only one consideration – who will recognise India as the 'primary power' in the region (a policeman in American parlance) and thus help keep a lid on the pressure cooker that India had turned South Asia into.

Pakistan is not the only victim of India's 'imperial' aspiration; the religious minorities and the 'low born' inside India suffer even more. India betrayed the Sikh who it promised to give their own 'sovereign state'. It betrayed the Untouchables by Poona Pact promising meaningless 'legal safeguards' in exchange for the effective 'political safeguard' of 'separate electorate' offered to them by the British Government. All the various tribal peoples all over India, who had been self governing under British rule, have been denied their separate identity and rights. The betrayal of India is matched by the ineptitude of Pakistan's leaders who neither understood the Indian mindset nor their own role as the champion of 'post imperialism' to uphold the right of 'national self-determination' in South Asia and as a 'nation state' with Islam as the principle of national solidarity.

Putting this book together was a huge task that could be done better if some of the constraints had been absent. Because it is so difficult to speak the truth and survive in South Asia, many of the Authentic Voices live in exile and those who live in India have to be careful. Being a soldier rather than scholar, my editing is not characterised by 'academic restraint' but by 'forthright clarity'. But I have not tried to harmonise style or substance; the differences of views between the various contributors exist, as they must. After all, these are the Authentic Voices of different peoples. I am grateful to all the contributors, particularly to Syed Ali Geelani and Mr V.T. Rajshekar, who are under close watch in India, to have taken risks to address the people of South Asia and given them hope and direction.

Brigadier (r) Usman Khalid

London, December 14, 2004

# Authentic Voices of South Asia

## Introduction

The partition of the erstwhile British colony of India that created India and Pakistan was implemented at midnight on 14/15 August 1947. At the time, it was considered to be the final solution that would end the 'communal strife' that had dominated politics during the last century of the British rule in South Asia. It was thought that the era of empires, at long last, was coming to an end and that the operating principles of rule over the South Asian sub-continent would thenceforth be 'self-determination' and 'democracy'. But that is not what happened. The Congress Party had other ideas. Its principle leader – M.K.Gandhi (Mahatma Gandhi) had successfully united all except the Muslims of the sub-continent on the platform of 'opposition to British Imperialism'. That was a perplexing change because the Congress Party had been created and organised by the British as a veritable trophy to the 'native majority', which had been christened by them as Hindus, for their service to the British. How did this darling of the British become their nemesis?

The answer to this question lies in the transformation of the Hindu society during the British rule. From being the 'victim' under Muslim and British imperial rule the Hindus had come to aspire to inherit the British Empire. But the British knew that their empire in South Asia was not one nation and could not be one country. They separated Burma and Ceylon – Buddhist majority states – from India long before 1947. They were also aware that the religious diversity of India and the 'caste system' prevented India from crystallising a single national identity. Besides, their Christian hearts could not ignore the social oppression suffered by the Untouchables for thousands of years. In 1905, Lord Minto was appointed the Viceroy of India with Morley as the Secretary of State. They set about restructuring India on the basis that religion and castes were the touchstone of identity to prepare India for representative rule. The reforms introduced by them are known as Minto-Morely reforms<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 15<sup>th</sup> Edition, 1981, Volume VI, p924



Under these reforms Separate Electorate was introduced not just for the Muslims but also for the Christians, the Sikhs and the Untouchables (also called Scheduled Castes). This meant that Electoral roles were prepared separately for every religion and Scheduled Castes who were allocated share of seats in elected bodies in accordance with their population. Quotas were reserved for under-represented religions and castes in jobs and education as well. Another reform of importance to the Muslims was the partition of Bengal to separate the Muslim majority areas of Bengal and join it with Assam to make a separate province with capital at Dhaka. The Hindus of Bengal opposed the partition fiercely; they called it imperial game of 'divide and rule. They were even able to get Muslim support against the alleged 'imperial conspiracy.' The outcry was so loud that the British reversed the decision. That was the point the Congress Party became apprehensive of the British. They realised that 'British pragmatism' was prone to switch to 'justice and fair play' when coercion did not work. That is not the Brahmin way. The disciples of *Kautilya*<sup>2</sup> do not give up easily; they use stratagem, subversion, intimidation and mob violence, resorting to war when the ground is well prepared.

The year 1905 was significant for the Muslims of South Asia in several ways. Most of their demands, particularly for Separate Electorate had been met. The violent reversal of the 'partition' of Bengal had awakened the Muslims politically and they were alarmed by Hindu militancy. They found a leader in Khawaja Sir Salimullah to organise a political platform for the Muslims - All India Muslim League. It was founded in Dhaka by an assembly of notable Muslim leaders of India of the time. The Muslims and the Untouchables began to leave the Congress Party and the British started to view it with suspicion. Congress had to rely on stratagem and direct action; it could not count on the British goodwill. The Muslims entered the political equation as a separate entity; the political contest in British ruled India became triangular.

The die was cast by the Second World War. The British were suffering reverses in Europe at the hands of the Germans and in Asia at the hands of the Japanese. The Congress, that had been watching the rising power of the Muslims and the Untouchables with alarm, made the decision to start a 'Quit India Movement' in order to 'unite' all the peoples of India under its leadership on 'anti-imperialist' platform. It had already succeed in securing the agreement of the Untouchables to spurn the offer of Separate Electorate through the Poona Pact signed in 1932 between Dr Ambedkar and Mr Gandhi. The Muslims were under great pressure but they had a leader with wisdom and far sight – Mohammed Ali Jinnah. He saw through the scheme and knew that its objective was that the Hindus inherited the British Empire and everybody else left high and dry. He did not only not join the Congress Party in calling for the British to 'quit India', he encouraged the Muslims to join the British Indian Armed forces in large numbers to help defeat the Nazis and forces of fascism.

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<sup>2</sup> *Kautilya* was the Prime Minister of *Chandragupta Maurya* whose book '*Arthashastra*' rivals the '*Advice to the Prince*' written by Machiavelli.

This single historic decision made Jinnah the great leader (Quaid e Azam) that he has ever since been called by the grateful nation. Almost the entire Congress leadership spent the years of the War behind bars while the Muslims learnt how to fight a modern war and had jobs and money in their pocket. The balance of power changed; Pakistan became inevitable. The leadership of the Congress Party saw the creation of Pakistan as its defeat and did not reconcile to the 'partition' in 1947. The focus - even the foundation - of the polity of India has been to re-establish an empire in the boundaries of the British Empire it calls '*Akhand Bharat*'. That makes India an enigma – a country that is proud of its struggle against British Imperialism but wanted to inherit their empire. India presses on with its imperial ambitions ignoring that there were more than five hundred autonomous 'princely states' in the British Indian Empire. It ignores that all the provinces under direct British rule had been annexed at different times over two hundred years on widely different terms. The states of Assam were the first to rebel against the hand over of Assam by the British to India in violation of the treaty by which the British had ruled that province.<sup>3</sup>

The rest of the world has uncritically accepted the propaganda that India is a vibrant democracy that has integrated its diverse peoples into one nation. It is eulogised for having operated as a democracy despite its large size (a billion plus people) and extreme poverty while its neighbours underwent frequent military coup d'état. But the real success of India is that it has been able to avoid attention being focussed on its apartheid and vicious repression of religious minorities and *Bahujan*<sup>4</sup> castes. Its armed forces have been engaged continuously in genocide of religious minorities and tribal peoples ever since the British left. The liberation struggle by the tribes of Assam started in the fifties and has continued ever since. It had the effect of neighbouring Burma being left alone, adopt its old name Myanmar, and restore its historical personality of the past. But all the other neighbours of India have had to suffer because India covets their territory and harbours hopes that the peoples of those countries would come into the Indian fold.

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<sup>3</sup> Assam has been an independent kingdom since 1000 B.C. It was not until the 13<sup>th</sup> Century when Ahoms people crossed over from Burma, gave it its present name, and founded a stable and prosperous state. However, it continued to be prize coveted by Burma. The British took over the administration of Assam by the Treaty of Yandabo with Burma in 1826. The people of Assam had largely been Buddhist but conversion to Islam and migration of Muslims had made Assam a Muslim majority province. In 1905, when Bengal was partitioned, Assam was made a part of East Bengal. The partition was reversed in 1924 and Assam became a separate province again. In 1947, Sylhet decided to become a part of Pakistan in a referendum. The rest of Assam has never accepted its union with India even after being divided it into seven states. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 15<sup>th</sup> Edition, Volume2, p206

<sup>4</sup> *Bahujan* are original peoples of India – Backward Castes, Scheduled Castes and Tribal peoples - who are outside the Aryan *chaturvarna* caste system – Brahmins, Kashtriyas, Vaishyas and shudras.

After the Second World War, it was believed that no country would be able to get away with invasion and annexation of territories of a UN member state. But India invaded and annexed the colonies of France and Portugal without consulting with the colonial power or the people of the colonies. It annexed Sikkim on the excuse that it threatened its security because its ruler had married an American. It invaded and annexed the state of Hyderabad that wanted to become independent in accordance with the Independence of India Act that is the legal basis for transfer of sovereignty to India. It invaded and annexed the State of Junagadh that joined Pakistan in accordance with the same Act. In both cases, India acted in the name of Non-Muslims who were in a majority in those states. But when the Muslim majority in the state of Jammu and Kashmir anticipated the mal-intent of its ruler and the people rebelled and expelled the ruler, India sent its troops into the state in response to an 'instrument of accession' signed by the ruler that has never been seen and has been proved to be forged or non-existent.

India has fought three wars with Pakistan – in 1948, 1965 and 1971. In 1971, it invaded East Pakistan on the pretext that the Hindu minority had been persecuted and forced into exile in India. It occupied East Pakistan, installed its protégés in power and hoped to rule it in perpetuity. But a group of young army officers of Bangladesh found out that their 'redeemer' was an Indian agent and overthrew him from power in a coup d'état on 15 August 1975; the 'victory' of India was reversed. But the truth has not yet reached the people of Pakistan who continue to believe that the Muslims of East Pakistan were disillusioned with Pakistan. While this book does not go into the ordeal of Sri Lanka or Assam, it does describe the true story behind the 'secession of East Pakistan' in two chapters written by Dr Abdul Mu'min Chowdhury. He was a university teacher at the Dhaka University during the traumatic period of civil war in East Pakistan. After obtaining doctorate from the Exeter University, he was Professor of Sociology at Dhaka University from 1967 to 1973.

India set about breaking up Pakistan even before it came into being. What is generally called 'partition' is viewed by the Muslims as 'liberation' and separation of East Pakistan imposed by external aggression/foreign invasion is clearly 'secession'. The true story of that 'secession' is dealt with at length by Dr Mu'min Chowdhury because he worries that the information and education apparatus of Pakistan as well as Bangladesh is still under influences hostile to the polity of Pakistan. He has ever since been engaged in efforts to undo the subversion that led to the invasion and separation of the East Wing of Pakistan. He is disheartened that many in leadership positions in Pakistan have unthinkingly embraced the view the 'secession' was the result of mistakes made by Pakistani leadership or some inadequacy in the Two Nation Theory. That he says: is an oversimplification that amounts to falsification of history. He warns of dangers to those living in areas the Brahmin covets. As politics of Pakistan came to disconnect with the 'purpose of Pakistan', he says, India found the ground fertile for subversion.

The Brahmin genius for subversion worked its way into East Pakistan and made it Bangladesh. With the coup d'etat of 15 August 1975, Bangladesh started to backtrack from the edge of the precipice. It has not come back all the way and claimed ownership of the Pakistan Movement but it is moving in that direction. That, he says, would happen if Pakistan remains on its guard against the machinations of its neighbour. Bangladesh is divided on how to view events of 1971 - liberation or secession. He makes the case for the latter and believes that as Bangladesh increasingly accepts that view, it is once again possible to look at the future rather than dwell on the past.

Like Dr Mu'min Chowdhury, all those who have written in this book are no armchair strategists- mere academics and scholars; they have been active in campaigning for the objectives they have written about. The most important contributor to this book is V.T.Rajshekar, the Editor of Dalit Voice. He is the 'authentic voice' of the *Bahujan* who are an overwhelming majority – 85 per cent of the population - in India. He makes the point forcefully that Hinduism is a misnomer; its true name is 'Brahmanism' because Brahmin's superiority by birth is the only article of this faith; everything else depends on the person and the situation. He asserts that the Brahmins are the only truly foreign element in India. They are of Aryan race; practise a non-proselytising faith and are proud of having scrupulously guarded their purity. There is no biological or any other basis for their superiority but there is no doubt about their 'purity' and hence in their foreign-ness.

After Buddhism was vanquished in India – its birthplace - there was no universal religion in the region until the advent of Islam (unless one calls polytheism a religion). Except when the subcontinent was consolidated under an imperial force, India was many states based on tribal or ethnic solidarity. Until the arrival of the Aryans, there was no Untouchability, widow burning or human sacrifice to monster gods. The society was egalitarian; there was no prohibition and meats were a part of their diet. The Aryans introduced those evils and the *Bahujan* were reduced to being 'non-person' – some kind of ghosts. Untouchability and apartheid was imposed on them. They were confined to ghettos totally ignored – unseen, uninvolved and unnoticed. As foreign rulers conquered India, the excesses against them were checked but the millstone of 'low birth' still weighed them down. That was until the British introduced 'representative democracy'. When the *Bahujan* got the vote, they came to acquire value.

Democracy has changed India. Its political scene is vibrant but it is socially immobile. The majority of India's population lives in rural slums that are untouched by civilisation. While India's neighbours are awed by the arrogance and imperial ambition of India, the main anxiety of the majority within India is how to shake off Brahmin control over everything – from thinking to policy making. Now that the effect of BJP spin is wearing off, it is becoming apparent that India needs radical change. India needs a new compact between its peoples as coercion as well subversion has run its course and proved to be inadequate. India

## Introduction

is not one nation but many nations. *They can work together but not on the basis of imperial ambitions but on the basis of solidarity that is just as workable between like peoples as between unlike peoples who make an honest compact and adhere to it with sincere sense of purpose.* To make new compacts the people need more than leaders; they need intellectuals of integrity who enjoy the trust of the several sides in the compact. V.T.Rajshekar is one such intellectual.

By his tireless efforts in the service of all the oppressed of India, he has emerged as the only person who commands the trust of the majority in India. V.T.Rajshekar has been the authentic voice of the *Bahujans* for thirty-five years – who are 85 per cent of the population of India today. He is hailed as the country's most original thinker and philosopher. He is the true successor of Dr Ambedkar, revered as a prophet by Dalits. He is a prolific writer having written more than fifty books. A person without any prejudice of race or religion, who judges people and their projects by their impact not by their declared purpose. Like all the truly great, he is upright and fearless; arrested many times, passport impounded (in 1986) and facing media blackout, he has never given up on efforts to get the truth out to the wider world. He has never said anything he does not believe in, and he has never hesitated to say anything that he does believe to be the truth. He has written two chapters for this book. Through him, the majority of India speaks its mind – its hopes and aspirations, its view of the past and its vision for the future.

The British gave the Brahmins what they most wanted – rulership over a country of a billion plus people in which they are no more than fifty million. They gained much but learnt little. The methodology they use for minority to rule in perpetuity - unite and rule - is explained at length by Mr Rajshekar. It worked for all except the Muslims who had leaders with wisdom, integrity and courage – Mohammed Ali Jinnah and Allama Iqbal. Many peoples – particularly Dalits and the Sikhs – had been dealt better cards but they were ready to let the Congress lead them. Allama Iqbal conceptualised the polity of post-imperial South Asia that has since been popularly known as the 'Two-Nation Theory'. Mr Jinnah considered the Sikhs and the Untouchables of India also to be separate nations. He promised them support in their national endeavours. But Mahatma Gandhi was telling them the exact opposite. He told them not to trust the Muslims. After having tried hard to get the Muslims to fall into the trap of being 'Indian', he abandoned the effort and tried instead to consolidate 'everybody else' under the 'tricolour' flag of the Congress Party. India was thus partitioned on the basis of the Two Nation Theory – the Muslims were one nation and 'everybody else' was the other nation.

Defined as 'everybody other than Muslims' India needed two things to maintain its unity: 1) that hatred of Islam and Muslims should be sustained by demonisation, humiliation, deprivation, pogroms, even genocide, 2) that there should be ruling class to practice the unique imperial methodology of 'unite and rule'. But this 'internal imperialism' is expensive and destabilising and results in further impoverishment of the poor. Therefore, India also needs a 'foreign enemy' to underpin its unity. Indian scholars as well as strategists have been ever eager to

identify foreign threats. They have conjured up a threat from China, from beyond the Oceans, and from the Muslims. The fact is that no country in the world wants to invade India. Its torn social fabric is problem enough for 'clever' Brahmin; it is too daunting for any one else. India faces no military threat and yet it is feverishly engaged in building its military power. India is a bundle of contradiction. This book is an effort to let the victims – those denied identity as well dignity by the steamroller of Brahmanism - to speak for themselves.

The authentic voice of the Sikhs around the world is Dr Gurmit Singh Aulakh – the President of the Council of Khalistan – who is based in Washington D.C. His message of hope for the Sikhs has a place of pride in this book. He has been the leader of the Khalistan Movement for two decades. Reviled in India, ignored abroad, the Sikhs are often decried as terrorists in the Western press that readily accepts all the lies and half-truths that India pedals around the world. The steadfast resilience that the Khalistan Movement has displayed is largely due to the personal character and leadership qualities of Dr Aulakh. It is the gravitas of his person and his personal credibility that has helped the Khalistan Movement survive the genocide of Sikhs in the wake of June 1984 Indian Army assault on the Golden Temple of Amritsar.

He has been ably assisted by a remarkable person – Dr Awatar Singh Sekhon - a microbiologist by profession, resident of Canada, who has emerged as an authority on the history of the Punjab. A prolific writer, author of several books, a steadfast campaigner for Khalistan, he is the Managing Editor of the 'International Journal of Sikh Affairs'. He is one the loudest and the most authentic voices of the Sikhs. Dr. Sekhon has written a chapter for this book in which he describes how the Sikhs were betrayed by India. He accepts that the Sikhs made a mistake in not listening to the advice of Mr Jinnah and that they suffer because they were taken in by false promises of the Congress leaders.

The people who have suffered the longest and the most under Hindu rule are the people of Jammu and Kashmir. In a diabolical twist of history this Muslim majority state was handed over by the British for a few thousands of pounds to a Hindu ruler because he helped them against the Sikhs to conquer the Punjab. No people has suffered longer or more than the Muslims of Jammu and Kashmir. But they have persevered. It is not just political freedom they are denied; they are denied basic right to life. Picked up at random for labour without wage, they are killed at random and their women dishonoured with impunity. The Kashmiris had hoped for freedom in 1947 like all the peoples of British colony of India, but they continue to be denied their right to decide their own destiny. Even though the princely rulers of states were given the option to decide to join India or Pakistan, the decision was made largely in accord with the wishes of the majority. The state of Jammu & Kashmir is the only exception. The right of the people to decide their destiny was recognised by the UN in 1948 in Security Council resolutions. But instead of opportunity for self-determination the Muslims of Jammu and Kashmir have had to suffer prolonged and vicious military occupation.

Kashmir is not real estate to be given to India or Pakistan; Kashmiris are a people with the same hope and dreams as every other people. They are a beautiful people of a beautiful land. It was a Kashmiri – Allama Iqbal - who furnished the foundation of a modern polity for a post-imperial Islam and indeed the world, yet it is the Kashmiris alone who are denied the fruits of that polity and of freedom. The Kashmiris have been struggling against foreign rule since well before 1947. Their present rulers – India – have been the cruellest that has martyred 90,000 Kashmiris, raped countless women, and dynamited thousands of homes. They have done that because they believe that if a Muslim majority Kashmir can be a state within India, why not Pakistan and Bangladesh. India says that the ‘majority’ of Muslims of Kashmir accepts its rule and that constitutes a proof that India is a ‘secular’ state. In fact, it proves the exact opposite. It proves that India is held together by force and coercion. India bars the world press from Kashmir and commits war crimes against civilians that should land the leaders of India in front of International Criminal Court rather than be welcome among leaders of the ‘free world’.

Pakistan says the Kashmiris freedom movement constitutes a ‘Validation of its Two Nation Theory’. It is, but Kashmir, first and foremost, belongs to Kashmiris. Many generations of Kashmiris have lived and died in the hope of being able to decide their destiny in a free vote. They have yet to experience the absence of fear and coercion or the ecstasy of freedom. To them ‘freedom’ is a matter of honour and dignity denied to the Muslims of Kashmir for many generations. Every generation evolved a different strategy to struggle in the circumstances in which it found itself. Each generation produced leaders appropriate to that strategy. At this time, the symbol and the leader of that struggle is Syed Ali Geelani – Chairman of APHC (All Parties *Hurriyet* Conference). This book includes a chapter by Syed Ali Geelani. He gives a message of hope to Kashmiris all over the world and has outlined a course of action for them to accelerate the realisation of the objective of ‘freedom’.

This book includes a chapter by Dr Syed Inayatullah Andrabi, an intellectual-activist from Srinagar, the capital of Indian Occupied Kashmir. He has been campaigning for the liberation of Kashmir from India for several years, first as the Chief of *Islami Jamiat –i-Tulaba* in Jammu & Kashmir and then as the founder/convener of *Mahaz-e-Islami* (Islamic front). He has written on issues underlying the bloody conflict in Kashmir in the wider framework of the political destiny of Muslims in South Asia. Dr Andrabi now lives in London. It was fortuitous that the search for an authentic voice of Kashmir did not have to go far. His voice, among those who have written about Kashmir, is the clearest. He has outlined a new approach to resolving the issue.

Afghanistan is a country of South Asia that alone was never conquered or colonised. Its people are the bravest of the brave but their sterling character – their dignity and valour - has brought them much pain and few benefits. The last

Muslim Empire in South Asia was the Durrani Empire that included the area of present day Pakistan and Afghanistan. When this empire eclipsed, the tribal chieftains in Sindh and Baluchistan separated to become small Emirates. The British, after defeating the Sikhs and annexing the Punjab, fought the Afghans for decades and wrested control over the present day North West Frontier Province (NWFP) of Pakistan. The Afghans, even at their weakest, were able to humble the forces of the erstwhile British Empire that had extended so far and wide that 'sun never set' on it. The Afghans defeated the British in the First and Second Afghan Wars. It is in Afghanistan that the British suffered their worst defeats that started the roll back of their Empire. The collapse of the Soviet Empire also started with their defeat in Afghanistan. Ironically, even though two empires perished in Afghanistan, the USA has unhesitatingly walked in to 'fill the vacuum'.

The Afghans are fighters; the rugged terrain requires equally rugged people. They thrive in an environment of Resistance. That is why, perhaps, the intellectual response by Afghans has invariably been articulated by Diaspora Afghans. The most notable example in the last century was that of Jamal ud Din Afghani. Born in Asadabad (Iran-1838), died in Istanbul in 1897, he lived and worked in Iraq, Afghanistan, Egypt, the UK, Turkey and in British India. He was a journalist by profession and a fiery speaker earnest in politics in the pursuit of Islamic unity at a time when the world of Islam, very much like it is today, was under attack from all sides. Who is the Jamal ud Din Afghani of today? Who is the voice of Afghans on both sides of the Durand Line? That voice is that of Abidullah Jan – another journalist, a prolific writer, a Pashtun Afghan who lives and works in Canada at the moment. He has written a chapter for this book on the 'Union of Pakistan and Afghanistan: Impossible or inevitable.' A veteran of the struggle for the liberation of Afghanistan, the clarion call of this Mujahid is as timely as it is thoughtful.

The voice of Pakistan in this book is not of a scholar but a soldier, Brig. Usman Khalid. He is also a bridge across the civil-military divide as he resigned in protest against military rule after General Zia ul Haq ordered the execution of popular Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. In the first chapter by him, he points out that India has killed too many of its citizens and oppressed many times more in search of an imperial destiny. It has failed. It would cause much more death and destruction within and in neighbouring states if it persists in that course. India does not have a principle of national solidarity but it can still achieve cohesion and purpose by a 'compact of faiths, of castes and of states'. If it did not, India would secure peace and stability only when the empire breaks up and its states assert their sovereignty.

In his second chapter he articulates and updates the Two Nation Theory that is the foundation of the polity of Pakistan and he claims universal validity for it. He outlines the main theme of this book: *The Muslim of South Asia were the only people who had developed a 'national personality' by 1947 but that does not mean they were the only nation. Every nation of South Asia, he says, as it crystallises its national personality, is bound to seek sovereignty and has a*



*birthright to do so*. He has also articulated a fresh view of *Jihad* for the era of asymmetrical wars as the '*peoples war against foreign rule and for self-determination*'. He has provided a meaningful and clear definition of the terms – *Darussalam* (where the Muslims enjoy cultural as well as political sovereignty), *Darulaman* (where Muslims enjoy cultural freedom), and *Darulharb* (where Muslims enjoy neither). He has been active in a campaign for Afghanistan being 'transformed from a buffer to a bridge' and is for directly elected executive presidency in Pakistan in a parliamentary system - like that of France. He is a tireless campaigner and a clear voice in highly subverted and very confused Pakistan.

This book is different to those produced by academics or think tanks to justify or validate policy – often American policy. Such books often make dire predictions of strife and failure for countries hesitant to follow American direction. America-India-Israel nexus that is now overt is the driving force behind pre-emptive war and use of coercive diplomacy to establish and maintain world hegemony. That is why the views and analysis presented by much of the Western media is not credible any longer. What the 'nexus' presents or enforces, as solutions often become global problems. What they impose in the name of their security is often the cause of perpetual insecurity, instability and strife in the world.

The victims of American attention do say often and aloud – in words and by their actions - that it is not America they hate, it is the 'nexus', their objectives and their policies that entail occupation of their lands and genocide of their people that they are up in arms against. Much of the world is gradually coming to see the 'wrong' and is even eager to see it righted but not in South Asia. Here the 'nexus' operates through the Indian ruling class. The world press is disallowed to enter the strife torn areas and India responds sharply to any 'adverse' comments in the Western press who are castigated as 'erstwhile imperialists unfit to pass a judgement on the *largest democracy of the world*'. This book is different; it is the voice of South Asian mainstream, of the majority that is often repressed and even more often ignored. □

# Part I - India

## 2

### India in Search of Imperial Destiny

*Brigadier (r) Usman Khalid*

#### 1. Impact of Geography

The subcontinent of South Asia is a distinct geographic entity. In the North it is separated from China by the Himalayas, in the South is the Indian Ocean, in the West lies the desert of Baluchistan, and it is separated from Burma by thick jungle. All invasions and migrations have come from the North West whether their origin was in Central Asia, Persia or even Europe (Macedonia). Afghanistan, a country that is a link between South and Central Asia, has been an integral part of the history of the sub-continent. Throughout history, the North West determined the destiny of India. Is that still the case? After all, the most recent wave of Europeans came into India from the South over the Indian Ocean! Western influence travels on airwaves bypassing even the sea! But India is still pre-occupied with its North West. It is technically at war with Pakistan over Kashmir where it deploys more than half of its armed forces. The Sikhs in the Punjab are far from pacified. The question is: is the pre-occupation with its North West helpful or hurtful, necessary or avoidable, a quagmire or an opportunity for India?

It would not spoil the effect if the conclusion were revealed at the outset. For the first time in history, those in the North West (Pakistan and beyond) are not looking at India as a prize but a problem they would rather stay away from. The attention of Pakistan is focussed on Central Asia and the Middle East. However, Pakistan is an integral part of South Asia – historically and geographically. More important, driven by its dream of 'Akhand Bharat', India would not let go. Pakistan would determine the destiny of India not because it wants to, but because

India defines itself as the 'nemesis of Islam'.<sup>5</sup> India has been re-writing history with that as the focus. India has worked up an appetite for imperialism that makes it a scourge of the region. It has been seeking to bring its neighbours under its imperial wings with its eyes closed to the realities of the world that shuns imperialism. India is driven by a desire to expand territorially and is afraid it would break up if it didn't. It is arrogant - bullying neighbours when it is not actually threatening them. Why? Does it covet their territory? Does it want to distract attention from the oppression within? The answer is: both!

### 2. South Asia in Ancient History

It was Winston Churchill who said that India is not a country but a geographic area like Europe – a continent not a country. In size, present day India is as big as Europe, but in population it is three times bigger. The population of India is nearly 1200 million. Only China is bigger. But 90 per cent of the population of China is Han Chinese. There are several dialects but only one language in China. In India there are eighteen official languages and more than 500 dialects. Having failed to impose Hindi as the official language on the South, India recognises the language of every state as an official language and has been willing to create new states and change state boundaries to conform to ethnic boundaries. India has accepted the ethnic principle to define its states, which gives the states of India a universally recognised foundation for their national identity. But if the states are nations, what is India? An empire, surely! Ever since the dawn of the era of 'representative rule' India has anguished that unfettered democracy would lead to the break up of India at its seams into multiple nation states. The efforts to find a rationale for its unity have been fruitless; India has yet to find a principle to underpin its political unity that may be '*sans imperial*'.

When the Congress party was founded, it chose the tricolour as its flag in which saffron represented the Hindus, green the Muslims, and white the other religious minorities. The flag presented India as a 'compact of faiths'. The practical manifestation of the compact had been the acceptance of Separate Electorates. As long as the Muslims and *Parsis* held office in the higher echelons of Congress leadership, the compact was credible. With time, Hindus from North India – led by M.K. Gandhi - assumed the leadership of the Congress Party. They thought that too much had been conceded to the Muslims. They started to backtrack and to revile 'separate electorates' as 'communalism'. The British, however, knew that a 'democratic order' in India would have to be based on a 'compact of faiths and castes'.

Labour Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald was willing to concede 'dominion status' to India and he issued a 'Communal Award' in August 1932 as the basis of

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<sup>5</sup> The focus of revision of history by India after Partition has been on the 'cruelty and excesses' of Muslim rule that is viewed as the 'Dark Age' of India. The way Pakistan and Partition are reviled further underlines that India is unable to define itself in any other way except as nemesis of Islam'.

the Constitution of India. The offer of 'separate electorates' was extended to the Sikhs in the Punjab, Indian Christians, Eurasians, and to the Untouchables. Dr. Ambedkar favoured the 'Communal Award'. Gandhi called it a blatant policy of 'divide and rule' and went on hunger strike in protest. Violent riots erupted all over India and a number of people were killed trying to save Gandhi's life. Dr. Ambedkar came under so much pressure that he signed an agreement - known as the Poona Pact <sup>6</sup> - with Gandhi, under which the Untouchables gave up their demand for a 'separate electorate' and agreed to 'joint electorate' with the Hindus. The Congress Party had already resiled on the Allahabad Pact between the Muslims and Hindus. It was hoped that it would commit itself sincerely to a 'compact of castes'. However, it has since been proven that without the political safeguard of 'separate electorates', a compact of castes has little value, meaning or substance. The hope that the Poona Pact would secure more for the Untouchables than 'separate electorates' has turned out to be in vain.

Experience has proved that a 'compact of castes' also required to be underpinned by 'separate electorates' to be meaningful. Without being recognised as a separate political entity, the Untouchables could not be a party to any compact. Dr Ambedkar was the Minister of Law in the first post-independence government of India and was given the responsibility to draft the Indian Constitution. But he died a frustrated man admitting that he been misled; the Hindus had no intention of allowing the complex formula for reservation of seats for the Untouchables to work; they merely wanted them to be counted as Hindus. He saw that by giving up the right to 'separate electorates' the chance to secure recognition of Untouchables as separate nations was missed. He embraced Buddhism in the last years of his life by way of atonement. The 'compact of castes' turned out to be a mirage without 'separate electorates'.

A last ditch attempt was made to keep India united on the basis of a 'compact of faiths' in the 1946 Cabinet Mission Plan<sup>7</sup> that proposed the consolidation of Muslim majority provinces in the East and West into autonomous regions. The Congress Party rejected this although it was accepted by the Muslim League. With the Cabinet Mission Plan rejected, it became quite apparent that the Congress leadership had no use for any 'compact'; they had opted for an imperial destiny. When India became an independent country on 15 August 1947, it replaced the

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<sup>6</sup> The Poona Pact was signed in September 24, 1932 by Dr Ambedkar on behalf of the Untouchables and by Mr Gandhi on behalf of the Congress Party wherein it was agreed that the Untouchables would be in the electoral list as Hindus but allocated separate seats.

<sup>7</sup> The 1946 Cabinet Mission led by Lord Pethick Lawrence included Sir Stafford Cripps, Defence Minister A.V. Alexander and the Viceroy Lord Wavell. It proposed the consolidation of India into three autonomous regions comprising Bengal and Assam in the East and Punjab, Sindh, NWFP and Baluchistan in the West as Muslim majority regions and the rest of India as the third region, all of which were to decide whether to separate or stay together after ten years.

spinning wheel of Mahatma Gandhi on the Congress Flag with Ashoka's<sup>8</sup> Wheel and adopted the same tricolour as the national flag. This was a clear indication that India's rulers were seeking their destiny in imperialism with *Akhand Bharat* (restoration of empire of Hindu mythology) their objective. India opted for a quest for the resurrection of its 'golden age' as the foundation of its future. That it chose the symbol of the *Maurya* Empire at its largest (under a Buddhist ruler) shows that India decided the geographical spread of its empire and then started to look for a historical underpinning for it. But its course has not been smooth in the pursuit of that objective. Initially, it was the countries whose areas it coveted that bore the brunt of its imperial ambitions; now the native people of India (*Bahujan*) are its principal victims.

### 3. Stealing History

It was easy enough to put Ashoka's Wheel on its flag but the absence of a principle of national solidarity continues to haunt India. In its attempt to present itself as the successor of Ashoka's Empire, the Indian historians have had to present the period of Muslim rule (and to a lesser extent British rule) as the dark age of India characterised by oppression and exploitation by 'contemptible foreigners'. Under BJP rule, the focus was shifted from 'foreign origin' of those rulers to their 'foreign faith' as the object of hate and revulsion. This had an unexpected response from the *Bahujan*. Being the native peoples of India, they have a claim to India on a sound basis in history. They assert that the Aryan, being non-proselytising Hindus, are 'foreign' without doubt whereas most of the Muslims and Christians are native converts. Besides, the Aryans of *chaturvarna* (four castes) are only 15 percent of the population of India and the native people are 85 percent of the population. The *Bahujan*, therefore, assert that they are the real owners of India for two reasons: 1) being native peoples, 2) being the overwhelming majority.

The native peoples, however, are ethnically diverse. They still speak pre-Aryan languages in Southern India. It was their being several nations rather than one that has precluded the crystallisation of a single national identity. They have been on the defensive in the face of exuberance generated by the imperial project of '*Akhand Bharat*'. During British rule, the impact of the way religion operated in politics of South Asia, four ethno-historic entities emerged in geographical distinct areas. These are:

1. The Indus Valley, which is Pakistan today.
2. The Ganges Valley of North India that is Hindu heartland and called the Cow belt.
3. Brahmaputra Valley much of which is Bangladesh but it also includes West Bengal and the states of Assam.

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<sup>8</sup> Ashoka was the third King of the Maurya Dynasty who ruled much of what is India, Pakistan and Bangladesh today - 272 to 235 BC.

4. Deccan Plateau of South India that is ethnically distinct from Northern India where pre-Aryan languages are spoken.

Even during pre-history different civilisations emerged in each of the four areas but the most ancient and the most advanced civilisation emerged in the Indus Valley. Archaeologists have discovered the remains of the civilisation at Harappa (near Sahiwal in Pakistan) and at Mohenjodaro on the banks of the River Indus in the Sindh province of Pakistan. Both lie in the midst of desert. It was the combination of arid climate and proximity to a river that favoured the development of permanent settlement in a region populated by nomads. The bull was the symbol of the civilisation, which supported an egalitarian society worshipping gods quite different to that of the Aryans.

Both the centres of the Indus Valley Civilisation perished as a consequence of Aryan invasion around 1750 BC. The invaders did not settle in the land, they pushed on towards the Ganges Valley. The symbol of the Aryans was the horse and they used chariots in war. Concentration of cave engravings of horses and chariots in the North West show that the Aryans did not settle in the lower Indus valley, they pushed on into the Ganges Valley. That has been the pattern of settlement in the Indian sub-continent throughout history until the arrival of Europeans. The invading tribes entered India from the North West and then moved on in search of an easier life into the well-forested Ganges Valley. There was extensive contact between the three regions in the North but it was infrequent with the South. The movement towards the South occurred much later and the original Dravidian inhabitants of India are more or less untouched by conquest and foreign rule that dominated the history of Northern India. But the Europeans, who arrived in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century, entered India from the sea and exerted their influence on South India much longer than on the North.

With the conversion of Emperor Ashoka to Buddhism in the wake of the campaign against Kalinga (260 BC), India embraced Buddhism. From India it spread to Afghanistan, Central Asia, East and South East Asia. If Ashoka's rule was a golden age, it was the golden age of Buddhism. The native peoples of the subcontinent are enraged that the Aryans stole their history so brazenly and use their symbols as their own. Hinduism had been continuously at war against Buddhism for a thousand years and eventually succeeded in eliminating it from most of South Asia. Yet, the Hindus have no shame in putting the symbol of the Buddhist golden age on their flag. They first robbed the Buddhists of their identity and then stole their history. This is how the Aryan invaders colonised India; they did not just annex the land, they annexed whole peoples along with their gods and destroyed their identity. Because that strategy did not work against monotheistic faiths, they are re-writing history. After claiming for centuries to be of a superior Aryan race they now claim that Hindu is a disfiguration of the word 'Sindhu' and that they are not from outside but from the Indus valley. This is another brazen attempt to steal history - claiming to be the descendents of the Indus Valley civilisation that they (the Aryans) destroyed.

#### 4. British Legacy and the BJP

The re-writing of history started by the BJP is the most brazen of all. The fact is that South Asia embraced everything the foreigners brought, but the new rulers of India reject those who brought them – Muslims as well as Christians. The BJP sought to consolidate the ‘Hindu constituency’ on the foundation of a single objective - ‘purging India of foreign influences’. Since 1992 - the year the BJP led a successful campaign to raze the Babri Masjid to the ground - India has gone into a phase of blatant denial of its history. It is during this period that the agenda of *Hindutva* – constructed around Brahminic Hinduism – has evolved. It asserts that *India is a land of Hindus where Muslims, Christians and other such influences are ‘foreign’ and inimical to the ‘pluralist’ traditions of India.* This is not a change of objective; but it does mark a change in strategy. Before 1947, the Congress party with its agenda of Hindu-Muslim unity under the flag of Secularism was in the lead. *Hindutva* was the agenda of the Hindu *Mahasabha* only, which was shunned by educated Brahmins. With the rise of the BJP, *Hindutva* has been embraced as a national agenda by all the upper castes and privileged classes. The BJP, like its predecessors, underpins its politics with Hindu religion and it prescribes a polity based on the premise that ‘Hindus alone constitute the Indian nation’.<sup>9</sup>

According to their view, “Hinduism is tolerant and catholic, which makes it superior to all faiths, but its tolerance has often been mistaken for weakness. The Hindu ‘nation’ has been repeatedly conquered by aliens, the last of who were the Muslims followed by the (Christian) British. The entry and take over of India by foreigners created the illusion that it was a land of many different and equal cultures. Pseudo-secular nationalists like Nehru, who preferred bondage to an alien system of thought, perpetuated this notion within the ‘pseudo-secular’ Constitution. All such concessions must be reversed. Only a true Hindu nation (*Rashtra*) will provide protection to non-Hindus. Threat to the nation remains because the nation is ruled by ‘traitors and pseudo-secularists’ who have appeased Muslims in their pursuit of politics of securing bloc votes.”<sup>10</sup> The assertions like ‘only the *Hindu Rashtra* would provide protection to non-Hindus’ has caused fright in all corners of India that a ‘blood bath’ was imminent. The pogrom against Muslims in the State of Gujrat in 2002 and the election victory of the BJP that followed in three states including Gujrat was seen as a vindication of the politics of *Hindutva*.

The BJP and its allies obviously believed that the constituency of hate is larger and that it had defeated and buried the ‘pseudo-secularism’ of the Congress Party

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<sup>9</sup> Dr Ram Punyani, *Hindu Extreme Right wing Groups: Ideology and Consequences* (University of Leicester South Asian History Academic Papers 2), p2.

<sup>10</sup> Tapan Basu, P.Datta, S.Sarkar, T.Sarkar & S.Sen, *Khaki Shorts-Saffron Flags*, (Tracts from the Times), Orient Longman, 1993, p37.

for good. The surprise defeat of the BJP in the Elections of 2004 has been a set back but the BJP continues to be committed to the objective of *Hindutva*. It may, however, change its tactics. In the 'double speak' that is the hallmark of Brahmin speak, they insist that *Hindutva* does not reject secularism; it rejects 'pseudo-secularism' because it is just another name for the appeasement of Muslims. The real secularism is enforcement of loyalty on Indians who are not really Indian (because they are not Hindus) but can be treated as Indian if they are loyal to the Hindu *Rashtra*. Underlying such views is the assumption that Hinduism is the religion of all the peoples of India except those who are specifically Muslim, Christian or Parsi. But contrary to popular belief, the terms Hindu and Hinduism are Orientalist constructions originating with late 18<sup>th</sup> century British administrators who believed that 'the essence of India existed in a number of key Hindu classical scriptures such as the Vedas, the codes of Manu and *shastras* that often prescribe hierarchical ideas'. Their conclusion was eagerly 'supported and elaborated by Brahmins'<sup>11</sup>.

The British not only absorbed this understanding, they put an official seal on it by applying a legal system based on Brahminic norms to all non-Muslim castes and outcastes, and created an entirely new Brahmin legitimacy. In reality, the word Hindu was used by the Persians to describe those living in the sub-continent they called 'Hind' that lay to the East of them. It was a derogatory description and did not have any religious implication or meaning<sup>12</sup>. The first Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, wrote: "Hinduism as a faith is vague, amorphous, many sided, all things to all men. It is hardly possible to define it, or indeed to say definitely if it is indeed a religion or not, in the usual sense of the word, in its present form, and even in the past, it embraces many beliefs and practices, from the highest to the lowest, often opposed to or contradicting each other"<sup>13</sup>. Both names of India, *Bharat* as well as India, have imperial connotation. Calling it India underlines the desire to be the successor of the British Empire. Calling it *Bharat* or *Bharatvarsh* underlines the desire to de-link with the British Empire and underline a link with a mythical era when 'Hindu rule' extended from the *Hindu Kush* Mountains (in Afghanistan) to the Mekong Delta.

The words chosen by the BJP and its sister organisation are different to those of secularists – Congressites and Communists - but the objectives and impact of the their themes is the same. They all present 'polytheism' as 'tolerance' and revile 'monotheism' as 'intolerant'. Hinduism, they say, is 'tolerant' of gods of others but the monotheistic faiths are not. This is the main argument Hinduism has used to subvert every religion. They endlessly argue about the qualities and merit of gods only to shift focus away from the power and attraction of the theology and

<sup>11</sup> D.Haynes & Gyan Parkash, *Contesting Power: Resistance and Everyday Social Relations in South Asia* (Delhi 1999) p6

<sup>12</sup> Dr Ram Punyani, *Hindu Extreme Right wing Groups: Ideology and Consequences* (University of Leicester South Asian History Academic Papers 2), p2 &3.

<sup>13</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru, *The Discovery of India*, London 1946, p66



the value system of monotheistic faiths - Islam and Christianity. They revile 'faith' of monotheists as 'violence and intolerance' and present 'faithlessness' of polytheism as 'tolerance'. Even Buddhism, which has its origin in North India and is a 'pacifist' religion, has not escaped being slated because it is a monotheistic faith.

The fact is that Hinduism weakened Buddhism by subversive tactics and then fought a fierce war against it in the North West of South Asia (Afghanistan today). The Hindu Kush Mountains got their name from that war between Buddhism and Hinduism. This war just petered out as conquerors with a better military system, like Alexander the Great (of Macedonia) and then the Muslims, came on the scene. The conflict between egalitarian Buddhism and caste based Brahmanism lasted the longest and was at its fiercest in the Eastern regions. Buddhism survived in Bengal and Assam, in Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim, and still holds sway in Burma and beyond. The tactics and methods used by Casteism to vanquish egalitarian faiths are being used by the Brahmin even today and make an interesting study.

After Buddhism was banished from where it began, there was no universal religion in the region until Islam was introduced. There was no state, only a society with millions of gods in countless fiefdoms ruled by war-lords with the help of the priest caste that served its masters and maintained social control through superstition and suspicion, hate and fear. India got an opportunity to make a clean break with that history by the British revision of Indian history. The British wrote history with focus on the people – their hopes and fears - and created a Hindu identity. They also provided training in the art of compromise without compromising the essentials. The rulers of new India preferred to break away from the British legacy and have re-written history with focus on the accomplishments of 'Hindu Emperors' and popular resistance to 'foreign rule'.

### 5. Competing Views of Indian Polity

With history of 'Hindu Imperial Era' to draw on, the arrogance of India is hard to explain. All Hindu Empires were short lived. None was destroyed by invasion; each one collapsed from within in consequence of extreme destitution and poverty. In any case, imperial precedents no longer confer legitimacy on a state; India, therefore, continues to lack the underpinning of legitimacy. What India does have is three views of national polity supported by a three way split in national outlook represented by the three 'national' political parties: 1) the Congress Party, 2) the Communists and Socialists, and 3) the BJP led *Sangh Parivar*. They all have a different view how India can be best kept 'united'. But all the three are unashamedly imperial because none of them take into account the need for a 'new compact' among its very diverse peoples. When a 'national' party comes to power in Delhi or in a state, it acts in accordance with its party line. Since 'all three' agree on India's 'imperial destiny', they can impose their agenda on any coalition between them and/or with their several regional allies. But that is so as long as the regional parties and caste based vote banks have no national agenda.

The polity subscribed to by the Congress Party is '*Secularism & Pluralism*' – a muddle of welfare socialism and enlightened Hinduism that decries religion as the basis of identity but accepts ethnicity as a factor of solidarity. It recognises ethnic pluralism of India but closes its eyes to the more important aspect of pluralism - of religions and castes - that is the real basis of solidarity and the principal identity in much of India. The Communists (and Socialists) assert that the socialism of the Congress Party is a sham, which it is. They assert that India can be kept united by true '*Secularism and Socialism*' with religion – the opium of the people - set aside and the economy reorganised on the basis of community ownership. They believe that communal and caste strife that bedevils India would end if the Indian State were structured on principles of Communism. They believe that a Communist Revolution in India would not only end communal strife, it would also destroy all notions of religion and caste and begin a bold new era of fraternal equality. They have not won many new converts to their idea but they have been in power at the Centre as a part of the Congress led coalitions.

The BJP and its allies in the *Sangh Parivar* ridicule the 'pseudo-secularism' of the other two and reject socialism altogether. They prescribe '*Hindutva*' as the foundation of national polity. Under the BJP rule, the polity of the *Sangh Parivar* was well on its way to emerging as the national polity. The main focus of that polity is 'internal imperialism' founded on coercive social uniformity and 'revenge for past humiliation'. Since it was the Muslims and later the British who ruled India for a thousand years, the objective of revenge came down to 'genocide of Muslims and Christians'. It was the reality that derailed the BJP. The effort consumed in destroying one mosque (Babri Masjid) and one pogrom in Gujrat gave an idea of the task that liquidation of the Muslims would entail. Then there was the downside; it could lead to war with Pakistan. The BJP grasped that nettle fairly quickly. It deployed all its armed might on Pakistan's border in late 2001 and kept the forces deployed for a year. The Generals of the Indian Army were more realistic; they told their political masters that a quick victory was out of the question and nuclear exchange quite likely.

The fact remains that the Brahmins (who are in the lead in all the national political parties) are only 3 per cent of the population. The caste system gives the role of fighting to lower castes. Some of the lower castes did become ruling castes by leading the fight against Muslims e.g. Sikhs, Rajputs and Marathas. To maintain hegemony over resurgent castes the Brahmin leadership had to borrow ideas from the resurgent West. The Congress Party embraced '*Secularism and Pluralism*' because it had worked well as the basis of national solidarity under British rule. But they *hinduised* the idea. The Hindu view of secularism is not separation of the Church from the State but to de-legitimise 'foreign faiths'. The Congress took to 'denial' of religious identities. Electoral rolls in India neither record the religion of the voter nor allocate any seats to religious minorities. But seats are allocated to low castes and outcastes not on the basis of their numbers but as a token of favour. The Muslims and Christians get no favours but they can get seats from those who

have 'reserved seats'. Like the poor beg for alms, the minority religions beg for seats. That is how the Congress Party addressed oppression and alienation – by denying and exacerbating it.

The Congress' 'pluralism' did make a difference in one sense. Under Congress rule, the boundaries of provinces were delineated afresh on ethnic lines – many with a separate official language. The states of India do have a distinct ethnic personality now. The result is that all the southern states have banished the national parties. Each state in India has several political parties most of which exist in that state only. Upon the ethnic mosaic, a caste and religious mosaic is overlaid that makes India's political scene highly complex. Rule of a single party over all of India is a thing of the past. Coalitions of caste or region based parties are the norm. The emergence of regional and caste parties has not brought about the disintegration of India as many feared. But it has changed India beyond recognition. India, does not only not have a polity, it does not seem to need one. It is not a new situation for India. Just before the rule of India passed into foreign imperial hands, it had a polity vacuum. No foreign force wishes to rule India but its people are eager to embrace change. Voices from the bottom of the pile are becoming louder. Could they bring about the change India needs?

The Congress Party ruled India for nearly forty years but their prescription of polity stands discredited now. It was hoped that 'Secular Pluralism' would camouflage the truth that Congress rule was really Brahmin rule. During the BJP campaign to demolish the Babri Masjid, it became apparent that the Congress Party was just as eager to pander to the forces of Hindu Fundamentalism as the BJP. It simply looked the other way when the Babri Masjid was demolished. With that the secular credentials of the Congress Party were also demolished. That gave credibility to Hindu extremists that the Dalit fortnightly '*Dalit Voice*' calls 'Sacred Brahmins'. Their party - the BJP – is a *Brahmin Jati Party* in appearance as well as in reality. The 'Sacred Brahmins' have many names but a single focus – anti-foreign (meaning primarily Muslims but also Christian). The irony is that the majority of the caste Hindus has embraced their fascist ideology that they decried and ridiculed as Communalism when they were trying to induce the Muslims to abandon the 'communal' Muslim League and join their fold.

The challenge to 'Sacred Brahmins' comes from 'Socialist Brahmins' - a coalition of Communists and those who broke away from the Congress Party alarmed by the rightward swing of their Party. They put together a coalition under the flag of Socialism to keep India politically united and socially calm. The Congress Party is apparently eager to return to its core values, it could come back into the embrace of 'Socialist Brahmins'. But with the Brahmin dominance of Communist Party in Bengal, they would continue to be the leaders of 'Socialist Brahmins'. They have enjoyed credibility and public support in West Bengal on a sustained basis but their national constituency has atrophied. They also stand discredited because they have also failed to sell Communism as a 'principle of national solidarity' on all India basis. The 'Sacred Brahmins' (BJP and its allies)

were confident that their emotive slogan of *Hindu Rashtra* has real appeal that would be sustained. It was their arrogance that alarmed the *Bahujan* so much that they voted the BJP out of power in 2004. It is apparent that the 'hate' that underpinned the rise of the *Sangh Parivar* created an equal amount of 'fear' among their victims; India is still holding its breath.

'Secular Pluralism' as well as 'Secular Socialism' still has a popular base in India; it is just that neither is a credible 'national polity'. These are legitimate polities of many states in the Indian Union who have their own distinct ethnic identity. Until India becomes as many countries as the nations in its fold, the polity of India would continue to be Imperialism. Hindu imperialism is founded on hate and underpinned by the distortion of history. India has been kept together by hate – hate for the mythical foreigner, for the very visible Muslim, for the very vocal Sikhs and Dalits, for the very determined Kashmiris and Assamese. *Hindutva* is nothing but hate. It has led to the sharpening of contradictions in the Indian society. It required and often obtained the loyalty of the Untouchables of India by challenging them to prove their love for 'mother India.' They did so in droves enrolling as foot soldiers of the RSS attending classes eulogising Hindu fascist doctrines and engaged in vicious pogroms to intimidate and liquidate adherents of foreign faiths - Muslims and Christians. It has been a deadly dangerous game. Despite the defeat of the BJP in 2004, the religious minorities still face great peril.

In the name of *desh, dharti and dharm*, the non-Hindu majority in India is being forced to subsume their identity and become Hindus. Dalits, Backward Castes and Tribal peoples have been under great pressure to come into the Hindu fold. Many have been active in pogroms against the Muslims and Christians and have been praised when they actually kill, rape and burn. The pogroms in Gujrat against the Muslims were no flare up; those were planned by the leaders of *Sangh Parivar*, supervised by the Police, and carried out mostly by the RSS cadres often from low castes. In 1947, the Sikhs had been in the forefront of pogroms against the Muslims. It did not earn them indemnity. They were massacred in Delhi under the supervision of Congress members of the Lok Sabha and elected officials of the Delhi Administration. Did Delhi hesitate in assaulting the Durbar Sahib, the holiest shrine of the Sikhs? What added insult to injury was that most of the troops and senior commanders of Operation Bluestar of June 1984 were Sikhs.

No one has any rights and protection in India; it is the gift of the Brahmin. In the political parlance of India 'cruelty' is 'resolve', 'obstinacy' is 'steadfastness' and 'arrogance' is 'self-confidence.' Indian Imperialism is not underpinned by a noble or profound objective; it is sustained by internal imperialism – persecution of the low born and religious minorities. At this moment, the caste and region based parties of the 'low-born' have no national polity or a national agenda. It is because India is many nations? If so, it must be as many countries. That is itself a 'national agenda'. If such an agenda was not embraced, the 'low-born' would continue to labour under the spell of 'imperialism' taking part in pogroms, against their will and against their interest. They must understand that aggression is the flip side of

oppression, struggle against which is the *raison d'être* of the caste and region based parties. They have a national agenda. They must embrace it openly.

### 6. Search for Consensus

India is not a nation; it has never been a nation. But many peoples with different ethnicities and religions can be equal citizens in a country that has a principle of national solidarity. The mythical *Bharatvarsh* was in reality a land where superstition reigned and life was characterised by suspicion, hate and war between myriads of endogamous castes, worshipping rival gods, speaking many languages. India is not just unfamiliar with solidarity, it is perhaps even afraid of it. It is afraid because the caste system that is the foundation of Brahminic Social Order (BSO) of India is underpinned by fear, hate and suspicion. When newly independent India chose the symbol of the Buddhist Empire of King Ashoka, it could have chosen an imperial precedent of a Hindu Empire - Maghadha-Maurya Empire that developed all the recognisable features of the Hindu society based on the Vedic social order of today - the *Varna* (caste) System of *Manusmriti*. But it was confined to the valley of the River Ganges in North India only. India opted for large size, not the precedence of history.

Contrary to popular view, Hinduism is not a 'faith' or a 5000 years old civilisation; it is social order that was consolidated between the 6th to the 10th Century A.D just before the Muslims arrived in India. The present day Hinduism that provides religious underpinning for the *Varna* System is Aryan in origin. It is the ultimate foreign faith that did not accept converts and reduced the indigenous peoples to outcasts. The irony is that Hinduism became a recognisable faith under the British *Raj*. The concept of a Hindu Nation is a British gift and yet the *Sangh Parivar* spurns British rule with scorn.

Islam and Christianity are more indigenous as they made South Asia their home by conversion and the assimilation of converts. Brahmanism, being a non-proselytising religion, is truly foreign to South Asia and remains so. When the Brahmins realised that under the 'one man one vote system', they had to have numbers on their side, they borrowed the concept of Secularism from the Christian West and used it to distance themselves from the foundation of their religion - the caste system - because it provided them with a rationale and an instrument for consolidating all castes and religions under their leadership. They did not abandon the Caste System, the efficacy of which had been proven as a means of social control; they merely put it aside until they captured political power with the endorsement of the majority. The Congress Party 'used' Secularism to mislead minority faiths and the Untouchables and to bring India under Brahmin rule.

The Congress' secularism is indeed pseudo-secularism. Congress's secularism started with decrying religion *per se* and promotion of agnosticism and ended up decrying Islam and Muslims as 'foreign implants' under imperial rule. It used its 'agnostic image' to decry religion as 'communalism' and Muslims as

'communalists'. Beside secularism, the Congress employed two more concepts – one Hindu and one British – in an effort to make Brahmins the rulers of India in perpetuity. The Hindu concept was *Ahimsa* (non-violence). The art of fighting is not the forte of Brahmins; it was what the 'loathsome peoples' of India (Dalits and Backward Castes) and members of new and foreign faiths (Muslims, Christians and Sikhs) practised. But the Brahmins did want them to fight for them. So fighting was 'all right' if blessed by the Brahmin. Any atrocity however cruel, any people however loathsome, can become good and chaste if blessed by a Brahmin. The warring castes were 'put in their place' as deviants who cause injury and hurt to people while gods forbid even injury to animals. But when blessed by the Brahmin, even human sacrifice (to the goddess Kali) and pseudo-military organisations like the RSS are ennobled. But fighting for freedom, against apartheid, oppression and exploitation is a cardinal sin; it is to 'oppose the will of the gods' that ordained their low birth.

The British political doctrine employed by the Congress Party was 'democracy as the sole underpinning of legitimacy'. This doctrine was enthusiastically embraced because it precluded the return of Muslims to power in India, as they were only 25 per cent of the population on an All India basis. But the Brahmins are even a smaller percentage (3 percent) of the population. It was, therefore, vital to consolidate the 'Hindu' constituency. Mahatma Gandhi, the Congress leader, insisted that the Caste System was indeed a pillar of the Hindu religion but it did not make the castes unequal or low-castes and outcastes untouchable. That was a clever twist. He demonstrated his belief in equality of castes by taking up residence in colonies of the Untouchables. A lot of people were taken in so much so that Dr Ambedkar was persuaded not to insist on a separate electorate for Dalits and other non-Hindus in exchange for the Congress Party agreeing to work for the 'eradication' of the Caste System.<sup>14</sup>

Mahatma Gandhi may have been genuine in his eagerness to bring the Untouchables into the Hindu fold but it was not their best interest. Gandhi undertook a tour of 12,500 miles in an attempt to purge Hinduism of the evil of Untouchability. Eleanor Zelliott concluded that the Poona Pact revealed the basic difference in political philosophy and tactics between Gandhi and Ambedkar. Gandhi believed that only a change of heart on the part of Hindus would remove Untouchability, but he also believed that such a change was imminent. His efforts for *Harijans* (children of the Hindu god *Hari*), a name he coined for Dalits after the Poona Pact, reflect this stress on the need of penance on the part of upper castes. Dr. Ambedkar, on the other hand, believed in legal redress of grievances and guarantees of rights, backed up by political (will and) power<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup> Dr Ram Punyani, *The Second Assassination of Gandhi?* (University of Leicester South Asian History Academic Papers 3), p25.

<sup>15</sup> Eleanor Zelliott, 'Social and Political thought of B.R. Ambedkar' in T.Pantham and K.L.Deutsch *Political Thought of Modern India* (New Delhi, 1986), p165.

## 7. Awakening of the Untouchables

Dr. Ambedkar drafted the Constitution of India and it does ban caste discrimination but it has no effect and little meaning for the *Bahujan*. Dr Ambedkar was so disheartened at the 'constitutional protections' having turned out to be so meaningless that he converted to Buddhism in later life. The banning of caste discrimination has had the opposite effect to that intended. Since the Untouchables became 'full fledged' Hindus, they are put under pressure to demonstrate their loyalty to *Hindutva*. They have been under pressure ever since to acknowledge that they are Hindus and have to be in the forefront in anti Muslim pogroms and riots to prove that. But the social situation of the *Bahujan* does not change by taking up the prejudices of the high castes and killing and burning on their behalf. In the State of Gujrat in 2002, it were the *Bahujan* castes who turned on their Muslim neighbours to kill, rape and burn. That is the reality of *Hindutva*; it is a doctrine that sanctions genocide of those it cannot or will not assimilate. Its hallmark is distributing *Trishuls* (trident); murder and rape, loot and arson with the kerosene can as the primary weapon. There is panic among the victims it has targeted that is matched by euphoria among the genocidists.

Dalit leadership is alive to the dangers and has felt the need to organise the Untouchables politically. They are increasingly willing and able to accept responsibility to articulate new responses to the old problem. Since it is the 'foreignness' of Muslims and Christians that is used to vilify them, they wonder why should they not focus on the most evil foreign influence that came to their land - the caste system - that was brought by the Aryan invaders. The Aryans killed Buddhism that was an indigenous and egalitarian faith. Islam and Christianity are also egalitarian faiths. The Muslims brought prosperity and introduced the rule of law in their land. The British brought technology and introduced democracy as the underpinning of legitimacy. What did the Aryans bring? Apartheid and repression; poverty and superstition! Dalit leaders use these arguments to underline that Dalits are not Hindus; they are the native peoples of India dispossessed of everything by the Aryan invaders - their identity as well as dignity, their power as well their country.

The rulers of India eagerly wish to enjoy the public support and stability that the British or the Moghul imperial power enjoyed in India but they cannot draw on their experience if they reject that period of history as the 'dark age' of India. South Asia was consolidated into an empire enjoying peace and prosperity for a historically significant length of time only under Muslim and British rule. Since the British took power from the Muslims, they resented the British rule more. The Muslims were the target of relentless persecution and were in the forefront of resistance. Thus they continued to provide leadership and kept the hope alive for regaining imperial power. After the 'Mutiny' of 1857, The Muslims were crushed ruthlessly, lost hope and began to look towards the Afghans or the Ottomans to come to their help. It was not until their experience of the *Khilafat* Movement that they realised that the era of empires was finally over and accepted the idea and the

order of 'nation states'. That marked the beginning of a new era in the whole of South Asia – the era of nation states.

## 8. The Awakening of Muslims

The Muslims of South Asia deserve the credit for having responded to the intellectual challenges with ideas to suit the time and their situation. Their religious leaders were telling them that the idea of the 'nation state' is foreign to Islam; the Congress leaders were telling them that they were a part of the 'Indian' nation. The Muslims knew that neither was correct or right. It was the shock of the failure of the *Khilafat* Movement that helped them abandon old themes and consider bold new designs for their own future and for all the other peoples of India. They found that the 'Young Turks' had forced the Ottoman state to embrace the idea of 'Turkish nationalism' and were horrified that Ottomans had to face British inspired rebellion by Arab Muslims at a time they were fighting the British on their own soil. The dilemma persisted for decades. In 1930, in his famous Allahabad speech, Allama Iqbal said:

“ In the world of Islam we have a universal polity whose fundamentals are believed to have been revealed, but whose structure, owing to our legists' lack of contact with the modern world, stands today in need of renewed power by fresh adjustments. I do not know what will be the final fate of the national idea in the world of Islam. Whether Islam will assimilate and transform it ... or allow a radical transformation of its own structures by the force of this idea, is hard to predict.<sup>16</sup>”

As it happened, the World of Islam did embrace the idea of the 'nation state' but rejected that India was a 'nation'. They had a principle of national solidarity in Islam but the other peoples of India had not crystallised their national personality or a clear polity. In creating Pakistan, the Muslims of India resurrected Islam as a universal as well as national polity. Over many centuries of what Allama Iqbal referred to as imperial era of 're-paganisation', the Muslims had engaged in imperial conquests and contest with other imperial powers of the time. However, in embracing imperialism, Muslim rulers did not abandon the *Sharia*. The two got intertwined and it was necessary to separate the notion of 'state' from that of 'imperial state', to respond to the challenges of post-imperialism. The Muslim leaders of South Asia did succeed in vital disentangling of ideas to define a vision of Pakistan as a 'Muslim nation state'. They did not accept that the idea of a 'nation state' was foreign to Islam but they defined their national personality as 'Muslims'. The polity of Pakistan was condensed in the celebrated words of the father of the nation, Mohammed Ali Jinnah as: '*the Muslims (of South Asia) are a Nation*'.

As the Muslims crystallised their polity and were successful in securing 'sovereignty' in Pakistan, the Hindu leaders of India felt defeated. They responded

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<sup>16</sup> Dr Sir Muhammed Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements of*. Allahabad Address of 29 December 1930



by a resolve to 'undo Pakistan' and to pursue the project of '*Akhand Bharat*' to consolidate all of South Asia under their rule. Quite often India justifies its hate and imperial ambitions on the grounds that it is impelled by the desire of its people to avenge its past humiliation by foreign conquests. But that cannot be true. The Brahmins oversaw and imposed the caste system while the 'foreign' rulers were minded to bring succour to the 'low born', oppressed the *Bahujan* in India even during the Muslim and British rule. The Brahmins – being lettered – enjoyed privileged positions under Muslim and British rule. The truth is that it is under the Brahminic Social Order (BSO) imposed after independence in 1947 that the *Bahujan* have been oppressed without relenting like never before in the history of South Asia.

It is not to avenge humiliation of the distant past but the failure in 1947 to stop Pakistan that drives the high caste rulers of India in their aggression and arrogance. They are afraid that other peoples of India could also crystallise their national personality like the Muslims did. They keep on pretending and praying that 'Pakistan' is temporary and would come back into Brahmin embrace. They have a need to demonstrate to the *Bahujan* majority in India that even Pakistan is ready to come back into its fold to keep them from trying to follow in the footsteps of Pakistan and seek sovereign independence. That explains why India, a huge country of 1200 million people, is ever eager to bring its neighbours into a confederation, a common market or a common currency. The rulers of India fear they would not be able to maintain the political unity of the country if some of the states reached high level of urbanisation and prosperity. Beside the dream of *Akhand Bharat*, India is kept together by grinding poverty that underpins social immobility.

### 9. Military System and National Solidarity

At the height of the Moghul Empire, the population of the Muslims in India was no more than 7 per cent. The British never settled in South Asia; they remained an occupying power. If the Moghuls and the British could hold an empire together for so long, the Brahmins wonder, why can't they? It is because of two reasons. One, the era of empires is truly past and gone. Two, every empire creates a unique military system that sustains it through good times and bad. The British conquered and ruled India with the 'native soldiery'. They did so by recruiting members of low castes, outcastes or minority religions and paid the soldiers directly and regularly on the first of the month.<sup>17</sup> Those who had been oppressed under the BSO gave total loyalty to the British because they helped them escape the grind of being on the lowest rung of the caste ladder.

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<sup>17</sup> According to military historians, the British Empire in India lasted as long as it did because of two institutions; 1) a soldier could go to any station HQ or unit with his pay book and draw his salary on the first of the month, 2) when he reported a grievance to his Commanding Officer he wrote a letter to the Deputy Commissioner and the entire administrative machinery of the district came into action to provide him redress.

Contrary to history revised by the British and again by the Brahmins after 1947, which shows the Hindus to have been oppressed, the truth is quite the opposite. The native of all *jatis* were recruited into the imperial army of Muslim rulers particularly by those of South Indian States. The non-Muslim soldiers were exempt from *Jizya* (a tax imposed in lieu of military service) and as soldiers they were the equals of Muslims. The Moghul rulers gave Jagirs (land grants) in exchange for obligation to provide soldiers to the Sultan. A *panj hazari* for example was a Jagirdar with obligation to equip and maintain five thousand soldiers. The British de-linked the Jagirdari System from the military system. Instead of depending on Jagirdars, they recruited direct and put the soldiers on regular salary.

The British system of paying directly to the soldiers was obviously better. They designated 'martial races' that alone were recruited into the armed forces. Each regiment – of infantry artillery or cavalry - had its unique 'class composition' denoting the percentage of race and religion of the soldiers in it. A regiment provided the required number of 'units' to each combat formation – Brigade or division. Every unit had three to five sub-units of about 100 fighting men. In a sub-unit all the soldiers were of one 'class'. Since meals were cooked at sub-unit level, it was possible to adhere to the food laws of the caste or religion of the troops and to maintain separation at rest in barracks. The Muslims as well as the British military system was 'inclusive' of all religions and castes and respectful of the faith of all the soldiers.

The Hindu rulers recruited only the Kshatriya into their Army whereas the British classified many *Bahujan* castes as 'martial races' and they were recruited into the British Indian Army and of many Muslim rulers in large numbers. Rajputs and Marathas were welcomed into the fold of the Army of the East India Company. Dogras and Sikhs and later Punjabi Muslims and Pathans were brought into the British Imperial Army. For the Muslims and Sikhs, enrolment in the Army was a source of regular income and a matter of prestige in the village but for the low-castes it was much more; it was an escape from the rigour and humiliation of their low status. The British knew how to secure and maintain the loyalty of the troops. That is what helped them raise a huge army of natives to fight for the defence and the expansion of their empire.

As for officers, all of them were British in the early days of the colonial army. Being foreigners, they transcended the barriers of caste and religion of the soldiery. They were fair and impartial and were preferred over 'native' officers. However, when the armed forces became very large, the recruitment of 'natives' as officers became unavoidable. In the officer corps, however, it was considered 'wise' that the native officers should be as much like the British officers as possible. They were made to integrate with the British fully – speak the English language, eat British food and share accommodation in the Officers' Mess with British officers. A class of 'Brown Sahibs' thus came into being in the armed forces as more 'natives' joined as officers.

Ironically, the high castes joined as officers in larger numbers and were more eager to integrate with the British. Was it because disdain for the soldiers, who were non-Hindu or from low castes, came naturally to them? Whatever, the British and the Brahmin found natural allies in each other. The Brahmins took to eating beef and drinking, and their disdain for the people and aloofness from the soldiers was visibly more extreme. Thus the culture of the officer in the Indian Army was an amalgam of the British and Brahmin culture. Independence in 1947 required little change in the culture of the 'officer class' as the British military culture had also been underpinned by 'secular pluralism' that was the polity of the Congress Party. But the majority in the rank and file of the British Indian Army were from 'martial races' who were often non-Hindu. That has been changing and the proportion of minority faiths and *Bahujan jatis* has been falling. As *jati* identity matured in politics, the armed forces have drifted apart from the people in their composition as well as thinking. The culture of 'secular-pluralism' that had maintained the solidarity among soldiers in the past has come under strain.

Under BJP rule India conducted itself as a Hindu country with *Hindutva* as its objective. They brought the military system under even more strain. Hindu symbols and rituals that had been shunned by the armed forces have since been introduced with great gusto. As long as the culture of 'tolerance' meant that members of minority faiths could get by with being 'irreligious', the strains were bearable. But the soldiers of minority faiths have since been under pressure not only to refrain from the use of their own symbols and forms of worship but also to participate in Hindu rituals; strains are reaching breaking point. There is no public debate in India on such issues but India is faced with serious questions. Should the religious minorities (Muslims, Christians and Sikhs), whose number in the army has been falling any way, be purged? Should the armed forces (the prestige and steady job they provide) be used as an instrument of *Hindutva* to coerce the *Bahujan* castes into the Hindu fold?

Brahmin Social Order (BSO) continues to exert its influence on the military system. Non-Hindus are being purged and *Hindutva* is being employed for coercing non-Hindus into the Hindu fold. The Congress Party is a part of the BSO and it is unlikely to reverse the changes made under BJP rule. The BSO is founded on division, apartheid, fear and mistrust; the armed forces require the exact opposite – trust and comradeship – to be effective. The people of India are slowly waking up to the reality that the number of those in the fold of the Hindu *Varna* system is no more than 15 per cent of the population. Would the *Bahujan jatis* in the armed forces *hinduise* easily and willingly? Will the pressure on them and minority religions backfire? Will the armed forces become another RSS – props of the BSO? India has avoided these questions and swept the problem under the carpet. How long?

The Muslims are politically more homogenous and have an egalitarian faith. They are also 15 per cent of the population of India but they had come to accept that

they would never regain power and influence if the *Bahujan Jatis* were absorbed into the Hindu fold. That the exact opposite might eventually happen upsets all calculations. The main prop of *Hindutva* - the need for unity to face the 'Muslim threat' - has been knocked down. That the agenda of hate (for the hapless Muslims) would bring about unity among non-Muslims has turned out to be untrue. Actually, the slogans of Hindi, Hindu and *Hindutva* have undermined the Indian military system that had been viable because it was more British than Hindu. India has shied away from precipitous imposition of *Hindutva* on fighting men drawn from many faiths, castes and states but the zeal of the BSO is undimmed. *Hindutva* may be pursued discreetly under Congress rule but reaction from minority faiths and *Bahujan* is bound to increase steadily.

## 10. Legacy of Moghul Rule

The British came to India during the rule of Moghul Emperor *Shahjehan*. They first landed on the coast of Bengal and Western *Ghats* of India. Their historians noted that the Moghuls ruled over a huge and prosperous empire, the like of which they had not seen. They noted that India of the time had a flourishing economy and a stable society no less accomplished than their own. The British East India Company, whose main pursuit was trade, learnt fast. They took note that the religion of the rulers was different to that of the majority of their subjects; that the Moghuls enrolled native troops in their army; that non-Muslims soldiers served in the Emperor's army in large numbers; that there was peace and harmony in the land. It gave them the idea that they could also rule India.

After the defeat of a Muslim ruler, they annexed his territory, and persecuted and impoverished the Muslims. But they made their biggest gains by exploiting differences of ruling dynasties to get more territory and secure taxation rights or trade concessions in exchange for their help. Their methods turned out to be more successful than they imagined. The East India Company set up its own army of native sepoys under British officers. The British Empire in India was the only empire set up by a trading company using native troops. It had few problems ensuring the loyalty of native troops until the *Sepoy* Mutiny of 1857. After that, when the Company Army came under the Crown, the British Indian Army was further enlarged and used to defend and expand the British Empire. What made that possible?

The reason, quite simply, was the caste system and the deliberate illiteracy created by the Brahmins. The people only knew family loyalty and caste solidarity. The concept of patriotism was vague - love for the land and loyalty to the ruler. Which land? None was owned by the bulk of the toiling humanity. The ruler was always a foreigner. It made little difference if he was Muslim, British, French or Portuguese? The colonial army was comfortable with foreign rulers and apprehensive of the natives as rulers. They had good reasons. The Schedule Castes, Backward Castes and Scheduled Tribes, many of who were classed as martial races, had been comfortable considered 'apart' from the Hindus. They

were brought into the Hindu fold by the efforts of M.K. Gandhi who called them *Harijans*. But that is a word of ridicule now. Mayawati, a Dalit parliamentarian, said in a reply to a question about the '*Harijans*': "if we are the children of god, then what are you, the non-*Harijans*, the children of the devil?"

The *Bahujan* knew all along that being embraced as 'Hindus' by Gandhi was something sinister but they did not know what? They know that now; there is no escape from the embrace of the BSO. Under Moghul or Muslim rule they could convert to Islam or join their army to escape the humiliation and rigour of the BSO. The British gave them their due share in education and jobs and opened the doors of the armed forces to them. But 'freedom' in 1947 brought them back into the embrace of the BSO. They could escape humiliation and oppression under 'foreign' rule but there is no escape now. The number of Muslims in the Indian armed forces has fallen from 25 per cent to near zero per cent. The ratio of Sikhs has fallen from 12 per cent to 8 per cent. Dalits and tribal peoples are mistrusted and not recruited. *Bahujan jatis* have lost the most in the embrace of the BSO – their dignity as well as their identity.

### 11. Impact of *Hindutva* on the Armed Forces

Upon independence in 1947, India and Pakistan inherited complete Regiments or combat units. It was possible for both countries to continue the British system. But the segregation was not required in Pakistan; the consolidation of its cadres was prompt and easy. But the Indian Army was confronted with several dilemmas. Should it enforce vegetarianism? Should the castes touch and mix? The integration of the Officers' Mess did not sit well with the caste system. The officers who were Muslim, Christian or Sikhs felt more comfortable in the Officer's Mess but were resented by the soldiery and shunned by society. But high caste Hindus, who were uncomfortable with the culture of the Officers' Mess, were accepted by the soldiery and society. Over time, the Indian armed forces have come to resemble the wider society. The officers are from the upper castes and soldiers tend to be from the low castes and some backward castes. The number of non-Hindus is depleting fast. The armed forces of India have been transformed into a pillar of the BSO. The Indian Army is an imperial army that performs the same role for the Brahmin *Raj* as it did for the British *Raj*. But it is not 'inclusive' in its composition and is effective only against excluded minorities; it is not a vehicle or instrument of national cohesion as it used to be.

*Hindutva* has been imposed on the armed forces slowly. The preference for secular integration has given way to calls for unity on the basis of *Hindutva* - on doctrines of Brahmanism, on the teachings of *Manu*, *Kautalya* and *Shankracharya* that require segregation. Members of low castes who get a social leg up by joining the armed forces are driven down the social pile when they return to their villages. The number of Muslims in the armed forces has fallen so low as to be negligible. The number of Sikhs and Christians, who had a higher representation in the armed forces at the time of Partition than their proportion in the population, has been

falling. The egalitarian culture so necessary for camaraderie in the armed forces is becoming hard to sustain. There is no change of greater potential impact in India than the effect of *Hindutva* on the Indian armed forces.

The edifice of the unity of India was built on the foundation of the military system the structure of which was designed by the British. One leg of the stable structure was 'Secular Nationalism'; *Hindutva* seeks to strike down that leg. The second leg was the 'discipline and esprit de corps' underpinned by the integrated structure of the Indian armed forces in which classes were separate but equal. That is also under attack from *Hindutva*. The third leg was the 'high esteem for the armed forces' that is intact at the institutional level but has crumbled at the individual level as it is now determined by caste and faith not by military rank. Since India faced no threat from the outside, it could afford to deal with centrifugal forces with patience. But India is now impatient as it is eager to play the role of a super power on the international scene. The stakes have been raised. Muslims and Christians live in mortal fear; the Sikhs and Dalits are in open revolt. Even though the low castes have secured power in many states, the fear of a show down exists. With the element of fear being added to alienation, the centrifugal forces have become more radical and determined.

## 12. Betrayal of Religious Minorities

The largest minority in India – the Muslims – was effectively suppressed from the outset. Blamed for making Pakistan, they have been fair game. No excess against them is excessive enough. But the Sikhs who chose to migrate to India, and the Christians who stayed put, expected better treatment. National consciousness among the Sikhs was very strong as they had been a 'sovereign' nation under the Sikh *Raj* in the Punjab from 1799 to 1849. The Sikh scriptures are in the Punjabi language and their holy shrines were all in the Punjab province of British India. It stood to reason that they should have made a common cause with the Muslim majority in that province to secure a sovereign state of their own. The leader of the Muslims, Quaid e Azam Mohammed Ali Jinnah, made them such an offer that would have avoided the partition of the Punjab in 1947 and the Sikhs would have got their state soon afterwards. Unfortunately, their leadership accepted an offer for the 'glow of freedom', made to them on numerous occasions by the Congress Party and publicly by Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. The Sikhs regret the fateful decision to this day<sup>18</sup>.

The rulers of India make promises only to deceive and betray. This has been discovered by the people of Jammu and Kashmir and by the Sikhs at heavy cost in blood. India made a commitment to the UN in 1949 that it would allow the people of Jammu and Kashmir to decide their future in a plebiscite under UN auspices.

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<sup>18</sup> The Sikh movement for Khalistan – a Sikh sovereign state - proceeded in tandem with that of Pakistan. They were offered a Sikh state within Pakistan by the Muslim League if they supported Pakistan and by the Congress Party if they supported them. They chose to oppose Pakistan - a decision they now regret in view of the Congress betrayal.

After the situation had stabilised, India found an excuse in bilateral defence agreement between the US and Pakistan to go back on its agreement. When the Sikhs started a serious movement to press their demand for their sovereign homeland to fulfil the broken promise, the then Prime Minister Mrs Indira Gandhi waged a war on the Sikhs using the full might of the Indian Armed Forces. India used terror and humiliation in a manner much worse than foreign conquerors. It assaulted and desecrated the Durbar Sahib, which included the Supreme Seat of Sikh Polity, the Akal Takht. In the wake of Operation Blue Star in June 1984, the Indian Army unleashed a reign of terror all over the Punjab in which 125 Gurdwaras were attacked and 100,000 Sikh devotees were killed in cold blood including their leader, Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale.

This was not the first or the only betrayal of the Sikhs by India. Earlier when the Indian Constitution was passed through the Houses of Parliament, the Sikhs were not only denied their state but also their separate identity under Article 25 of the Constitution. The elected representatives of the Sikhs rejected the Indian Constitution in its draft as well as the final form on four separate occasions - in 1948, on 26<sup>th</sup> November 1949, in 1950 and again on 6<sup>th</sup> September 1966 when it was amended. The irony is that the Brahmins denied to all the peoples of India what was itself a gift of the British to them. It was the British version of Indian history that created a 'Hindu' identity. The Congress Party was set up and organised by the British as a vehicle for crystallising an Indian national identity. But the Hindu leadership of Congress had no desire to 'represent' all the religions and castes of India; it wanted to devour them leaving no trace of their existence.

The British were aware that caste based Indian society was not a nation and they wavered between honouring their duty to the peoples and undertakings to the princes on which they built their empire in India. But their over riding concern was that their legacy - India as a country - must survive. In the end, they implemented a typically British compromise. They gave self-determination to Muslims, states back to the princes, and their empire to the Brahmins. Their actions were driven primarily by a need to underpin peace and stability in the region. Their plan could have worked except that their imperial successors had other plans. The new rulers of India had no concern for peace or stability. The followers of *Kautalia* have been Hindu in their objectives and Machiavellian in their methods. The Brahmins have always been good at subterranean scheming. That is what helped them survive and flourish under the rule of the Afghans, Mughals, Sikhs, British and the Portuguese. But it makes them very bad rulers.

There were more than 500 princely states in British India that made the Empire a patchwork of treaties and protocols that defined the relationship of princely rulers with the British Crown. The internal autonomy those treaties provided also gave protection to myriad of minorities – ethnic as well as religious. All those protections and treaty obligations were unceremoniously dumped when India annexed the states by an act of the Indian Parliament without a referendum or consultation with the people. The states were merged into the adjacent province

often with a completely different ethnic or religious complexion. It caused massive social dislocation that has yet to find remedy. Typically, the high caste rulers of India have dealt with principles as well as princes with arrogance and disdain, adding insult to injury.

The Congress led freedom struggle was non-violent and it brought Hindus to power for the first time in history on the basis of 'consent of the majority'. The Congress enjoyed popularity as well as legitimacy. But it lost both almost immediately on gaining power. The Indian State is devoid of legitimacy because it did not abide by the Poona Pact with the *Bahujan* who are majority in India. Its polity is neither underpinned by the consent of the people, its princes, or its provinces, all of which have been steamrolled into submission in the name of elusive and farcical unity of India. It has denied the right of self-determination to peoples and states that had been sovereign or autonomous under British rule. India has no regard for any law or agreements it made internally with the peoples it rules or internationally with its neighbours. It depends entirely on the use of force, breaking the law as well its promises in wanton betrayal. It broke its promise to the Sikh nation and to the people of Assam to restore sovereignty to them. It betrayed the people of Jammu and Kashmir as well as the *Bahujan* it undertook to make equal. Betrayal has been the hallmark of Indian rule, the sole concern of which is the protection of the BSO.

### 13. Has *Hindutva* Run its Course?

There is concern among the disciples of *Kautalia* that unleashing a countrywide reign of terror, fear and intimidation may backfire. Even before its defeat in the 2004 General Elections, the BJP had started to talk about the need for peace with Pakistan and was eager to have Muslim and Christian faces among its spokesmen. But fear is not an appropriate weapon to forge unity. In reality, the BSO is not seeking unity; it thrives on the absence of solidarity and uses fear to annex and absorb various religious, social and political entities to destroy and eliminate religious, caste and tribal identities. The agenda of *Hindutva* has created religious polarisation and sharpened caste identities. For the first time, minority religions and oppressed castes are not getting mad; they are trying to get even. They all see the Brahmin as the enemy. The peoples of India see and know that they face no external threat. They also see and know that their country is a threat to its neighbours. They have seen in Delhi what sovereign freedom looks like. They know that freedom is to be found '*not in the discovery of a new basis for Hindu solidarity but in walking out of the fold of any form of solidarity of Brahmin design*'.

### 14. Need for a New Compact

In every state of India, the people are setting up political parties to pursue a local agenda they think would change their lives. They are bound to come to the conclusion that Brahmin dominated Delhi makes the rules that they are powerless



to change. When they do, India would come apart and the people would be free. The people of India have suffered much pursuing the mirage of a compact on all India basis. India is too diverse for that to be possible. It would also be realised that India's efforts to become a military power brings it no benefit; in the post-imperial world military prowess alone cannot build empires.

The more India tries to pursue an imperial destiny the easier would it be to use its power in the service of Israel or America. The Indian military would have to continue to kill those it is supposed to protect. India's power would be used to invade neighbours or to blunder overseas. What would India do to assuage the guilt of the wanton massacre of hapless Muslims and oppression of dirt poor Dalits? India has to concede this is an era of nation states. India would also have to restructure itself politically on the basis of nation states. India would not be the first in South Asia to reach that conclusion.

There were many among the Muslims in British India who dreamt of resurrecting the Moghul Empire. But an overwhelming majority rejected that idea and shunned an imperial objective. Pakistan is the product of the right of 'national self-determination'. It is the fruit of a political movement that was led by visionaries whose writings as well as actions were motivated by deep anguish and concern not just for the Muslims who had been oppressed for one or two centuries but also for those who had been oppressed for many more centuries. The Muslim League was founded in Dhaka in 1906. It took the Muslims of South Asia 34 years to decide their objective – Pakistan - a sovereign homeland for the Muslims. After they passed the Resolution in 1940, it took them only seven years to realise their objective.

The Brahmin rulers of India saw it as a defeat and set about trying to undo Pakistan from the day it came into being. They found traitors among the Muslims who undermined the solidarity of the nation by spreading malicious lies to sow suspicion and discord among themselves. After nearly losing Kashmir in the 1965 War, India succeeded with the connivance of both America and the erstwhile Soviet Union. India was able to start a civil war in East Pakistan that ended in its secession. But Bangladesh could not be annexed or transformed into a vassal. Pakistan could be split but it could not be undone. India's victory in 1971 turned out to be a Pyrrhic victory. Bangladesh is a Muslim nation: still the nemesis of India.

But efforts to distort history and to malign Islam continue. That 'Muslim rule was the dark age of India' has become a veritable oath of allegiance to the BSO. But the reality is that the majority in India are *Bahujan* who have been treated for countless generations as serfs. They till all the land but there is none their own; they do all the work in industrial or commercial enterprises for a pittance. They accepted all this because disobedience used to mean deprivation and destitution, even death. Now they know they do not have to put up with oppression and injustice. They can change their destiny and redeem their honour if they redeem

their identity first. India is theirs to rule and own; they have the power to decide their destiny.

### **15. Compact of Faiths**

India is a sub-continent, not a country. It was consolidated under imperial rule – by the Muslims for eight hundred years and the British for two hundred years. Both imperial powers underpinned their rule by a ‘compact of faiths’ because religious identity has been the primary identity in the sub-continent throughout history. The Moghuls and other Muslim rulers did not interfere with the indigenous faiths; Islam provided clear rules for protecting citizens of other faiths. The British law and administration was not based on any faith; their system was founded on experience and commonsense. The finest example of their sagacity was displayed in their design of the military system for India. They were able to raise an Army of ‘natives’ much bigger than their own to fight the Second World War. However, the Hindu leadership decided to start a ‘Quit India Movement’ when the War started. The field was left open for the Muslims and Sikhs. When the war ended, 56 per cent of the Indian soldiery were Muslim even though they were 25 per cent of the population of India.

The British organised the units in the Indian Army on the basis of a ‘compact of faiths’ respecting the religious sensitivities and food laws/preferences of the troops. They put that compact at the centre of the polity in India. The Congress leadership that had been behind bars much of the duration of the War, did not see the wisdom of what the British had done. But the British knew it was not possible to ignore the demand of Muslims for a separate state. The debilitating effect of the Second World War combined with the ‘natives’ fighting and winning a war against ‘superior races’ made the continuation of imperial rule impossible. The rise to power of the Labour Party in Britain accelerated the process of decolonisation. The British had organised the Congress Party, assembled a majority with a ‘Hindu identity’, and popularised ‘secular democracy’. But the Congress leaders could still not build national solidarity founded on a ‘compact of faiths’ that had survived the test of war.

After failing to work on a common platform with the Hindus, the Muslims of India fell back on Islam that gave them a national identity as well as cohesion and purpose. The Muslims were blessed with leaders like M A Jinnah and Allama Iqbal, the likes of which did not exist in any other community in India. The British could see that Pakistan was inevitable, so could the Congress Party. They could not thwart Pakistan but they set about making its territory as small as possible, its birth painful, its borders hard to defend, while India was facilitated in every way to step into the colonial shoes of the British. The creation of Pakistan was seen by the Brahmin as their failure to which they remain unreconciled. However, the emergence of Pakistan is not the only defeat Brahmin imperialism suffered. Since 1947, many other peoples of India have evolved their separate and distinct national personality and crystallised their national purpose.

The Sikhs, who were not a majority in any state of British India, are now a majority in the Indian Punjab despite the East Punjab of post-1947 having been split into three states – Haryana, Punjab and Himachal Pradesh – to dilute the strength of the Sikhs. The June 1984 assault on the Durbar Sahib of Amritsar, wanton bombardment and massacre of devotees on its premises, have made the sovereign state of *Khalistan* inevitable. In the wake of the assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi (who ordered the assault on the Durbar Sahib) the Sikhs were massacred all over India particularly in its capital – Delhi. There was no doubt left that no minority is safe or has any rights in India – not even a minority that is a majority in one state with disproportionately high numbers in the armed forces. The irrevocable parting of ways of Hindu rulers of India and the Sikhs is the second biggest defeat of India. The Sikhs are a brave people who have high regards for those who favour them but they do not forgive or forget disgrace and humiliation inflicted upon them. They are marking time. They would strike to secure their right to sovereign homeland of *Khalistan* when the time is opportune.

The struggle by the Muslims of Jammu & Kashmir for ‘*Azadi*’ (freedom) in which 90,000 have been put to death by the soldiers of the Indian Army constitute war crimes unparalleled in sustained cruelty to a people. India is very pleased with itself that the world blames the victims for their death, not the genocidists. Muslims in Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Gujrat (from 15<sup>th</sup> August 1947 to date) have been the victims of genocides and pogroms randomly and continually. They are the target of systematic exclusion from jobs and business opportunities. Many of them have attempted to survive by embracing *Hindutva*. But nothing has worked for them on any durable basis. The Muslims may be a mere 15 per cent in India but that small percentage is 150 million people. Such huge numbers excluded from the mainstream and living in perpetual fear for their lives and livelihood, cannot be sidelined forever.

Kashmir and the Punjab are not the only killing fields of India. The peoples of Assam have suffered the murderous ways of the Indian Army. The British colonial Army would never have been able to get away with so much murder and mayhem that the Army of ‘Indian Democracy’ has. India is unwilling to treat minorities as human beings let alone its citizens. India is an imperial state where 15 per cent (caste Hindus) rule in perpetuity. For the other 85 per cent, India is not a *Jamhooriat* (democracy); in the words of Dr A.S. Sekhon (who has written one chapter in this book), it is Brahmin *Zulmhooriat* (land of cruelty) - a laboratory to distort history to justify genocide and every other crime and excess that the rulers feel inclined to inflict upon the *Bahujan* castes and minority religions: Muslims, Christians and now the Sikhs.

It has been difficult to understand or explain how 3 per cent Brahmins atop 12 per cent of the others in the *varna* system, could dominate the majority in a democracy. It is not so difficult any more. If 3 per cent Jews can dominate young America, why can't the caste Hindus maintain perpetual dominance in an old and

crumbling social system? However, aware that the world is listening, cries of protest are being heard from the bottom of the social pile in India – from the *Bahujan*, the original inhabitants of India, who have been reduced to Untouchables in their own land by the caste system imposed by Aryan invaders. The oppressed castes and religions constitute a majority in many states of India and they have awakened to demand the power that is their democratic right. They now realise that they were misled by Mahatma Gandhi – who had returned to India after having played his part in the massacre of the Zulu tribesmen in South Africa as a Sergeant Major in the British Red Cross.<sup>19</sup>

The Congress Party made all sorts of promises on the way to inheriting the British Empire. Once it had acquired power it resiled from its promises. Many believe that Mahatma Gandhi himself was the architect of ‘planned betrayal’. That appears unlikely. But the Congress Party on whose behalf he made those promises had no intention of keeping any promise. In fact, betrayal has been the hallmark of Congress rule. Dalits have not faced pogroms; they are still offered a place in the Hindu fold. They would face the full force of Brahmin tyranny when they seek national self-determination. Thus far, it is the Muslims, the Sikhs and the Christians who have faced genocide, discrimination and oppression. Perhaps, the Brahmin knows that the *Bahujan* have the potential of asserting their majority in many states that would remove Brahmins from power - state after state - from all of India. The worst excesses of the Caste System were dampened under the Congress and Socialist rule. The rise of the BJP and the patronage it gives to fascist groups to intimidate, humiliate and dehumanise has opened many eyes and a new chapter of history. A ‘compact of faiths’ has been precluded.

## 16. Compact of Castes

BJP ruled India was not ashamed of the Caste System; it made it the lynchpin of its scheme of social engineering. The divine origin of the system gives the high castes a weapon to secure the submission of *Bahujan* castes. Unlike Islam where Divine Law gives protection to non-Muslims, the Divine Law of Brahmins underpins the caste system. It provides protection to no one; only privileges to high castes. Over the last hundred years, more and more people have been ‘annexed’ and given ‘Hindu identity’ like a territory annexed by a conquering army. More and more can call themselves Hindu but they continue to be refused permission to enter high caste temples or be their equal in any sense. Any person of whatever caste can convert to any of the proselytising religions – Islam, Christianity or Buddhism - but it is not possible to change one’s caste. For centuries, the downtrodden of India could escape social oppression by conversion to egalitarian faiths. Now that embracing an egalitarian faith can bring the wrath of the Brahmin, the rulers of India are in a bind that they can give nothing in exchange for submitting to being annexed to the Hindu fold. Thus far, the privilege to call oneself a Hindu has been the only reward.

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<sup>19</sup> Dr Velu Annamalai, *Sergeant Major M.K.Gandhi*, Dalit Sahitya Academy, 1995.

Another protection to the Scheduled Castes and other oppressed peoples during British rule was reserved quotas for their proper representation in jobs and elective offices. The Muslims were well represented in the British Indian Army since most of them were classified as martial races. The separate electorate had secured for them proper representation in politics. It appeared to Hindu leaders that the gains made by the Muslims would induce the Untouchables to follow their example and seek recognition as separate national entities. They started to work at a feverish pace to assimilate the Untouchables. The *Bahujan* were offered little but the Muslims were reviled so viciously and continuously for 'Communalism' and 'Separatism' that the message was driven home. The British were accused of 'divide and rule' and any community that demanded a 'separate electorate' was reviled as 'British collaborators'. As discussed earlier, the pressure was so great that Dr Ambedkar signed the infamous Poona Pact of 1932.

At that time it was not realised that by spurning the offer of a 'separate electorate' the *Bahujans* had missed the opportunity of securing recognition for themselves as non-Hindus by faith and non-Aryan in their ethnic identity. The *Bahujan jatis* virtually merged their identity into a 'Hindu' identity at a time when the rise of fascist cadres like that of the RSS were sharpening caste polarisation. But the reality was camouflaged by several factors. Reserved quotas for the oppressed castes in education and employment by the British misled them into believing that there was an alternative to separate electorates. More than five hundred princely states that enjoyed internal autonomy also provided a protection by encouraging migration of religions and *jatis* favoured by the rulers. The Poona Pact, that was viewed as a 'compact of castes' at the time when the British were the sovereign power, has turned out to be the 'betrayal of *Bahujans*' when the protections enjoyed under the British rule disappeared.

Legal safeguards for the *Bahujan* have turned out to be meaningless. How can a poor man obtain legal redress any way? Secularism was intended to absorb the *Bahujans* into the 'Indian' fold denying them a political identity. Under BJP rule, the polity of *Hindutva* sought to absorb them directly into the Hindu fold by not only decrying Islam and Christianity as 'foreign faiths' but also ridiculing 'secularism'. In the BJP view every Hindustani (Indian) speaks Hindi and is Hindu. *Hindutva* demands only 'cultural conformity' – not of faith or beliefs. Since it demands so little, it requires submission that must be total. Any one who does not comply and conform is a 'rebel' who threatens and disturbs the integrity of the BSO. Secularism in India does not operate as a force of freedom by separating the Church from the State but for suppressing any challenge to Brahmin hegemony in matters of faith as well as the state - denying all religions any voice or status. Since the 'Hindu religion' does not have a theology, it can operate in an ethical framework devoid of ethics. It makes its socio-political impact through its caste system only. The Caste System is the real religion of the Hindus.

The *Bahujan* majority in India has concluded they had more freedom under 'foreign' rule. Having been at the bottom of the pile for so long and experienced the rule of the disciples of *Kautalia*, they are not seeking a compact with the Aryan castes. They challenge the legitimacy of India in which 15 per cent caste Hindus rule in perpetuity. As the original inhabitants of India, the country belongs to them. Hinduism is not their religion; it is the religion of Aryan invaders who took over the gods of the native peoples and enslaved them through the caste system. They now understand how in the name of *dharm* and *dharti* the original inhabitants of India have been reduced to menials and serfs – devoid of honour and dignity, untouchables in the land that has been theirs before the Aryan invasion. Dalits, low castes and other marginalized peoples now realise that they are the majority in India. *They have an alternative. Instead of subsuming their identity, they can assert their identity. They need solidarity among themselves. They need accommodation with each other - not with the Brahmins.*

### 17. Compact of States & Legal Safeguards

In the forties when the Muslims of South Asia declared: 'Muslims are a Nation', they were not the only nation. The leaders of the Pakistan Movement always considered the Sikhs, Dalits and many other peoples to be full-fledged nations in their own right. Since they led the Muslims of India, they focussed attention on the nation they represented. It was the Congress leadership that used the term 'Two Nation Theory' for the Muslim assertion that they were a separate nation. This marked their failure to challenge the Muslim League as the sole spokesman of the Muslims of South Asia. They had another reason for it. If they could not speak for the Muslims, they wanted to speak for everybody else. 'Everybody else' was not a nation'; but it was helpful to the Congress if it could consolidate them in contradistinction to the Muslims. By being able to speak for 'everybody else' the Congress Party transformed all the other nations into 'non-nations'.

A compact of faiths or of castes proved to be meaningless without 'separate electorates'. After the collapse of a 'compact of faiths', Pakistan was interested in a 'compact of states' for the sake of the significant number of Muslims who would be left behind in India. But the way Pakistan was cheated during the actual demarcation of the boundary by Sir Cyril Radcliffe<sup>20</sup>, and the denial of the right of self-determination to the people of Jammu and Kashmir ever since, made that

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<sup>20</sup> Sir Cyril Radcliffe, an eminent English jurist, was the Chairman of a Boundary Commission with judicial powers to delineate the boundary between India and Pakistan. He submitted recommendations on August 13, 1947, to the Viceroy Lord Mountbatten who released the 'Radcliffe Award' on August 18, three days after the Independence Day (and allegedly altered it during the time). The Award did not meet any of the claims made by Pakistan but it significantly gave land access to State of Jammu and Kashmir to India by giving Muslim majority *tehsils* east of River Ravi to India. This made the occupation of the Muslim majority state by Indian troops possible, which continues. India and Pakistan fought over Kashmir in 1948-49 and in 1965. The resistance movement that started in 1989 has claimed 100,000 lives of Kashmiris. That is the measure of the mischief.

impossible. However, on account of India being multi-ethnic, it was thought that India, if not South Asia, would be kept united on the basis of a 'compact of states'. On first glance it does appear that the Indian Constitution is indeed founded on a 'compact of states' and it does even seek to address 'caste polarisation'. However, on close scrutiny it is revealed that the castes as well as the states are also dealt with in the same way as non-Hindu religions - by legal stratagem.

The constitution of India recognises the existence of castes but makes no attempt to make a 'compact of castes'. It treats the *Bahujan* castes with more disdain than even the minority faiths. It employs the concept of 'secularism' to deny the of minority faiths as well as the *Bahujan* majority their identity and thus their rights. The Constitution defines a Hindu as one '*who is not a Muslim, Christian or Parsi*'. By this definition, the Constitution goes much beyond decrying religion; it interferes with religion. The intent perhaps was to exclude the Muslims but the 'inclusion' of Untouchables, Buddhists, Jains and even the Sikhs in the Hindu fold is even more unkind. The Sikhs have been denied their separate identity even though they are neither Hindus nor Muslims. The identities of Dalits, Buddhists, Jains and followers of many other religions who are not Hindus, are all Hindu in the eyes of the Indian Constitution. Inclusion and exclusion are two sides of the same coin; the aim is to crush and destroy the target identities. The *Bahujan* castes, who are the majority in India, are deemed to be undeserving of recognition of their separate identity – political or religious.

Since the Constitution delineates the spheres of responsibility of the 'state' government as well as the 'union' government and gives the Supreme Court the authority to adjudicate disputes, it gives the impression that the Constitution is founded on a 'compact of states'. However, that is misleading. The Constitution does not provide political instruments for redress to the state government; it only provides for recourse to law. The Union Government does have the Indian Armed Forces to enforce the executive as well as legislative decisions but the state government is unable to protect the life, liberty and livelihood of the people of the state from ingress by the Union. The only meaningful way the Constitution could have ensured the integrity and viability of a 'compact of states' was by providing to the states the 'right of secession' from the union. It is like providing for a 'right to strike' to workers faced with unresolved issues. Since the right to 'secede' is not provided, the 'compact of states' is also meaningless and without substance.

The disagreement between Sheikh Abdullah, the Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, and the Union Government was not resolved by the Supreme Court but by the Governor who dismissed the Chief Minister and put him behind bars. War crimes are committed against the people of Jammu and Kashmir every day by the Indian Security Forces and the State Government is powerless to prevent their crimes, apprehend the soldiers, or punish them. Martial Law has not been promulgated and no other bar has been placed on the state government to deal with crimes against civilians. And yet, the state government is powerless to protect its citizens from the excesses of the Union Armed Forces. There was nothing that

the Government of the Punjab could do to stop the assault on Durbār Sahib inside Punjab in June 1984 or to stop the pogroms against the Sikhs in the Union capital of Delhi. It is powerless to secure the release of more than 50,000 Sikh political prisoners incarcerated without trial since 1984. The Union Government appoints the Governor; it can order him to dismiss the Chief Minister and the state government. That makes legal safeguards utterly meaningless.

The State Government cannot protect the people from the crimes of the Union and its Security forces without being equipped with the 'right to secede'. Like the legal safeguards against caste discrimination are meaningless without the political safeguard of 'separate electorates', the 'compact of states' is unenforceable without political mechanisms that would have to include the right to secede. Brahmin-ruled India continues to employ stratagem rather than evolve consensus for policy and compacts for solidarity. That makes India hard to govern and even harder to understand.

### **18. Lessons of Indo-Pakistan Wars**

India and Pakistan have fought three wars in 1948-49, in 1965 and in 1971. The first two were fought over Kashmir. The dispute over Kashmir is the oldest unresolved dispute on the UN agenda. The irony is that India and Pakistan agreed a solution of the dispute and the UN Security Council endorsed it by its Resolution. So, a UN endorsed international agreement to resolve the Kashmir dispute exists. But India has been able to defy the UN with impunity for more than five decades. It appears that in matters international, a law is enforceable if America says it is. It is not dissimilar to the Union Government of India that decides which law would be enforced and how? Pakistan became the closest ally of the United States during the Cold War but it could still not secure US support for a 'plebiscite in Kashmir'. Why? Pakistanis are often told that the Indian lobby is very strong and has commanding influence in the US. It did not make sense because India was a vocal opponent of US policies and supported the Soviet Union from the forum of Non Aligned Movement for forty years. But India had good relations with Israel. Is that why?

India drew the right lessons from the 1965 War in which India nearly lost Kashmir. The USA rushed to the rescue of India because China issued an 'ultimatum' that was clearly a farce<sup>21</sup>. India became certain that the US considered China as its Number 1 Enemy and that it could build a strategic partnership with America even though Pakistan was ostensibly a major ally of America and India of the Soviet Union in the region. India was thus able to secure the support of the US as well the USSR for the break up of Pakistan. Apparently Pakistan paid a very heavy price for its friendship with China. In reality, it opened the eyes of

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<sup>21</sup> The ultimatum was issued on the grounds that some sheep had strayed across the McMahon Line into China. It was clear China would not invade India; it was much easier to herd the sheep across the border. But the 'farce' sent a clear message that China would intervene on the side of Pakistan if any one else did.



Pakistan. Having been betrayed twice by America – in 1965 and in 1971– Pakistan has had to defend itself by its own forces and resources. All the successes of Pakistan came after 1971. It may well be India that has drawn the wrong lessons from the 1971 Indo-Pakistan War.

The Indian Army over-ran East Pakistan in a stunning display of its power and ‘liberated’ Bangladesh. What was even more stunning was that the ‘rag tag army’ of Bangladesh, trained and equipped by India, turned its guns on Indian troops looting on the streets of Dhaka. The Indian Army was wise to beat a retreat and withdrew completely a few months after its victory. In less than four years, the Muslims of Bengal realised what a terrible mistake they had made. On 15 August 1975, in a popular coup d’etat led by young officers of the Army – Colonels Farook and Rashid – overthrew his government and punished the traitors. The country is still called Bangladesh but it is a sovereign country. The victory of India has turned out to be a Pyrrhic victory.

The secession of East Pakistan did not discredit the Two Nation Theory; it provided the rationale and model for a multiple state future of South Asia. National identities continue to evolve – nations consolidate or atrophy in response to challenges they face. This is the attribute of living peoples and indeed their right. The lesson the peoples of India could draw is that they can also secure sovereign freedom as they crystallise new national identities. Pacts and agreements of yesteryears are binding on those who signed them or their successors. They do not compromise the right to sovereignty and exercise of the right of national self-determination. That the Congress rulers of India and their successors have resiled on their solemn commitments to Kashmiris, Sikhs, Untouchable and several other sovereign peoples, absolves them of duty of loyalty to a constitution that does not enforce agreements and is unable to protect the life, liberty and livelihood of its ‘low born’ citizens or religious minorities.

The war between India and Pakistan is no different in law from the war between the Kashmiris and the Indian Union or the Sikhs and the Union. The difference is that Pakistan gained its sovereignty after a ‘long’ struggle against the BSO and the Kashmiris, Sikhs and Dalits would gain their sovereign freedom after a ‘longer’ struggle against the very same enemy – the BSO. The Brahmins know only one way they can rule in perpetuity – by perpetual poverty. Under the BSO some would be rich but India would always be poor. With the economic advance of India gathering pace, the chasm between the rich and the poor would widen and the curse of the BSO would become even more intolerable.

### **19. Impact of International Situation**

In the sixty-four years since the Pakistan Resolution, a lot has happened in South Asia. Afghanistan was liberated from Soviet occupation – an effort opposed by India but supported actively by Pakistan. East Pakistan became a separate country in consequence of an invasion by India. But Pakistan and India are still at war over

Kashmir. Both countries promised to the people of Jammu and Kashmir to hold a plebiscite under UN supervision. India has resiled from its promise to Kashmiris like it did to Dalits and the Sikhs. But Kashmiris, who had waited long enough, started a guerrilla war in 1988 when India rigged the elections to reverse its defeat at the hands of the pro-plebiscite parties who had taken part in the elections for the first time. Insurrection in Jammu and Kashmir has continued ever since; 90,000 Kashmiris have been put to death. Why? Because they demand a plebiscite as agreed by India and Pakistan and endorsed formally by the UN Security Council?

The Sikhs have continued their struggle for a sovereign state of *Khalistan*. Their aspirations are better supported internationally after the vicious genocide they were subjected to in the wake of Indian Army assault on the Golden Temple in June 1984 in which 250,000 Sikh youth were killed by the Indian armed forces. The Diaspora Sikhs continue to struggle successfully for the objective of a 'sovereign state' while the Sikhs inside India watch events closely for an opportunity. The revision of history under the agenda of *Hindutva* has alarmed the intelligentsia all over India particularly in the Southern States. Intimidation by militant cadres of the RSS shouting Hindu, Hindi, Hindustan and Hindutva chill the spines of those being invited into the Hindu fold. Dalits, who are not Hindus any way, have spurned the offer and even the erstwhile fence sitters among them have renounced the fold of the Hindu faith.

America is fighting an insurrection in Iraq that it occupied in 2003. The entire region of the Middle East faces great perils. But America is still unable to tell even its own people what objectives it wanted to achieve by invasion that it could not achieve by diplomacy? The people of the region believe America has a 'hidden agenda'. Since the Muslims have no ill will for America, they are sure that it acts at the behest of Zionism that has America in its grip. Even in the recent past, America has supported self-determination for Muslim peoples, most recently to Afghan resistance to Soviet occupation, and to resistance in Bosnia and Kosovo to Serbian occupation. Why does the US help Israel perpetuate its occupation of Palestine? Why does it not take the side of the victims of the sustained genocide in Kashmir? Neo-cons who make policy in the US, say with clear commitment that they are at war with Islam and see Israel as a base in the heart of the Muslim World. They see India as a natural ally because it defines its national persona as 'enemy of Islam' that has 450 million Muslim in its physical embrace or reach. The nexus between America, India and Israel does make sense.

## 20. Conclusion

India has two names and two personalities. It is '*Bharat*' to its own people and 'India' to the rest of the world. Its names reflect its dual personality – a face to suit the occasion. People in the West look upon the obsequious folding of hands to say 'hello' as something very endearing. They do not know that it is to avoid having to shake hands with an 'outcaste' that a Christian or a Muslim is in their eyes.

The international conduct of India is haughty and idiosyncratic, which is often quite baffling. This is deliberate. India does not want the full glare of scrutiny on the many claims it makes. It claims to be a successor of the British *Raj* and the home of an Aryan civilisation; it is actually struggling to maintain its empire and there is nothing civilised about its civilisation. It claims to be a modern secular democracy but it is actually a murderously oppressive society. It claims to be the most tolerant religion but it is not really a religion; it is an instrument of subversion if it is not of perversion. It claims to be 'inclusive' meaning it absorbs everything but embraces nothing.

Hindus have millions of gods and are eager for more. Hinduism thrives on a diet of gods; it can devour a whole cult or faith even religion. It does not change vocabulary; it changes the meaning of words. No one buys the yarn this old lady spins and yet she has survived to reach ripe old age. She appears so unthreatening, so harmless. The numerous Hindu festivals and colourful rituals draw a lot of attention and interest from tourists and students of anthropology. The tourists love it and the film industry flourishes by it while India is quietly crushing the *Bahujan* majority and Muslim minority. It is an enigma for its people and menace for its neighbours.

The oppressed in India have thus far been free to protest and complain, but that is changing fast. Assertion of separate identity and demanding protection and rights are now seen as evidence of disloyalty that draws the wrath of the many fascist groups as well as its marauding military. What is alarming is the emergence of a nexus between America, India and Israel. The nexus has imposed perpetual war in much of the world particularly the Middle East.

The quest for world power status, deep hostility to Islam, and desire to dominate the Indian Ocean have blinded India to the pitfalls in the imperial path. If Asia were to avoid becoming the battleground, the silent majority in India would have to take notice of the sinister objectives of their rulers. They need to know that the reason for wanton use of the armed forces against hapless civilians in all corners of India is its inability to make policy by consensus and secure solidarity by compact. The freedoms that were taken for granted even under the British rule have long since gone. India would have to make a compact with peoples of all faiths, between all the castes and between all its states and underpin the compacts with political safeguards to evolve a *sans* imperial polity. That is the only way India can stay united and have a direction and a destiny.□

# Aryan Aggression on Indian Culture

*V.T.Rajshekar*

## **Dalit Cultural Identity & India's Dominant Culture**

### **1. Influence of Dominant Culture**

India is not a nation; it is a group of many warring peoples that may be striving to become a nation but every time they make progress, the 'dominant culture' creates conflicts and India is pushed back to being a bloody battlefield. This 'dominant culture' is referred to as 'Hindu culture', or 'Indian culture' or merely 'Hinduism' depending on the preference of the ruling class. Whatever the name used, it remains the 'dominant culture' because it is the culture of the ruling classes/castes. The subject races and castes do not have a culture; they merely follow the direction that is set for them. Obsequious imitation of the ruling class is the second nature of the masses of India. It would not have been unique if those who determine the values of the 'dominant culture' were not a mere 15 per cent of India's population and their culture, founded on the caste system, did not contrast so sharply with the egalitarian culture of the indigenous Indian peoples.

The social inequality that the 'dominant culture' supports provides the underpinning for sustained economic exploitation in India that involves perpetual enslavement of the majority indigenous peoples by the minority of ruling class/castes. V.A. Pai Panandikar, a well-known economist, estimated that 80 per cent of the gross domestic product is consumed by 20 per cent of the population. In a country of a billion plus people, the bulk of the population – more than 70 per cent - contributes very little to the economy as producers or as consumers because they live in rural slums where they produce locally what they consume locally. If they did not exist, the only statistics that would change significantly is that of the population. The number of those who are literate (both reading and writing) is also about 20 per cent; this is the segment that buys any industrial products. The English-knowing population is not even 2 per cent. Only about 2 per cent of Indians pay income tax. Purchasing power is concentrated in the hands of the top 15 per cent to 20 per cent of the population. Over 50 per cent of Indians live below the poverty line and another 20 per cent live hand to mouth. The top 15 per cent of the population owns over 60 per cent of the land despite land reforms that put a very low ceiling on

maximum land holding.<sup>22</sup>

The lowest income occupation in India is agricultural labour. Right at the bottom of the pile are the rural landless farm labourers that account for 50.44 per cent of the Scheduled Castes (SCs). In comparison, the numbers of non-SC/ST (Scheduled Tribes) are 14.08 per cent of the farm labourers. This figure does not include SCs who have converted. The telling statistics is that 48.98 per cent of the total rural male landless agricultural labourers are SCs (also called Dalit). Another 30 per cent or so of SCs are small cultivators working on non-viable farm holdings. Almost all the primary leather workers in all parts of the country are SCs. Scavenging is the preserve of the SC women and girls. The irony is that the most ‘unclean’ segments of the Indian society keep India ‘clean’!

In the Western and Northwestern states of India, weaving is an SC occupation. In West Bengal, Assam and Tripura, fishing is a typically a SC occupation. In Himachal Pardesh, hilly Uttar Pardesh and Sikkim, the SCs do all the work that involves metal-based and wood-based traditional skills of craftsmanship. In most parts of India, SC women are *dai* (mid-wives) and *dhoban* (washerwomen). In the urban areas, the SC/ST women provide the bulk of the labour force for construction and street cleaning. Their men also work as sweepers and scavengers and constitute the majority of rickshaw-pullers, head-load workers, construction labourers, cobblers and *beedi* workers. They do all the work that is dirty and hard for meagre or no wages and are held in contempt for being ‘low born’. They suffer in silence with dignity that is the hallmark of victims of sustained oppression and long suffering.

Here are some interesting figures on literacy rates: (rural)

		SC		Non-SC/ST	
		Male	Female	Male	Female
1971	Census	20.04	5.06	38.51	15.88
1981	Census	27.91	8.45	46.41	21.68

The patterns are clear. In 1971, the literacy rate of male SCs was almost half that of the non-SC/ST population, while for females it is almost a third of the non-SC/ST. This has not changed much even in two decades.

Economic statistics show that about 15 per cent of India’s population own the wealth; they control all the levers of power. India’s ruling classes are not ‘landed aristocracy’ like in many other parts of the world. They do own much of the land but it is their monopoly over white-collar occupations that make their grip so tight over the society and the entire country. The ruling class comprises the industrialists, engineers, doctors and other professionals; bureaucrats, journalists, judges and

<sup>22</sup> Hindustin Times, V.A.Pai, Panandikar, Dec 3, 1987

lawyers; the owners and stars of the film and entertainment industry; high profile sportsmen, businessmen, bankers, and high ups in the scientific, educational, religious and trade union establishment. The ruling class, caste-wise, consists of Brahmins 3 per cent, *Kshatriyas* 1 per cent, *Vaishyas* 1 per cent, plus the top landed *Shudra* communities of about 10 per cent - a total of 15 per cent. There are a few from the Backward Castes (BCs), some Muslims and Christians, many Sikhs and other minorities, who are included in the ruling class. Their number is not statistically significant but they serve a very useful purpose in presenting the ruling class as 'inclusive' 'representative' and selected on the basis of 'merit'.

Economic and social statistics show that Indian society is unequal to the extreme. But it is not inequality that makes India unique; it is unique because the social system of India determines the vocation and status of an individual at birth. Wealth and power flow from that status. The status conferred by caste opens avenues for education and plum jobs for some (of high castes) and closes firmly on the others. The question is how a small minority is able to shackle the majority so tight that it has not been able to break itself free in three thousand years? No group has succeeded in doing that for so long any where in the world. Why in India? One reason is the underpinning of religion provided to 'inequality by birth'. But the more important reason is the submission that the 'dominant culture' has secured and maintained from all the castes, races and even religions of India. It is true that the 'low born' enjoy a greater share in wealth and power today than fifty years ago. But this share remains a 'gift' of the ruling class. They give this 'gift' to those who come into the fold. That means they marry suitably<sup>23</sup> and/or take part in Brahminic rituals thus making a public display of being grateful for being 'accepted in the fold'.

## 2. Who is a Hindu?

The culture that the world sees in the films and is brand named 'Indian' is the culture of the 15 per cent who constitute the ruling classes/castes of India and not of all those people who are clubbed together and called 'Hindus'. After having acquiesced to being called 'Hindu' for two centuries under British rule, the indigenous peoples of India have started to resent being called Hindu. After all, it is this Hinduism that made the *Bahujan* (native peoples of India – 20 per cent S/Cs, 10 per cent S/Ts and 35 per cent B/Cs) majority Untouchables. The Muslims, Christians or the Sikhs did not make them Untouchables – kept them out of sight, out of mind, cocooned by misery, without worth, unfit for any consideration. Nor can anybody blame America or Germany for the plight of these 'Wretched of the Earth'. It is this 'dominant culture' called Hinduism that brought them to this state. Hinduism is a

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<sup>23</sup> The use of marriage to forge bonds between tribes and even countries has been in vogue in the past in many countries but it was frowned upon in India. However, sometimes exceptions were made and Muslim princes of ruling dynasties married daughters of 'non-Muslim' local princes. The Muslims looked at such wedlock as 'conquest' and the local princes as 'an ally in the palace'. In India after 1947, Muslims and Hindus of upper classes do intermarry and such intermarriage has been a passport to rapid progress as it helped underpin the 'secular credentials' of India.

foreign religion (an Aryan import). If it is a religion at all, it is a religion of those who are in the fold of its *Varna* (caste) System - the top three *Varnas* (Brahmins, Kashatriyas and Vaishyas) plus the land owning *Shudras* who, together, are no more than 15 per cent of the population. The *Bahujan*, who are 65 per cent of the population of India are not 'Hindus'; they were never Hindus. To this, must be added: Muslims (15%), Christians (2.5%) and Sikhs (2.5%) – a total of 20 per cent - who are clearly not Hindus. It means that 85% of the population of India are not Hindus. To this day nobody has challenged these statistics. This is the truth; these are the facts; and yet India parades itself as a Hindu majority country. Why?

The curse of the caste system was successfully imposed on the *Bahujan* because they were ancestor worshippers with many gods. Before the Aryans imposed the caste hierarchy, they sold a gradation of gods. They accepted the gods of native peoples but at a lower rank than Aryan gods. For thousands of years, the indigenous peoples accepted themselves as children of lesser gods. To be allowed to worship higher (Aryan) gods was an honour. When one earned that honour, one was accepted in the Hindu fold. This was a privilege that the Brahmin priests granted very sparingly usually to those with a huge following like founders and saints of other religions or powerful rulers. This was done by giving a figure of reverence the status of *avatar* (reincarnation of god). This process of 'cultural annexation' is the preferred method of the Brahmin as a substitute or follow up of 'military conquest'. Lord *Rama* and *Krishna* were declared to be *Avatar* despite their low birth because they were rulers of large areas with following among the native peoples.

Cultural annexation is more thorough than political annexation because it also makes the annexed people serfs of the invaders. The Aryan conquest of India is unique in that it destroyed the identity of the native peoples of India by imposing on them a caste hierarchy and a culture tolerant of discrimination, oppression and apartheid. The Aryan conquerors were not satisfied with securing physical obedience of the native people; they imposed on them a culture that held them in a hypnotic spell for thousands of years. That is how the Brahmin caste was able to exercise social control over the *Bahujan* even when the rulers were no longer Aryan. The Aryan castes monopolized wealth and power by arrogating to themselves the power, first to judge and grade *Bahujan* castes and their cultures and then to admit or rather 'annex' it to the Hindu caste hierarchy. There was no benefit to the *Bahujan* caste admitted into the Hindu fold; it was the mark of 'social conquest' by the Brahmin.

The defeat of Buddhism in India was accomplished using the same methods. Buddhism became the dominant religion of India after it was embraced by Maurya King Ashoka about 300 B.C. It spread from India to Central Asia, China and South East Asia and became the first universal faith of Asia. The appeal of Buddhism lay in its having one divine personage (Lord Buddha) as the symbol of its authority. It rejected the authority of the *Vedas*, of Brahmins and of the doctrine of *aatma* (soul). It was the nemesis of Hinduism because it was egalitarian and did not support the caste system. But Buddhism admitted persons of any age or caste to monastic life. It did not interfere with Hindu customs and allowed its adherents to approach Hindu or

other local super-natural powers for immediate favours. It was easy for the Brahmins to infiltrate the ranks of Buddhist Monks to subvert it from within while the Hindu temples and rituals continued to *hinduise* its followers culturally. Since the Buddhists believed in 'reincarnation', this weakness was exploited at the appropriate time by the Brahmin. Lord Buddha was recognized by them as the reincarnation of Hindu god *Vishnu* and his followers admitted into the Hindu fold. This recognition was later qualified by the addition that *Vishnu* assumed this form in order to mislead and destroy the enemies of the Vedas.<sup>24</sup> Hinduism, clearly, is a religion of stratagem and spin where gods are cruel and clever; they can take any form in order to deceive and mislead.

It is only in the era of democracy heralded by the British rulers that the Brahmin resorted to 'cultural annexation' without invoking gods. But not quite. M.K.Gandhi – a non-Brahmin of Bania Caste - was elevated to the status of *mahatma* that is not as high as *avatar* but one with godly attributes. He was able to misinterpret and mislead in pursuit of his godly duty to deliver the rule of India back into the hands of Brahmins, the chosen people. However, Gandhi was killed by an irate Brahmin who thought that he had gone too far in 'misleading' the Muslims and was outrightly 'appeasing' them. The image of the Mahatma is tainted by his murder and the stratagem by which he brought the Untouchables into the Hindu fold is no longer considered divine. The absorption of the Untouchables into the Hindu fold has proved to be reversible. The Brahmins, who have considerable experience in the use of political methodologies, are now eager that more and more people come into the fold of Hinduism whatever their conditions and demands. They believe that the conditions are transient but the embrace of Brahmin, they hope, is not.

The hallmark of 'Hinduism' is the 'caste system' that it has been able to impose on the native *Bahujan*. It , had been able to sustain a yearning among the children of lesser gods for the blessings of the 'holy Brahmins'. A religion in which the Brahmins alone can interpret the will of gods and are able to grant or deny the blessing of gods is more appropriately called 'Brahmanism'. It is indeed a religion because it calls for belief in what one does not see. But a religion that sanctions the caste system is neither divine nor in accord with nature. It is unnatural and even absurd to consider someone holy by birth. But this structure of beliefs has been upheld for so long that it has given rise to a unique culture. The culture of a society constitutes ideas, values and ethics underpinned by a religion or a non-religious ideology. Brahmanism revolves around the Brahmins being holy, superior and a chosen people. A culture is made profound by the value it attaches to human equality and human dignity, by the protection it provides to the weak, the poor, and those in difficulty or distress. The Dominant Culture of India needs to be put to test to examine the cultural and philosophical tradition of 'Hinduism', or more precisely 'Brahmanism'.

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<sup>24</sup> Encyclopaedia Britannica, 15<sup>th</sup> Edition, Volume 8, p906



### 3. Does Hinduism Support Equality?

The Aryan *Varna* (Caste) system, based on graded inequality, is the foundation on which the edifice of Hinduism is built. In the *Bhagwat Gita*<sup>25</sup> the Hindu god Krishna says he is the creator of the caste system. *Purusha Sukta* in the *Rig Veda*<sup>26</sup> defines what is caste – effectively, an ascending order of reverence and a descending degree of contempt. When one of its gods authorized inequality how can there be room for equality under Hinduism? The *Manu Smriti*, the legal code of Hindu religion, has given the caste system the underpinning of legal sanction. The Supreme Court of India itself has upheld the Code of *Manu* by its decision that only a Brahmin can be a temple priest. The Constitution of India, thus, upholds the caste system. Even M.K. Gandhi, described by the upper castes as the ‘Father of the Nation’, fully supported the caste system.

It is pointless going into the havoc played by the caste system that supports the abhorrent practice of Untouchability. The ‘caste system’ is really the most vicious, inhuman and diabolical form of racism. Hinduism grades an individual and decides his social rank upon birth. Thus, any aspiration for uplifting oneself by ambition or education is denied from birth. No wonder, even though Untouchability has been outlawed, ambition and education are limited by pressure exerted by the ‘dominant culture’. All the Prime Ministers (until Manmohan Singh), a majority of the ministers, ambassadors, judges, IAS and PS officers, scientists, engineers, journalists, lawyers, auditors, teachers, bankers are all Brahmins. India has a selection system that sees merit through the lens of the caste. But it is vital for Brahmanism to broaden its base of support while conceding little in elementary rights or opportunities to the majority – truly the ‘Wretched of the Earth’. As open discrimination having been outlawed, the methods have to be increasingly indirect – more vicious and more deceitful.

### 4. Does Hinduism Support Democracy?

Eternal vigilance, it is said, is the price of democracy. But how can there be vigilance where 70 per cent of its population is deliberately kept illiterate despite the constitutional provision of free and compulsory primary education? Deprive a man of knowledge and he will become your slave. This is the Law of *Manu* and India is implicitly following it. However, the British, who introduced democracy, also introduced the English language in India. It would not be an exaggeration to say that all the gains made by the oppressed peoples during British rule could not have been protected from Brahmin subversion without the wide use of the English language (particularly in Southern India) and the use of English Law, which is still the

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<sup>25</sup> *Bhagvadgita* (The Lord’s Songs) is a book of Hindu hymns that is popular in much of India.

<sup>26</sup> *Vedas* are the holy books (scriptures) of the Hindus. *Rig Veda* is the most revered and considered the most authentic. The followers of Vedas are called *Vedic*, *Vaidak* or *Vedantic* – all have the same meaning.

primary legal code of India.

English, however, is the language of the ruling class while the slaves have been encouraged to use local Indian languages. Convent schools are for the ruling classes and government officials, and municipal schools for the slaves. Very beautiful and convincing theories are advanced to make slavery resemble liberation. What can be better for indigenous peoples than to have all their education in their own languages? The problem is, it does not get one a job. This slavery is so sugar-coated that slaves in India are enjoying their slavery. But the effort to keep the 'natives' and 'slaves' away from the English language has only been a partial success particularly in South India where literacy rates are higher and the Church more active in education. Similarly, the monopoly of the Brahmin over politics is not so overwhelming any more. Having conceded one person one vote, the holiness of the Brahmin appears hollow. After single party (Congress) rule for five decades, a coalition of more than twenty parties is the norm. The Brahmins have to be content with deciding (or subverting) the national agenda. Brahmanism is the anti-thesis of democracy. But with politics of equality based on one-person one vote, the political dynamics of India has a mind and motion of its own.

### 5. Does Hinduism Support Liberty?

Hinduism is unique in being the only faith that provides the underpinning of religion to the most brutal form of racism - Untouchability. The South African apartheid had no sanction under the religion of that country - Christianity. But Hinduism sanctions Untouchability. The caste system fixes the profession of each *jati*. A person who is a Brahmin will die a Brahmin and one who is a scavenger will die a scavenger. There is neither a promotion nor demotion under Hinduism. When the freedom of vocation is denied, how can there be liberty? Mrs. K.R. Gowri was the most popular 'Marxist' leader who helped the Communist Party win several Kerala Assembly elections. But she was deemed to be unfit to become the Chief Minister because she belonged to the lowly *Ezhava* caste. Jagjivan Ram was denied prime-minister ship twice because he was an Untouchable. An upper caste person in high office may be corrupt, characterless and a downright idiot but he would still be tolerated and even praised because virtue goes with caste. In parts of Tamil Nadu, Andhra, Karnataka and many other states Untouchables cannot walk with shoes (even slippers) on their feet. Their girls are compelled to run naked on full moon nights. They are forced into the '*Devdasi*'<sup>27</sup> system of prostitution. The list of indignities forced by the 'dominant culture' on the Untouchables is long but it is clear there is no room for liberty in Hinduism; it thrives on ritual and regular humiliation of the 'low born' on the strangest of pretexts.

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<sup>27</sup> *Devdasi* (maid servant of gods) are girls donated to temples often by their parents.

Actually, they serve every need of the priests – keep the temple clean and well swept and be act as their concubines. They are forbidden to refuse sex to any devotee of the temple. They are, thus, no different to prostitutes but they do it for free – to please gods and earn credit for those who donated them to the temple.

But there is complete liberty to beg, to starve, and to go naked. Hundreds of girls of the wretched families work as prostitutes in Bombay's Red light district under official care. They have full liberty to sell their bodies. There are criminal tribes in India who steal for their livelihood. There are some Tribal people who live on treetops like monkeys. On Calcutta streets one is confronted with the pitiful sight of emaciated rickshaw-pullers transporting burly women. This is one job every one has complete liberty to take up and young men take it up in hundreds of thousands to earn meagre fares, to sleep on footpaths, drink illicit liquor and die young. There is complete liberty for these wretched human beings to live a life of destitution without hope, without purpose.

### **6. Does Hinduism Support Fraternity?**

Fraternity means fellow feeling - sharing joy and grief with the wider community. It gives all a sense of belonging to the wider community called the country. But in India, fraternity is conspicuous by its absence. Fraternal solidarity begins with the caste and ends with the caste. If the Muslims are killed in hundreds, 'Hindus' feel happy. In Nellie (Assam) thousands of Muslims were killed but not even a condolence meeting was called any where by the Hindus. They rather celebrated it. The mass murder of Sikhs in 'Operation Bluestar' in June 1984 that included an Army assault on the Golden Temple - the holiest shrine of the Sikhs - was celebrated as a victory in a 'Hindu war on the Sikhs.' The euphoria that accompanied the 'success' in demolishing the Babri Masjid in 1992 and the wanton massacres of Muslims all over India that followed, speaks eloquently about the nature of 'fraternity' that the Hindus have for fellow citizens. Participation in and enthusiastic approval of every excess and barbarity conceived by the sick and paranoid mind of the ruling castes is how Hinduism defines 'fraternity'.

The rest of the world - of any faith or lack of it - believes that sharing success and happiness is not enough; it is sharing misfortune and misery and standing by each other in hard times that are the hallmark of fraternity. It is suffering together that builds fraternal feelings and transforms common humanity into national solidarity. Co-suffering is more important than co-enjoyment. In the 'dominant culture of India' it is the inflicting of pain, injury and insult that is the hallmark of being 'upper caste' and being 'cultured'. If it is hard for those living outside India to understand how brazenly Hinduism sells its inhumanity as 'culture' how much harder it must be for those who are its victims condemned to muted invisibility owing to the branding success of Hinduism.

In the wake of the assault in 1984 on the Golden Temple in Amritsar, the villages of the Punjab were emptied of young Sikhs; they were taken in thousands from their homes, lined up on canal banks and mowed down with machine guns. It is estimated that 250,000 Sikh young men were killed and the Sikh people have yet to recover from the trauma of that genocide carried out by the state security forces. It was the biggest pogrom ever undertaken; it is among the most heinous war crimes ever committed. But India continues to be celebrated as the 'largest democracy' and as

'apostles of non-violence'. Muslims are killed daily in Jammu and Kashmir without even making news let alone meriting inquiry or prosecution. The Untouchables are kicked, killed, burnt and raped and their meagre property torched or destroyed. Does a 'Hindu' feel their pain let alone share their suffering? No! They stay smug, even satisfied, that the lowborn are being kept low; that those of a different culture are being kept underfoot. It is this lack of fraternity that enables the upper caste rulers to declare Sikhs anti-national, Muslims terrorists, Christians suspect, Untouchables a dirty lot, and tribes troublesome. Only the upper castes are cultured, possess merit and are fit to rule.

Many of the upper caste say that such a situation no longer exists in today's India. This is utterly false. The daily bloodbath in Kashmir is the example, how false? Every day in that state the security forces of India take scores of young Muslim men from their homes or hideouts and kill them in cold blood. Why? They were Muslims! It is this absence of fraternity that has made India a vast theatre of eternal war - religious wars, linguistic wars, caste wars, and border wars. No country in the world has such a dismal record of class war. Nay, the very function of the 'caste' is to generate conflict, eternal conflict. The dwarf Brahmin Parasuram<sup>28</sup> 'circled the earth 21 times and killed every Kshatriya and finally standing atop the Western Ghats threw his *kodali* (axe) dripping with blood and the Arabian Sea receded to the place where the *kodali* fell'. The reclaimed land, present day Kerala, is called *Parasurama Shristi*. The rulers of Kerala have named the Trivandrum-Mangalore train that passes through this vital artery as the 'Parasuram Express'. Kerala's top 'Marxist' leader, E.M.S. Namboodiripad, presented an idol of Parasuram when he met Chairman Mao Tse-tung in Beijing. Even the Marxists in India believe in the tales spun in support of the caste system.

It is to keep the Kshatriya underfoot that the Brahmins introduced the *sati* (widow-burning) system. Being fighters, it was their wives who became widows and burnt themselves on the funeral pyre of their husbands. The Brahmin - Kshatriya conflict of Hindu Mythology started by Parasuram continued even in Independent India. Prime Minister V.P.Singh, a Kshatriya, tried to unite his caste against the Brahmins who dominated the Congress Party. He used the Mandal Commission Report<sup>29</sup> to fight Brahmin supremacy but they used the destruction of the Babri Masjid as a weapon to finish him instead. Where is fraternity in India? It is conspicuous by its absence.

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<sup>28</sup> *Parasuram, the dwarf Brahmin*, is an important character of Hindu mythology, who is credited with several miracles that brought great benefits and great victories to Brahmins without effort or fight. He is the symbol of the power that every Brahmin 'can' mobilise if he is provoked or enraged.

<sup>29</sup> Mandal Commission Report looked into the representation of depressed communities and recommended reservation of quotas for them. This was implemented by Prime Minister V.P.Singh and increased opportunities in education and employment for Dalits and other depressed communities.

## 7. Nietzsche's Gratitude to Manu.

German philosopher Nietzsche, the architect of European Fascism, has acknowledged that he had borrowed his Nazi ideas from *Manu*. It is on the basis of the writings of the architects of German Nazism that *Dalit Voice* concluded that Brahmanism is the father of Nazism<sup>30</sup>. The assertion that Hinduism, the actual name of which is *Sanatana Dharma*, is the oldest living civilization in the world is without foundation in history. The parameters of this faith were formalised under the British *Raj* about two hundred years ago. That Aryans came into South Asia about 3000 years ago and imposed a caste system. With that came the dawn of 'Hinduism' in India. Buddhism became the religion of India about 2300 years ago. What followed was perpetual war and conflict between Buddhism and Hinduism that led to South Asia being split into thousands of tribal states. There was consolidation of territory by warrior kings that was entirely local and temporary. In any case, *Sanatana Dharma* could not have been much of a civilization where the role of *Dharm* was to keep the *Bahujan* majority in perpetual misery - in virtual slavery.

## 8. Obsession with Pure, Clean and Auspicious

Hindu *Dharm* imposes itself by imposing its values on non-Hindus. It is unlike any other religion or non-religious faith, as it has no concern with good and bad, noble and ignoble, virtue and sin, which is the focal point of other religions. It is obsessed with 'clean', 'pure' and 'auspicious'. It is by arrogating to himself the power to declare what is unclean, impure and inauspicious, that the Brahmin asserts his authority and superiority. To be a Hindu is to be overwhelmed by a fear of the impure and unclean. Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar put it very well. He said about Hinduism: "It has not got the power to purify. It has not got the impulse to serve."<sup>31</sup>

The Brahmins, who sell and promote Hinduism, divide all elements of human experiences such as time, space, things, and people into pure and impure.

(A) **Time** is divided into auspicious and inauspicious. A Brahmin priest fixes the auspicious time of a wedding. A new Prime Minister is sworn in only after a Brahmin priest fixes an 'auspicious' time. During the *rahu kala* nothing should be done. India became independent at the stroke of midnight on August 14, 1947 because the Brahmin priests found no other 'auspicious time' for such a historic event. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.G. Ramachandran's plane's arrival at Madras was delayed (he was returning after medical treatment in the USA in 1987) by 15 minutes to avoid *rahu kala*.

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<sup>30</sup> *Brahmanism* – Dalit Sahitya Academy, 2002.

<sup>31</sup> *Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings & Speeches* Vol.III p.92, Maharashtra Govt. 1987.

- (B) **Space** is also divided into pure and impure: *Agrahara*, inhabited by Brahmins, is the 'purest' area and *Cheri* where the Untouchables live is 'impure' and dirty.
- (C) **Things** that people eat are pure and impure: Beef is impure, pulses and vegetables are pure. Even colours can be pure or impure. White is pure; black is impure.
- (C) **People** are pure and impure: The person of a Brahmin is sacred and holy. That is why he alone can be a temple *pujari*. Jesudas (a Christian) was not allowed into Guruvayur Temple in Kerala. Indira Gandhi (who married a Parsi) was not allowed into Puri Jagannath Temple. Jagjivan Ram (Dalit) was not allowed to unveil the statue of Sampurnanand. A woman during menstruation is impure and cannot enter the *garba gudi* (sanctum sanctorum) even if she is the wife of the temple priest.

A woman, even a Brahmin woman, is less pure than a man. All the Hindu beliefs, rituals and religious practices reflect an obsession with purity and timeliness. The Brahmin judgment on such matters does not have to make sense; it is often absurd and (perhaps deliberately) difficult. The power of the Brahmin lies in habitual solicitation of Brahmin verdict or advice and obeying it regardless of how irrational or absurd it is. The water of the Ganges, even with dead bodies floating in it, is always pure! Taking a bath in its putrid waters absolves the bather of all sins.

**Brahmin power to decide auspicious and touchable.** This determination of the time being auspicious, and things, people and space right to touch or enter gives enormous power to those who make that distinction or decision. Since only a Brahmin has that authority and special power to know, he becomes sacred and hence powerful. He alone can be the *guru* (teacher). Hinduism is the one religion in the world where learning and salvation is possible only through a *guru* and this *guru* can be none other than a Brahmin. Marriage rituals can be performed only by a Brahmin. Rituals at birth and death, in fact no function can be properly performed unless it is presided over by a Brahmin priest. The *Guru* is greater than god.

## 9. Vivekananda on Brahmins

Even Swami Vivekananda, who the Brahmins consider as a great Hindu saint, who gave a new lease of life to Brahmanism, even though he condemned the Brahmins as pests, said:

'The Brahmana, by his very birth, is the Lord of the Universe! Even the most wicked Brahmana must be worshipped.'<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> *Caste, Culture and Socialism*, 1983. p.35, Advaita Ashrama, 5 Dehli Entally Road, Calcutta

*Guru* alone is *Hari* (god)<sup>33</sup>. And this *guru* insists on unquestioned obedience. Implicit faith in the *guru* is the most important principle of the RSS. Unquestioned obedience is the bedrock of fascism. This is also the central message of the *Gita*<sup>34</sup>.

Jagjivan Ram was a millionaire and held the second highest office as the Deputy Prime Minister of India during the Janata Government. But his wealth and position was nothing before a poor Brahmin. So, the problem of India is not poverty. If the Untouchables are poor, it is the by-product of their cultural degradation being classified as impure. As long as this notion of purity and pollution is allowed to run riot, how can there be any human rights?

## 10. Does Hinduism Support Merit?

Brahmins and members of other upper castes say they are opposed to 'caste based reservation' that had been introduced to allow the downtrodden to get into universities and jobs. They want jobs to be given on the basis of 'merit'. But what is this merit? Take the example of a temple priest (*archaka*). Why does the Brahmin want this job to be reserved only for one caste, Brahmin? This has been upheld even by the Supreme Court. Why the double standards? The upper castes want caste-based reservation for *archakas* but merit based selection for other posts.

Before merit alone could be the criterion for admission for higher education and jobs, there has to be a level playing field for all. If the right environment were provided, those with merit would come up. Science has already established that heredity plays little role in intelligence or aptitude. But when 80% of India's population (women in particular) are held down and denied opportunities, how can those with merit flourish? The truth is that 'reservation' notwithstanding, unseen barriers to advancement of the poor and the backward remain in place and are becoming even more formidable.

Endogamy bans inter-caste marriage. The caste system puts constraints on religious conversion and every other route and forms of intercourse between closed groups; it prevents even inter-dining between castes and religions. So much inbreeding makes India a country of people with little merit but plentiful fears. The upper castes of India want every one to 'love the land'. But what is the use of 'loving the land' without loving its people? The upper castes hate 85% of the people of the country; they do not consider them their brothers and sisters but as objects of contempt and disdain. How can there be love for the land when the relationship between the people is characterised by avoidance of contact and interaction? With so much burning hatred in their hearts how can the upper castes expect love? They want everything that is foreign - even foreign handkerchief and foreign underwear, Scotch whisky, even foreign wives. But they tell the others that they must love India and be 'nationalist'.

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<sup>33</sup> Arun Shourie: *Hinduism: Essence and Consequence*, Vikas, 1979. p. 357).

<sup>34</sup> *ibid* p.130

## 11. Treatment of Women

The status of women - even Brahmin women – is no better than that of slaves. They are the property of the male – the father or the husband. Even though widow burning (*sati*) has been outlawed, Hindu religion continues to sanction it. In consequence, the worth of womenfolk is low and the practice of infanticide of females, bride burning, demand of dowry, the institution of *Devdasi* (prostitution of Dalit girls) are all an integral part of Hinduism. In other words, slavery has religious sanction under Hinduism. The *Vedas* and *Upanishads* consider women equal to *shudras*. That is how the Puri Shankaracharya, the most honest of the Nazi leaders defended *sati*. The *Devadasi* system has religious sanction. Bride-burning is a daily feature of Indian life; Delhi and Bangalore are competing with each other. The law of *Manu* strictly says that the woman has no place in her own right in the Hindu society. Before marriage she belongs to her parents, after marriage to her husband, after becoming a widow, she is under her children. At no time a woman can be free. At no time she can be trusted. This is the position of even Brahmin women. Even *Sita*, the legendary wife of *Rama*, had to eventually commit suicide fed up with her husband - a god, no less.

## 12. Hindu Tolerance

Indians often claim that Hinduism is the ‘most tolerant religion in the world’. What is the nature of this tolerance? Arun Shourie, a Hindu Nazi leader, accepts, “Hinduism is tolerant in matters that do not affect the social order”. “Hindu tolerance” is all humbug.<sup>35</sup> When the Moghuls came to India the upper castes simply surrendered before them. They also imitated the Muslim customs and manners. Not because they wanted to please the Muslim rulers but because it was ‘unwise’ to stand up and resist. It is often their cowardice that they present as ‘Hindu tolerance’. A Hindu is ‘intolerant’ when faced with the weak but becomes very tolerant when faced with the strong. The mindless and endless violence inflicted upon the Muslims and Sikhs prove how violent the Hindu could be when the social order in which the Brahmin is holy and superior is questioned.

While utterly intolerant of a challenge to Brahminic social order (BSO), Hinduism is very tolerant of a wide variety of beliefs and practices. The central Hindu belief of ‘reincarnation’, it shares with Buddhism. But its Hindu version, ‘the indestructibility and trans-migration of soul’, is the foundation of the Hindu Caste System. A human soul may migrate to a bird or a beast, a fish or a reptile, even an insect. A person is born a Brahmin because of the good deeds in a previous life. He is holy by the will of gods – humans cannot change this. He is chosen; he is superior; he is worthy of worship, honour is his right, to give him privilege is the duty of all the rest. Since human beings are actually born equal, the BSO needs to be further underpinned by folklore and superstition. Depending on the folklore one was brought up on, a Hindu

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<sup>35</sup> V.T. Rajshekar: “Deceptive Boast of Hindu Tolerance”. *Statesman* Dec.1, 1987



can have any number of gods. In practice, every one who calls himself a Hindu chooses a few gods he likes and puts their figurines in the prayer room or in an elevated position. It is this freedom to choose one's gods that the Hindu religion calls 'tolerance'. It is this accommodation of any number of gods that is advertised the world over as evidence of Hinduism being the 'most tolerant faith'.

It is this kind of tolerance that has been so useful to deny the Sikhs, the Jains and the Buddhists their separate religious identity. They are all considered to be Hindus in India. If there were not so many Muslims and Christians outside India, they would also have been accepted as Hindu. If the Christians in India were to accept Christ is an '*avatar*' of Vishnu, they would be readily admitted into the Hindu fold. One may believe in one God or many gods, one may be a meat eater or a vegetarian; anybody and everybody is a Hindu as long as one does not challenge the 'holiness' of the Brahmin and the hierarchical social order in which he is at the pinnacle. This is 'Hindu tolerance' as practised in India. Any one who does not question the superiority of the Brahmin caste and shows deference to him can call himself a Hindu. But this tolerance ends at the temple door. An Untouchable entering a temple can be killed. Backward Castes (BCs) demanding reservation of quotas in education or employment can be butchered for their temerity to enter roles reserved for the Brahmin. Dalits entering *Guruvayoor* temple can be attacked and expelled. 'Hindu tolerance' means that one can do anything but not cross the functional and residential boundaries of the caste order. Under no circumstances can a person of low birth engage in work or worship reserved for the Brahmin.

Ravana, a Dalit hero in mythology, is ritually burnt every year at the end of the *Ram Lila* festival. Dalits have tolerated this for centuries. But when Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar exposed the sexual exploits of *Rama* and *Krishna*, his book (*Riddles in Hinduism*) was burnt by enraged Hindus and the government was forced to delete the annexure to the book that had been published by the Maharashtra Government. Many Brahmin writers have criticised *Rama* and *Krishna* for similar reasons. Even Swami Vivekananda has also done that. But when Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar spoke the truth, his book was burnt. This is because he was an Untouchable. This is Hindu tolerance. In an Editorial in *Dalit Voice* giving a Dalit view of the Sikh struggle for cultural identity, its Editor was arrested under the Terrorists Act', handcuffed and dragged all the way from Bangalore to Chandigarh and kept in jail. Earlier, he was dismissed by the *Indian Express* where he had been working until 1981. The Government of India impounded his passport to prevent him from making speeches outside India critical of Hinduism. Who said Hinduism is the most tolerant faith?

The principle of 'reservation' has been accepted in India. But an oppressed community can seek 'reservation' in education and employment if had a separate identity. That is where the agenda of *Hindutva* enters the equation. If a community is *hinduised* it neither has a separate identity nor any rights. But a community cannot be terrorised into being *hinduised* directly; the attempt could backfire. In the Gujrat State of India, Dalits and BCs wanted reservation of quotas for education and employment. Their number in the state is very large and the upper castes launched

two 'caste wars' (in 1981 and 1985) to make them refrain from pressing their demand. But they did not attack Dalits; they attacked and killed Muslims in hundreds even though they did not have a quota and did not demand any. The objective to *Hinduise* Dalits and BCs was achieved by encouraging them to join the carnage against the Muslims. It sent a chill down the Dalit spine who got the message that if they did not join, they could be the target and the victims the next time. They did not get reservation; they became Hindus by 'killing Muslims' and thus joining the ruling classes. And rulers do not need quotas! How can any one say that Hindus are 'tolerant'? They are diabolical in their deviousness and duplicity. The Brahmin is smart, if getting away with murder is smart, but they are not tolerant. How can a social order that thrives on heaping indignity and perpetual suffering on millions of its own people be called 'tolerant'?

### 13. Gandhian Non-violence

In Hindu religion, non-violence is an essential feature of the faith. *Ahimsa* (non-injury) is an article of faith in Hinduism and Buddhism and is the core belief in Jainism. It forbids the taking of life – animal as well as human. That most Hindus are vegetarian is because of their belief in *Ahimsa*. But epics of Hindu religion – the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* – glorify war. What, then, is the real implication of *Ahimsa* in Hinduism? In its rudiment, it means that the majority of Hindus are vegetarian, many worship the cow, all oppose its slaughter but not all refrain from eating beef. At its apex, *Ahimsa* is Pacifism. In the middle is the entire Hindu culture where everything is flexible - in which virtue and vice change places all the time. Certain things are to be said (preached) but not to be practised. War, for example, should be fought when it can be won easily, by means that load the dice in one's favour, using slyness and falsehood to infiltrate the enemy ranks, using rumours and propaganda to sap the enemy's strength and so on. For a Pacifist religion, Hinduism devotes a lot of words to fighting and winning wars. Why?

The caste at the top of the pile is Brahmin. Being a caste of priests, they are forbidden to fight; it is the *Kshatriya* whose role it is to fight. In every other ancient society the fighters have been the rulers, why should Hinduism be an exception? It is because fighting is a low vocation, allocated to the children of lesser gods. It is reinforced by the view that victories do not come by fighting, they are the result of 'wise direction, stratagem, and blessing of gods' that the Brahmins provide. Hinduism, therefore, is not pacifist. Those allowed by the gods to bear arms are pressed into the vocation to fight for their gods under the direction of the Brahmins who alone know the mind of the gods. It is by promoting such views of the role of various castes in war that the Brahmin keeps his position at the top. They pour scorn on fighting and fighters - dirty business of the dirty castes - but war is eulogised when blessed by a Brahmin. Pacifism is thus employed as an instrument of social engineering that keeps the low castes from rebelling against the BSO.

The Non-Violence that the Western World is fascinated by is not Hindu Pacifism or their view of the role of castes in war. They are impressed by the politics of 'non-

Violence' used by M.K. Gandhi to wrest political power in India. Actually, they are not fascinated or impressed; they praise it because they would like the people of countries they exploit or occupy to resist only by 'non-violence'. The praise is extended in the hope that it would help in social engineering of the rest of the world that ensures that the underdog seldom barks and never bites. The truth, however, is that the *satyagrah* (peaceful protest) by M.K.Gandhi attracted huge crowds and their passion often led to violence. But it was a clever not to approve of violence because it were the Muslims and the Sikhs who excelled in its use. He preferred methods where mobs mattered. He did not mind politics of violence; but he was against organised fighting where character and courage also mattered.

The religious doctrine of *Ahimsa* and political methodology of non-violence continue to have a role as an instrument of social engineering in India. It is used to decry movements of liberation and to demonise the Muslims and Sikhs. But it plays no part in the design of Indian polity or policy. The Government of India feels free to use force to keep the people disarmed and down; in fact it uses force frequently and wantonly against them. India has little use for the legacy of M.K.Gandhi; he is another of its fallen heroes. Even his principal legacy – bringing Dalits, STs and BCs within the Hindu political fold – stands discredited as inadequate, even unfocussed and misdirected. The irony is that his nemesis in life – the RSS – took his life. His life ended with a Brahmin bullet after having served them so well and so long. His prime role and his biggest achievement were to hide the true scope of his fake non-violence and sell it as a doctrine of peace and harmony.<sup>36</sup>

It is probable that M.K.Gandhi learnt from his experience in South Africa to transform 'non-violence' into a political methodology. In South Africa, the White racist regime used violence on the Blacks very crudely and brutally. The Black responded to violence with riots. The police and the military killed but could not pacify; they ended up exacerbating the alienation of the Blacks. It gave him the idea that mobs have power but it could be effective if it did not invite the use of the coercive power of the state legally and overtly. His idea was to assemble large crowds for peaceful protest. But Brahmins or caste Hindus could not build crowds if the majority remained indifferent. To attract mobs, the art used to assemble crowds for the many Hindu festivals was used. To incite violence, an incident was created. Gandhian non-violence was well-orchestrated mob violence that was blamed on someone else.

#### **14. Hinduisation Campaign**

Gandhi was not the first to realise the need to represent all the indigenous peoples of India. In the past, it had been normal for the Brahmin priests to represent the native people under Muslim rule. The British recognised the existence of the Untouchable

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<sup>36</sup> *Violence in Hinduism*, Prof. K.S. Bhagwan, Dalit Sahitya Academy, 1986.

castes and gave them special protection. In the end even they succumbed. The Brahmins were the only ones who were educated and they readily accepted new rulers as the will of gods. Unlettered *Bahujan* had no alternative to allowing the Brahmins to speak for them. The process of *Hinduisation* of the native peoples with the Aryan *Varna* system took the form of 'cultural annexation' as described earlier. It had been going on for thousands of years. Such *Hinduisation* of the *Bahujan* suited the Brahmin very well; it added layers at the bottom of the caste pile posing no challenge to his pre-eminence at the top of the hierarchy. There was no point in using violence or coercion when the Brahmin could annex other religions and communities by 'inclusion' into the Hindu fold. The number of the top three castes in the *Varna* system was so small that the *Bahujan* did not fully realise (or assert) that their identities were functional (profession pursued) and tribal and had no religious implication. The British, who described everybody who was not a Muslim as Hindu, also made the task of Brahmins easy. However, the advent of democracy under British rule posed new challenges. The Brahmin had to invent new political methodologies to accelerate the process of *Hinduisation*.

It is not surprising that the SC/ST/BCs have never been killed in huge numbers like the Muslims and the Sikhs. The largest number of the Dalits ever killed in riots was at Kilvenmani, in Tamil Nadu. The number of deaths did not exceed 50. Slaves do not have to be killed unless they are defiant. Offered 'social annexation' with the Hindu, defiance did not make sense. For centuries the Backward Castes and even Dalits, accepted their position at the bottom of the caste ladder without protest. *Hinduisation* is a process of enslavement. In the Hindu fold, they accept the status of slaves as the will of the gods, as punishment for sins of previous incarnations. They vow to spurn education, kill ambition and reconcile to a life of menial work with little or no wage. Will anybody kill his own unpaid, life-long slave? The *Bahujan* are not only slaves but slaves who enjoy their slavery. They are taught to kill their ego, eschew comfort and work hard for better status in future life. That is social engineering long before Aldous Huxley wrote his 'Brave New World.'<sup>37</sup> The slaves must eschew violence; it is forbidden by gods. The high castes are allowed to resort to violence as viciously as they will because they do so as instruments of punishment for defiance of the will of the gods. That is the secret of the upper castes maintaining their stranglehold over their slaves. Hinduism does indeed stand for non-violence. Most persecuted peoples in the world are the victims of violence; *in India the people are the victims of non-violence*.

## 15. Karma Theory

Instead of firearms as weapons, Hinduism uses the 'Karma Theory' as a weapon against the *Bahujan*. The theory of *Karma* (fate) takes away the responsibility for

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<sup>37</sup> Aldous Huxley (1894 –1963) author of the classic 'Brave New World' painted a picture in the book of a rigidly stratified hierarchical society with every one brainwashed to feel happy in their situation feeling sorry for those who have to work harder or carry more responsibility. He did not know that such a society already existed that had eagerly accepted foreign rulers starting three thousand years ago with Aryan invasion.

the welfare of the oppressed. If one is poor and suffering it is because of one's sins and misdeeds in a previous life. It means that the society has no responsibility to alleviate oppression that lies at the root of perpetual poverty and a life of destitution, generation after generation. Even the richest temples of India do not run welfare centres for the *Bahujan*. Charity begins at home and ends there. High caste charities support homes for widows and old women of their own caste. Brahmins who choose to live as naked fakirs are supported by charity, giving to the *Bahujan* would be defying the gods who condemned them to destitution because of what they must have done in a previous life. The philosophy of *karma* is injected into the blood of everybody. There is no question of a revolt; it is against the genius of India. No one even protests; the culture of acquiescence prevails. Everything is governed by destiny; what would be the point in protest; what would be the object of a revolt? *One cannot change fate or challenge destiny. Who can change what is in the stars; who can defy Karma?* No one indeed! Celebrate festivals and enjoy life, whatever will be will be! That is Hinduism! A song sung by Doris Day.

When there is not even a whimper of protest, where is the need for violence? And if anybody does rebel and protests, (and dares defy the *Karma* theory) can be dubbed a terrorist or anti national and the police or the military would take him away. No one talks, every one whispers. No one stands up for the victim. It must be his *Karma* - his sins or his stars. He must have deserved the wrath of the gods. Speaking up for the victims of wanton violence is unheard of in India. The only violence that is mentioned in the media is against temples and *pujaris*, against politicians and policemen – all members of high castes. That attracts media attention because that is the excuse for unleashing indiscriminate and wanton violence against the low castes or followers of minority faiths. 'Operation Bluestar' against the Sikhs in 1984, the cold blooded murders of Kashmiris that has been going on since 1989, the heavy handed violence used against Nagas and the tribes of Assam gets an occasional mention only to underline that they deserved the wrath of the gods (the Army or State Police acting as an instrument of divine anger) by defying their *karma* and daring to protest, make demands, and resist oppression or occupation.

### 16. Individual & Collective Salvation

There is no concept of even symbolic collectivity in Hinduism. In Christianity, Islam, Sikhism, Judaism and Buddhism the followers of the faith are asked to seek collective salvation. Prayers are held in their places of worship 'collectively'. In all these religions, the people pray for mankind, for all humanity, for 'collective welfare' of the society. But in Hindu religion, there is no collective or mass prayer in a Hindu temple. One can go to a Hindu temple any time and pray alone. A Hindu first prays for himself, then his wife and children, then maybe his *jati* (caste). How can he pray for all Hindus, let alone all humanity, when he believes that the lowborn are being punished for the sins of a previous life? They want to see them suffer. When they do not see them suffering they become an instrument of inflicting suffering. A Brahmin sees himself as divine. He takes on the role of a vengeful god whenever he sees others happy, living a life in peace and harmony; he makes them

fight each other to ensure they remain weak and meek and live a life of misery.

The culture of 'individual salvation' does accommodate alms giving but it forbids 'collective action' for 'collective salvation or welfare.' To voice support for the victims of state oppression is treated as a capital crime. Any one who speaks for the oppressed castes, races, tribes or religions is seen as a rebel and a renegade and is made a target. That is why Hindu society has never produced a single revolutionary. Sri Narayana Guru had to face many violent attacks from Brahmins for building a Shiva temple. Swami Ananda Thirtha, although a Brahmin, was assaulted many times by Brahmins for working for the 'welfare of Untouchables'.<sup>38</sup> His Brahmin wife according to Shankarananda Shastri killed Babasaheb Dr. Ambedkar. Shyam Sunder, who ranks next only to Babasaheb for his contribution to the Dalit movement, died unwept, unsung, un-honoured, without even a memorial to his name. Mahatma Phule had to face continuous harassment for trying to awaken the Dalits in Pune. All those who dared to stand up against systematic oppression and for 'collective salvation' were hounded mercilessly in their life and forgotten after their death.

In contrast, every encouragement is given to those of 'low birth' who want to enrich themselves. Jagivan Ram was a millionaire and Deputy Prime Minister of India. Ram Vilas Paswan is getting all the encouragement to make money. Corruption is all right, even encouraged; to get the *Tirupati prasad*<sup>39</sup> one has to bribe the priests. But if one collected money to use it for 'collective welfare' of the community, then the entire legal and administrative apparatus of the country comes to life. The Terrorist Act, National Security Act and TADA are let loose if any one dares to raise voice for the victims of systematic oppression – even genocide and massacres.

## 17. Hinduism is not a Religion but a Political Ideology

Culture is a way of doing things. In its essence, it is a set of values - ethics and morals – that are formulated by following a faith (religion) or a philosophy (non-religious ideology) over a long period of time. Hinduism - the dominant culture of India - is the product of the operation of the ideology of Brahmanism. An ideology revolves around a supreme objective. In Hinduism, that objective is to maintain 'Brahmin primacy in religious as well as non-religious matters'. That is why the focus in Hindu culture is not on values, ethics or morals but on methods. Hinduism is not a religion because it does not define itself in ethical or moral terms. It is not even an agnostic faith because that would also require high universal objectives. Hinduism is a political ideology. Since its objective is sinister and cannot be admitted publicly, Hinduism has difficulty defining itself even as a political ideology. It defines itself often in terms of being similar to or different from the dominant ideology of the time. With the rise of Communism as a political ideology, a segment of the Hindu society embraced it readily. But they did so in their own

<sup>38</sup> Ananda Thidha A.M. Ayrookuzhiel. C1SRS, 1987.

<sup>39</sup> A 'special morsel' given to devotees by the temple priest.

unique way. They added Communist heroes to their list of heroes like adding new gods to the list of Hindu gods.

The Brahmin 'objective' has remained fixed and unaltered over thousands of years, which makes Hinduism a unique mix of ideology and mythology. It does change its methods and continues to evolve new themes and strategies but it continues to claim that it is a religion. How effectively it uses its status as a religion to advance its political ideology was displayed in a Supreme Court judgment in the famous 'Soosai case'. The highest court in the land upheld that reservations couldn't be extended to those Untouchables who quit Hinduism. That means that reservation is a reward for remaining within the Hindu fold - for those who remain 'Hindus', in other words 'slaves'. Christian missions have often been accused of giving 'inducements' for conversion. But the Indian State is itself using the inducement of reservation to bring or retain the slaves into the fold of Hinduism. This is glaring case of 'religion' being used to promote the ideology of Brahmanism. This is truly without parallel in the world.

In a nutshell, it is the 'dominant culture' of the top 15 percent ruling classes that carries the brand name of 'Hinduism'. It is pushed down the throat of all those who live in India through electronic media (e.g. TV serialization of the *Ramayana*) through the print-media, the education system, in fact by every organ of the state. The air one breathes, the water one drinks, the paper one reads, the books one studies in class rooms, the cinema and the TV programmes one sees, the gods one worships, involves spreading the tentacles of this 'dominant culture'. A social scientist called this process as '*sanskritisation*'. The cultural onslaught is continuous and overbearing; no wonder that the *Bahujan*, whose enslavement is the objective of this avalanche, have succumbed. In the past 100 years or so, the upper caste rulers have been vigorously engaged in *sanskritisation* or rather *Hinduising* Dalits and tribal peoples. M.K. Gandhi was the leader of this movement to *hinduise* the Untouchables. The title of Mahatma was conferred on him for this service he rendered. He got the Untouchables of India to come into the Hindu fold for 'political purpose' only. He sold the idea on the basis that it would 'forge unity' in 'struggle for freedom' against British *Raj*. Little did they realise that being accepted in the 'Hindu fold' was to accept perpetual slavery.

The system of reservations, as mentioned earlier, is used by the upper castes to tighten the stranglehold of *Hinduism* over the non-Hindu majority in India. During the decades since becoming free of foreign domination, the *Bahujan* majority has come into ever tightening grip of a much more diabolical form of domination - of *Hinduism* - that has denied freedom to them more completely and viciously than ever before. The state itself is being used to propagate *Hinduism* and provide props and anchor for a scheme of social engineering that makes Brahmin hegemony more secure with every passing day. Even the Supreme Court, that has a high reputation for its secular credentials, for its fairness and impartiality, has been used as a prop

for Hinduism as evidenced by its judgement in the famous *Soosai* Case.<sup>40</sup>

## Causes of Culture Clash

### 18. Dalits - Victims of Hinduism

Dalits, being at the bottom of the caste pile, are the worst victims of *Hinduism*. The rulers are making every effort to bring them into the fold of *Hinduism* through assimilation, integration and the threat to withdraw reservation if they convert to egalitarian religions. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar advocated conversion as the most important weapon of liberation.<sup>41</sup> All those Dalits, Tribals and BCs who quit Hinduism and became Muslims, Christians, Sikhs or Buddhists might not have become rich but they have certainly achieved self-respect and a better status in the society.

It is true that Dalits are not Hindus and were never Hindus. Hinduism, or its more accurate name *Vedic Dharma*, was brought into India by the Aryan invaders. That means that the people who lived in the sub-continent of South Asia prior to the Aryan invasion cannot be Hindus. SC/STs are the indigenous peoples of India. Even the Backward Castes (35% of India's population) are neither *shudras* nor Hindus but they are also Untouchables. It is quite apparent that 85% at the so-called Hindus are not Hindus at all.

The Untouchables have their own cultural identity. They are worshippers of nature. They have their own glorious cultural heritage. As the founders of the Indus Valley Civilisation, they can be ranked as the pioneers of world civilization. Even to this day they continue to be separate from the Hindus despite the best efforts to assimilate them. They had no caste system; their society was tribal practising a sort of primitive communism that gave equal status to women and believed in high moral values and ethics. They are proud to be 'outcastes'; they are indeed outside the caste system.

### 19. Unending War

Those within the four-fold caste system (*chaturvarna*) hated those who were outside their system. The Aryans condemned those outside the caste and treated them as their enemies. They destroyed their glorious Indus Valley Civilisation and introduced their barbaric caste order. Those who fought the Aryans were called *Dasas*, *Dasyus*, *Asuras*, *Rakshasas* (Ravana was a *Rakshasa*), *Vanaras* (Hanuman was a *Vanara* or a monkey), *Daityas*, *Danavas*, *Pishachis*, demons. The history of India has been one of unending war between the invaders and the natives, which is

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<sup>40</sup> V.T.Rajshekar, *State used to promote Hindu Religion?* Reprint of Dalit Voice Editorial, Sept.1, 1987.

<sup>41</sup> Dr. B.R. Ambedkar: *Why Go For Conversion?* Dalit Sahitya Academy, 1987.



continuing even to this day. The Jharkhand movement is a part of the struggle of indigenous people. So also are the struggles in Mizoram, Nagaland, Gorkhaland and Uttarkhand. The two 'Gujrat caste wars' were also a part of this struggle. The war on the *Riddles*<sup>42</sup> was also part of this unending strife.

Though the Aryan invasion is more than 3000 years old, the invaders could not completely destroy the distinct cultural identity of the indigenous peoples. In every village, the people stick to their life-style, their own language, their own shrines, their own traditions, and their own culture. They have their own temples, their own priests and deities. Their dress, food, culture and traditions are separate even today. It is only after 'British Imperialism' was replaced by 'Brahmin Imperialism' that the process of *hinduising* the indigenous peoples of India was intensified. The oppressors are not succeeding. With time, the resolve of the indigenous peoples is stiffening and their resistance to Hinduisation is increasing.

## 20. Struggle in Assam & Kashmir

The Tribals are resisting this aggression very effectively. The entire Northeast Mongoloid Tribals have revolted against Brahminic aggression and not even the Indian Army has been able to suppress their struggle for freedom. The Kashmiris are fighting bravely and dying in their thousands to resist Hindu rule and cultural aggression. Gorkhaland, Jharkhand are other manifestations of popular resistance. The Sikh struggle for cultural identity is yet another resistance movement. In the South, Sri Narayana Guru's and Periyar's Dravidian movements are important anti-Aryan movements. Millions of *Bahujan* suffocated by this Aryan poison have converted to become Muslims, Christians and Sikhs.

The Aryan 'dominant culture' – Hinduism - is losing the battle. That is why it is resorting to ever more violent methods to suppress the 'sons of the soil'. The country's 'national press' is working as a vehicle as well as a watchdog of this 'dominant culture'. So are the law courts and the bureaucracy. The police and the military are being increasingly used to crush any individual or movement that attempts to work against this 'dominant culture'. With time, as more and more deprived people of India gain awareness through the teachings of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, Mahatma Phule, Sri Narayana Guru, Periyar E.V. Ramaswamy, Dr. R.M. Lohia etc. the fight between the 'dominant culture' and '*Bahujan* culture' will get intensified leading to more and more violence. Caste wars, therefore, are inevitable and unavoidable. India's road to socialism passes through caste wars because in India 'caste' is 'class'. It is a historical process that must be welcomed. Some from the upper castes would like to play a part in the process. That must be welcomed.

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<sup>42</sup> '*Dalits win war on Riddles*' Dalit Voice Jan. 1, 1987

## 21. Christian Contribution

The Christians being the best educated in India, they have contributed a great deal to help sharpen the class/caste contradictions. It is not well known but it is a fact that it was the Christians of India who taught the upper castes how to fight 'British Imperialism'. It was the Christian missionaries who brought modern formal education to ordinary Indians. In other words, much of what modern India boasts is what the Christians introduced in India.

But all this was in the past. The Christian milk of human kindness dried up after the foreign Christian missionaries left the country and the upper caste Christians took over the reins of power in the Church. The upper caste Christians are putting up with all the shackles put on them by the present rulers of India and bringing a bad name to Christian churches.<sup>43</sup> But there are enough sympathetic Christians still left in India and Christian values as such are certainly superior to that of Brahmanism. It is, therefore, quite probable that the Christian Churches would help rather than hinder the sharpening of the ambient contradictions in India and help in the liberation of the peoples of India.

## 22. Rise of BJP Intensified Culture Clash

With the Hindu Nazis – the RSS and the BJP - capturing power in Delhi in 1998, they intensified their Hinduisation (enslavement) drive that was re-christened as *Hindutva*. They launched a deafening propaganda campaign inside and outside India that the original inhabitants of India (SC/ST/BCs) are all Hindus and that Hinduism, which is the name they prefer for what is really Brahmanism, is the religion of all in India. On international forums they have officially denied the existence of the indigenous people in India. The Hindu Nazis have vowed to bulldoze this multi-national, multi-lingual, multi-religious, multi-ethnic India into *Hindu Rashtra*. It is this reckless drive of the ruling upper castes guided by their Hindu Nazi parties that is bringing them into a head-on clash with the non-Hindu majority.

The Aryans, who are 15% of the population (if they include the non-Aryan *shudra* as their kin), discarded their Aryan identity to fool the gullible, illiterate, starving masses of India. They now call themselves Hindus. This is a name they have assumed after the advent of the British *Raj*. Before that the word 'Hindu' did not mean the follower of any faith; it was used by Persians for the people of the Indian sub-continent they called 'Hind'. It was a derogatory word meaning 'slimy' like the word 'nigger' used by Americans for black people. In the course of the last several centuries the Brahmins have been borrowing from the myriad of indigenous religions, cultures and traditions to broaden their constituency. They accepted the deities of the native peoples and converted them into Hindu gods. That is how

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<sup>43</sup> V.T.Rajshekar *Christians & the Liberation of Dalits*. Dalit Sahitya Academy, 1999, Reprint

Hinduism has come to claim title to 330 millions gods while the Brahmins originally had only two gods — Brahma and Vishnu. Even Ishwara is a pre-Aryan god of the original inhabitants of India. The British gave the word 'Hindu' a religious connotation when they started to use it to describe any Indian who was not a Muslim. It took a while but the politically astute Brahmins noted the potential of falling in line with the British usage. The word Hindu has come to mean the 'Brahmin constituency' – those who need them as priests and readily acknowledge their special privileges and power.

### 23. Annexing the Shaivites

Ishwara (also called Shankara) is a pre-Aryan god of native people of India. It was their most popular god but he was relegated to the third place after Brahma and Vishnu on being embraced by the Aryans. It was dumped on burial ground as a watchman. The Kerala dwarf Brahmin, the legendary Adi Shankara, is believed to have performed an ingenious trick of becoming a Buddhist to sabotage Buddhism from within. Not only that, he assumed the name of Shankara which is the other name of Ishwara. He was thus able to fool the vast majority of native people who were devotees of Shiva (called Shaivites) an *Avatar* of Ishwara. By embracing Shiva as a Hindu god, all the Shaivites, who constituted the largest segment of the indigenous population in South India, were annexed and made Hindu. This legendary move of Adi Shankara in Hindu mythology is celebrated as a masterstroke in the *Hinduisation* of the non-Hindu masses. The Brahmins hated Shiva and yet to bring the indigenous population under their influence and control, they took to Shiva worship. Such Brahminic tactics are a part of the law of contradictions in which *Vedics* are experts.

### 24. Mohammadi Hindus

It is by co-opting native gods, and the festivals, customs, culture and traditions that come with them, that the Brahmins bloated the number of their gods to 330 million. Lord Buddha, who led the most effective crusade against the Brahmins, was made an *Avatar* of *Vishnu*. Jainism, which rose as an anti-Brahmin faith, has been similarly absorbed. Today, the Muslims, who constitute 15 per cent of the population are also under tremendous pressure to get assimilated into the Hindu fold as *Mohammedi Hindus* giving them the status of the *shudras* and Prophet Mohammed being made a *Hindu Avatar*. There are upper castes among Muslims who would make any compromise to curry favour with the Brahmin. Some of the *Ulema* have joined the BJP. It would not be a surprise that the Brahmin is able to do to Islam in India as it did to Buddhism and Jainism and is doing to the Sikh faith. The elite of the Indian Muslims is *hinduising* already; it is only the poor masses of Muslims who are resisting.

Brahmanism is not tolerant of any challenge to Brahmin hegemony but by redefining tolerance as embracing new gods, it is able to claim to be 'tolerant' and resilient. It accommodates every faith or non-faith that accepts Brahmin primacy in

matters important to the Brahmin. In return, he accepts every one in the Hindu fold - as the slave of Brahma and Vishnu - even though one continues to worship any number of gods or honour any number of *avatars*. What can be more tolerant? Equipped with such tolerance, it has a huge ability to devour and digest any religion or faith, any protest movement or rebellion. Brahmanism of old was paranoid and defensive; modern Brahmanism is imperial and aggressive. It expands its imperial control through assimilation and is devouring every indigenous religion and culture. But it has yet to establish itself as a civilisation. The *Vedic* Aryans destroyed the indigenous civilisations and devoured all the indigenous faiths but they were still humbled by outsiders who were able to exploit their main weakness – the absence of a principle of solidarity.

In the seventies, India appeared poised for a break through and was to become a world power. The empire the British built was handed over to them on a platter and India faced no external threat. But the old problem emerged in a new form. The system of social engineering that helped the *Vedic* Aryans remain in social control even when political control was in foreign hands has proved to be inadequate as an underpinning for a political system that is based on 'democracy'. The system could not be so transformed that the Brahmin remained in control? With the rise of the BJP to power, it appeared that the political system might well be good enough to sustain the Brahmin in direct political control. But the evidence of elections in 2004 suggests that such a judgement was premature. The BJP, by its vitriolic campaign against foreign faiths – Islam and Christianity – has underlined the foreign origin of *Vedic* Aryans. They have provided the native peoples with an argument as well as an objective. The argument is 'majority rule' and the objective is 'national self-determination'.

The culture of the original inhabitants of India, their form of worship, their offerings to their deities are all entirely different from that of the Brahmins. The native people are all meat-eaters and they also consume alcohol. What they eat and drink they also offer to their deities, which are mostly their ancestors. The native peoples of India are ancestor-worshippers, meat-eaters and alcohol-drinkers. They lead simple lives; they are not cunning and crafty. The woman plays a dominant role in the life of natives whereas the *Vedic* Aryans are rough towards woman. The native peoples are becoming conscious that *Vedic* Aryans expanded their influence by deceiving them, even stealing their gods and goddesses one by one and occupying their places of worship. As long as the Brahmin is acknowledged as the leader, his capacity to use a combination of corruption and co-option to bring native peoples under his control and expand his rule is considerable. Thus far, this capacity has been eulogized for inclusivity and tolerance. Now it is seen as a cruel irony.

## 25. Founding of a Hindu Nazi party – the RSS

Hinduism is fascist faith since the beginning of history. But it adopted a fascist

agenda and military form and shape with the establishment of the RSS.<sup>44</sup> This Hindu Nazi Organization is a hydra-headed serpent. The sole purpose of this party is to *Hinduise* (enslave) India by destroying the identity of all the non-Hindu indigenous peoples. It adopted several ingenious strategies and methodologies. Its literature advises that the native non-Hindu Indian populace should be kept poor and illiterate and induced to follow Hindu rituals and traditions. The *Vedic* leadership of the RSS does not lead the campaign but uses hordes of corrupted and co-opted member of *Bahujan* castes. Once the native people *Hinduise* they are instigated to attack the non-Hindus - Muslims and Christians. The Sikhs – followers of a revolutionary religion that was born to fight the Hindu caste apartheid - have already been *hinduised*. Through the many newspapers and journals that the upper castes own, they are able to malign the Muslims and Christians and tarnish their image so that the innocent natives are prejudiced against the two egalitarian religions in India.

## 26. Zionist Connection

The *Vedics* and the Hindu nazi parties are not against Muslims and Christians *per se*. During the 800 years of Muslim rule and 200 years of rule by Christian Europeans, it is the *Vedics* who derived the maximum benefits. Anti-Muslim and anti-Christian propaganda was stepped up mainly after independence in 1947. No one is more responsible for maligning the Muslims and Christians and *Hinduising* Dalits and other indigenous races than the Congress leader M.K. Gandhi. The RSS has since become very active in pursuing the *Hindutva* project but in the hands of the BJP, it has been an instrument of intimidation rather than of absorption. Under BJP direction, many of its units spent millions of dollars in the tribal belts and in Dalit colonies to *Hinduise* these non-Hindu people. Money is no problem for them because the entire business class, which is from the upper castes, is interested in funding *Hindutva* and maintaining the *status quo*. Lately, the White Western racist countries and their Zionist masters have also come to take interest in the *Hindutva* project of the Hindu Nazi parties and are supporting the cultural aggression against the innocent natives.

## 27. Role of the Arya Samaj

Hindu Nazism took a definite shape between 1870 and the 1920s. The *Vedics* have always been conscious of their numerical weakness; they are only 3 per cent of the population. The *Arya Samaj* movement was founded in 1875 to propagate the merits of Brahminic culture. It was a clever way of securing the support of non-Brahmins without giving them the status of high castes. Any one could embrace the *Arya Samaj* (Aryan Hindu-Vedic culture) without changing one's faith. The aim of the *Arya Samaj* was to spread the tentacles of Brahmanism by stigmatising those who threatened the Brahminic Social Order. Its founder Dayananda Saraswati, a Gujrati Brahmin, mainly targeted the Sikhs and succeeded to a great extent in blunting the

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<sup>44</sup> Christophe Jaffrelot. *The Rise of Hindu Nationalist Movement & Indian Politic - 1925 – 1990*, Penguin Books, 1999.

sharp teeth of Sikhism. His frequent criticism of the Brahmins and their caste system fooled the anti-Brahmin Jats who made a beeline into the *Arya Samaj*. Charan Singh, a former Prime Minister of India, noted for his honesty and dedication to the welfare of the Backward Castes, became an Arya Samajist. Even though he hated the Brahmins, he was caught in their web of deceit and duplicity.

The Arya Samaj, which was a super- Brahminic religious order, was presented as a movement against caste apartheid. The entire non-Hindu Jats, a hardy martial race who had been the deadly enemy of the Brahmins, were tamed and made loyal to Brahmins through the Arya Samaj. That is how the *Vedics*, who are mere 3 per cent of the Indian population secured the loyalty of a militant community that had been outside the caste system and hostile to the BSO. Through the Arya Samaj the Brahmin broadened the base of their support but the tensions within the *Varna* (caste) system continued to boil over. When he *Kshatriyas* and *Vaishyas*, who are within their own *dwija* fold, were utterly hostile; how could they be sure of *shudra* support? The *shudras* are 10% of the 15% who accepts the *Varna* system and they were groaning under the weight of Brahminic Imperialism. The Maratha leader Shivaji was a *Shudra*: how the Brahmins tormented him is recorded by Brahmin historians themselves. All over India the *Shudra*, who are the children of the concubines of Brahmins and hence are not Aryan, were boiling with anger against the Brahmins. That is why the BSO – when it formed the Congress party – gave the top position to a *Bania* (M.K.Gandhi) and a *Shudra* (Sardar Patel) to hide behind a mask in order to assemble a majority to engage successfully in a freedom struggle against the British.

*Vedics* suspected the loyalties of not only their own twin *dwija varna* (*Kshatriya* and *Vaishya*) but also the *Shudra*. They were worried that the mask of political solidarity would slip and the ugly face of caste apartheid exposed. Having come so close to getting the whole of India under BSO rule as successors of the British Empire in India, they feared that all their efforts could yet be wasted and the many nations of India could go their separate ways. They were desperate to be successors of the British. They feared that if the British did not hand over power to them, the Muslims would join hands with Dalits and become the rulers of Independent India. They knew that the first to be finished in such an independent India would be the Brahminic forces. It is believed that it was this fear that made them accept the partition of India. They believed that with Muslim majority areas separating to become Pakistan would reduce the size of the ‘Muslim menace’ and the blame for the partition could be put on the Muslims and their leader – Mr. M.A. Jinnah.

## 28. Poona Pact *hinduised* Dalits

The Muslims were a big threat not merely because of their numbers but also because of their militancy and being concentrated on the Western and Eastern periphery of India. They had a basis for national solidarity (Islam), which the non-Muslims did not. But it were the other non-Hindus – those outside the *Varna* system - who were much larger in number than the Muslims. The main challenge to the BSO supremacy

came from the *Bahujan* who had found a leader in the person of Dr Babsaheb Ambedkar. The *Vedic* promoters of the BSO, in preparation for taking over the rule of India, accepted a *Bania* - M.K. Gandhi - as their leader and presented him as a great national leader and even conferred on him the title of the 'Father of the Nation'. The BSO was thus able to present its Congress Party as 'inclusive' - ready to accommodate people of all castes and faiths - and discredit those who represented the oppressed castes or religious minorities as petty and selfish, lacking in vision, willing to submit to the British game of 'divide and rule'.

The Congress as the mouthpiece of the BSO was very effective in its propaganda. Many Muslims and almost all the other non-Hindus fell for the propaganda but there were a few leaders who saw that the BSO was also encouraging and organising Hindu Nazi parties under the leadership of Moonje, B.G. Tilak, Savarkar and many others to *Hinduise* the Non-Hindu indigenous peoples. What was particularly ironical was that the process of *Hinduisation* did not involve any inducement, promise or reward. They were merely instigated to hate Muslims and Christians and to kill them in riots whenever the opportunity arose. Every anti-Muslim riot in India brought hundreds into the fold of Hinduism. A non-Hindu Dalit, Tribal or Backward Caste person became a great Hindu when he killed a Muslim in an anti-Muslim riot. But the moment the violence and bloodshed was over or if he sought equality with those of high birth, he was kicked for his temerity and put back into his place.

The main plank of the politics of M.K.Gandhi was opposition to Separate Electorates introduced by the British to guarantee representation to all castes and communities in accordance with their population. The Muslims did not give up once they got the Separate Electorate System. They demanded their separate state of Pakistan when the Congress Party refused to promise that it would maintain that system after independence. M.K. Gandhi turned his attention towards Dalits, Christians and the Sikhs. The Christians posed no problem; they looked at themselves as the kin of the departing British and were eager to support the BSO as designed by the Congress Party with British help. The Sikhs wanted a sovereign state but they were not in majority anywhere – even in the Punjab. They were promised a sovereign state of their own if they played the same role in the Punjab as Dalits performed elsewhere – to kill Muslims. Their leaders, even though offered a sovereign state by Mr Jinnah, went along with Brahmins and the Sikhs regret that decision till today. But SC, ST and BCs together constituted a majority in many states in India. If they had not been taken in by M.K.Gandhi (who was 'fasting to death' if the Untouchables persisted in their demand for a Separate Electorate), they would be the rulers of several sovereign states today.

That Dalits are ten times more numerous than the Brahmin was turned into a weakness by the persuasive Mahatma – M.K.Gandhi. Because he was himself not a Brahmin, because he started to live among Dalits in their colonies, because he condemned the caste system and promised to abolish it after independence, Dalits were taken in. Babasaheb Dr Ambedkar signed the Poona Pact (1932) with M.K.Gandhi accepting 'constitutional guarantee' of equality in place of Separate

Electorate. In retrospect, it was a fatal decision. The Congress Party refused to abide by any of the commitments it made in early days of its rule pleading lack of parliamentary support. The constitutional guarantee of equality and abolition of the caste system are a cruel joke. The upper castes do not require permission to oppress; they just do. It is not the law that permits or sustains oppression; it is the social engineering carried by the BSO that does.

If the system of Separate Electorate had been retained and the Poona Pact not signed, it would have been the biggest defeat inflicted upon the *Vedics*. It would have confirmed Dalits, STs and BCs to be outside the Hindu fold. Babasaheb Dr Ambedkar admitted later that it had been a mistake to enter into the Poona Pact with the Congress Party and to accept promises of equality instead of recognition of separate national identity of the *Bahujan* peoples. In the name of 'Indian National Unity' the Brahminic Social Order (BSO) deceived the Untouchables and condemned them to perpetual slavery of the upper castes. However, the Joint Electorate system that was introduced in its place has not been a one-way street. In a democracy, numbers matter. As social oppression did not cease, the oppressed had a reason to organise their own political parties. In an environment of social atrophy, there is little focus in the efforts of the parties of the oppressed but there is no dearth of enthusiasm; the self-confidence of the new Dalit leadership is rising all the time. *Hinduisation* may yet prove to be a dangerous experiment unleashing responses and reactions that are as yet unforeseen.

The reason behind the *Vedic* undertaking the dangerous experiments of *Hindutva* is their siege mentality. They know that they are a micro-minority and physically weak. They fear that if the people at large knew their crimes no *Vedic* would remain safe in India. They know that being Aryans they do not belong in India; the natives are also well aware that the *Vedic* Aryans are foreigners. They feared they would face the fury of Dalits joining hands with the Muslims and taking over the ruler-ship of India. This fear gripped every thinking *Vedic* in those days and was expressed openly by C. Rajagopalachari. The Muslims being forced to go to Pakistan in large numbers because of riots, arson and looting was seen as a reprieve and lessened their anxieties. In the wake of the victory in 1971 over Pakistan, their self-confidence increased further. The success in crushing the Sikhs ruthlessly in 1984, gave them even more confidence. But the insurrection in Kashmir and in the North Eastern states of India continues. Violent *Hinduisation* is being resisted. The BJP saw the need to change its methods. It unleashed a 'peace offensive' on the new generation of Muslims in Pakistan and Bangladesh who are unfamiliar with the ways of Brahmins and the objectives of the BSO.

## 29. RSS Praised Hitler for Murder of Jews

The RSS, founded in 1925 by Hedgewar, a Telugu Brahmin and resident of Nagpur, is nothing but a first class terrorist and anti-national secret organization. Its greatest success is that it has been able to blacken and tarnish every organization hostile to its objectives and interests as 'terrorist and anti-national'. Such is the power of *Vedic*



propaganda. They have displayed mastery of the art of rumour mongering and mind-control. The hard core of the RSS is Brahmins - mainly Chitpawan Brahmins - who claim Jewish origin. They resented M.K.Gandhi because he was a non-Brahmin in a position of leadership of the country that was the birth right of the *Vedic* Aryans. Besides, many of his actions helped the 'despised' *Bania* community to come up. With the Birla family accumulating unprecedented wealth and Gandhi becoming the leader of all India, a caste so reviled and a community so intensely hated by the Brahmins had become respectable. The *Vedic* are an extremely jealous class. They would never tolerate anybody other than a *Vedic* to be the leader, much less the leader of all India. This was the most probable cause of the *Vedic* conspiracy to murder the Mahatma.<sup>45</sup>

The cumulative result of the ambient conditions and its objectives was to make the RSS a fascist outfit and adopt the style of the Nazis. RSS leaders were sent to Europe to study the movements led by Hitler, Mussolini and Franco. The German Nazis also took a keen interest in study of Hinduism in India and the fascist organisations that it was enmeshed with. The Hindu Nazis declared the Muslims a threat to national interest, and the German Nazis copied them and declared Jews a threat to their nation. Golwalkar claimed to have been inspired by Hitler and the German Nazis admitted that they borrowed heavily from *Vedic* literature and organisation. The RSS praised the mass murder of the Jews by Hitler.<sup>46</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru, himself a Brahmin, in a letter to a Chief Minister compared the RSS to the Hitler led Nazi organisation<sup>47</sup>. He even declared that the RSS was 'anti-national' in his reply dated Sept.24, 1948 to Golwalkar<sup>48</sup> But Nehru's opposition to the RSS did not come from his heart, it was all a part of the typical Brahminic duplicity aimed at keeping the Hindu Nazis as well as the anti-Nazi forces under the leadership of the *Vedic*, lest the anti-nazi movement passed into the hands of anti-Brahmin forces. *Vedic* cults under varying titles at different times have fathered every kind of racism including Nazism, fascism and even Zionism.

### 30. Revision of History

*Hinduisation* of the indigenous castes and tribes has taken many forms and entailed the adoption of many different strategies. Ban on cow slaughter is one, scrapping of Muslim Personal Law is another, withdrawal of special status of Jammu and Kashmir to bring that State within the ambit of *Hinduisation* in the name of integration, promotion of Hindi and destroying Urdu, are all part of this process. All these steps are directed at creating hatred against the Muslims among the non-Hindu

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<sup>45</sup> V.T. Rajshekar: *Why Godse Killed Gandhi*, DSA 1991 'Third revised edition'.

<sup>46</sup> M.S. Golwalkar: *We, Our Nationhood Redefined* p. 197.

<sup>47</sup> *Letters to Chief Ministers* (1947—1964. Vol.- 1, Editor: G, Parthasarathi, Oxford University Press, 1985

<sup>48</sup> *Justice on Trail* - A collection of historical letters between Sri Guruji and the Government. 1948-49.

ethnic Indians. Everything connected with Sanskrit (a language less than 1% of the Indian population is familiar with) and Sanskritised culture have been glorified. Hindi written in Devanagari script was popularized in place of Urdu, which is much the same language but is written in Arabic script. Hindi was spread through Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Haryana, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh had several languages of their own like Ardha Magadi, Khadiboli, Mundari, Hariyanvi, Brijbasha, Rajasthani etc. Hindi has swallowed up all those languages and the area is called the 'Hindi belt'.

The objective of every scheme, organization or project conceived by the *Vedic* is to destroy the identity of all non-Hindu indigenous peoples and to strengthen Brahmin hegemony and leadership. Since the Brahminic forces took control of all of the media from the outset, they had no difficulty in propagating any falsehood, discrediting any person, or distorting facts to mutilate history. Murli Manohar Joshi, India's Minister of Education in the BJP Administration, a hardcore RSS member and a Brahmin, revised the history of India in the biggest ever scheme to distort history with no other aim except to nurture prejudice against Islam and Christianity. They obviously understand that the impact of cultural aggression is maximized by imprinting on young minds the hate and prejudice that would make them seek direction and leadership from the source of hate and prejudice – *Vedics* and Brahmins. Primary schools began to propagate *Hindutva* mostly in areas of Backward Castes. History was re-written to falsify facts. The 'intellectuals' of India, who are from the upper castes, took part with enthusiasm; those who disagreed largely kept silent. The poison being injected into the young could only produce adults full of hate and self-righteousness. The thought of the future fills every thinking Indian with fright.

### 31. Destroying the Identity

Ever since the Hindu Nazi party (BJP) came to power in Delhi (1998) with the support of coalition partners that represent regional and caste-based parties, the Brahminic forces have stepped up their drive to destroy the ethnic identity of the different indigenous castes and tribes and impose on these non-Hindu peoples a Hindu identity. Destroying the ethnic identity, therefore, has now become the main component of Brahminic cultural aggression. The Brahminic forces have learnt from history that there is no need to subject a community to violence to secure its subordination and subjugation. The easiest way is to destroy its identity. Once a community loses its identity it becomes powerless, voiceless and can be easily absorbed and assimilated and given any shape and name.<sup>49</sup>

In South Africa and the United States the White Western people employed violence in dealing with indigenous Blacks and Native Americans. In India, Brahminic forces have been much more successful without much violence. In South Africa and

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<sup>49</sup> *Spanish Experiment - How to Exterminate Muslims in India*. A reprint of Dalit Voice article, 1999 DSA.

America, the natives were victims of violence; in India the natives have been the victims of non-violence. M.K. Gandhi was hailed as the 'Apostle of non-violence' only for this reason. He *hinduised* (enslaved) the non-Hindu native peoples (*Bahujan*) comprising the Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs) and Backward Castes (BCs) without much bloodshed. Of the three, the most important community is the SC (Dalit). He renamed them as *Harijans* meaning the children of the Hindu god *Hari*. The intimidation employed by the Hindu Nazis - the RSS - pales into insignificance before Gandhi's non-violent *Hinduisation* (enslavement) drive. And that is why the 'credit' for *Hinduising* India and converting it into a *Hindu Rashtra* (land of Hindus) goes to Gandhi. The grateful 'Nation of Hindus' conferred upon him the highest title of *Mahatma* and hailed him as the 'Father of the Nation' but he is the father of the 'Hindu Nation' not of the majority who are non-Hindu to whom he was the herder who took them to slaughter.

### 32. Pyramid-shaped Caste Order

The Brahmins have realized that the numbers were not on their side and they could easily be sidelined because of their numerical weakness in parliamentary politics. They have seen that people vote increasingly for their caste or community. They have accelerated the process of Hinduisation of all non-Hindu castes and tribes by destroying their ethnic identity. Just before the 2004 Elections, the BJP abandoned its anti Muslim stance and accepted Muslims into its fold. Was that a temporary expedient or a new drive to encourage more Muslims to act as Mohammedan Hindus is difficult to say. But India remains a vast Sub-continent of hundreds of castes and tribes. The Brahmins tried to impose their culture by imposing a *Varna* system that involved the grading of the different human collectives in a hierarchical order. Different ethnic identities of India, comprising different castes and tribes, were gradually pushed into this pyramid-shaped caste order and the Brahmin placed himself at the top and called himself the most superior, sacred and the very god on earth (*Bhoodevatas*).

The *Bahujan* are not Hindus and were never Hindus. If they are not Hindus, how can they be a part of the Hindu caste system? The *Vedics* have used every trick and stratagem to push the non-Hindu ethnic identities into their pyramidal caste order over several centuries. Although different ethnic identities, barring the STs, came under the Hindu (Brahminic) Social Order, they did not lose their ethnic identity. This fact has been admitted when the Anthropological Survey of India conducted its "People of India Project".<sup>50</sup> However, even though different non-Hindu 'castes' did not lose their identity, they came to be called Hindus. And many of them began to accept that they were Hindus. That is how the Brahmins came to claim that 85% of the Indian population is Hindu. They have come to this figure by including the following categories of indigenous communities under Hindu.

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<sup>50</sup> Dalit Voice Editorial, June 16, 1996 "Caste decides everything in India: Government of India survey reveals hard facts of life".

SC - 20%	Brahmins 3%	Muslims 15%
ST - 10 %	Kshatriya.Vaishyas 2%	Sikhs 2.5%
BC - 35%	Shudras 10%	Christians 2.5%
<b>65%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>65+15 =80% plus Buddhists ,&amp; Jains etc are considered Hindu</b>		

### 33. Growth of caste-based parties

The destruction of the ethnic identity of the indigenous peoples is given the top priority in the *Hinduisation* drive. Millions of dollars are being devoted for this cause. Very dedicated Nazi cadres are sent to remote corners of India to bring Dalits and Tribals into the Hindu fold. While the cadres have been successful in some parts of India, the reaction in much of India is to strengthen the ethnic identity of castes and tribes. In parliamentary democracy a seat in the parliament brings power and privilege. The castes and tribes, who have experienced nothing but poverty and oppression for centuries, have come to understand the value of their vote and use it to bring their kinsmen into assemblies and into power. The alienated and the long oppressed get a taste of power and even some measure of social justice and a few economic opportunities. A caste with large numbers and with some influence gets to have a vote bank that guarantees to it a share in power. Caste-conscious Yadavas, Jats, Chamars, Mahars. Vanniyars among the BCs and SCs are playing an important role in politics. Caste consciousness is growing because the weaker and oppressed castes have found enormous benefits by organising caste-based parties. Regional parties and caste based vote banks is the order of the day in Indian politics and is likely to remain in the foreseeable future.

The Brahmins are aware of the danger to their monopoly on power because of increasing caste consciousness. Inter-caste tensions are on the increase as contradictions give rise to caste rivalries and even caste wars. The Brahmins are doing their best to destroy this caste-consciousness in low castes while they seek to consolidate the unity of Brahmins and other upper castes. India's ruling class continues to be dominant on the international scene as all the national parties are Brahmin led. The BJP is effectively a Brahmin *Jati* Party and the Congress Party was the platform from which the Brahmin wrested control over much of the erstwhile British Empire in India. Even the different communist parties are led by Brahmins and constitute an additional instrument of Brahmin hegemony over India. Non-Hindu native peoples of India are far too excited having a share in power for the first time ever. But they would have to start taking interest and get involved in inter-state and international matters where they tend to leave matters entirely to *Vedic* machinations.

Crushing the identity of the non-Hindu indigenous peoples and erasing their memory gets top priority in the BSO scheme of things. Under the title of *Hindutva*, it is not only the focal point of social engineering but also of politics of *Sangh Parivar* (alliance of all the fascists forces in India). But the ferocity with which

*Hindutva* was pursued by the BJP during its rule awakened the oppressed in India. By its defeat in the elections in 2004, the *Sangh Parivar* is out of the limelight but it is no less active. It appears that the BSO has been alarmed by the alertness of the oppressed who have organized caste and region based parties to resist *Hindutva*. They may have concluded that the gains made during BJP rule need to be consolidated before overt aggression is resumed against the oppressed castes and religious minorities. They hope that the awakened would go back to sleep or start bickering and infighting. But that remains to be seen.

The *Vedic* obsession with purity - positioning themselves as clean, sacred and the chosen people - has alienated the majority that reciprocates by shunning the Upper Castes. From childhood, a *Vedic* is trained by his scriptures to act as superior - born to rule. But how can a handful of people (3% of the population) perpetuate themselves as rulers when the social scene is characterized by polarization, not unity and solidarity. This is causing a lot of confusion in India today. After a period of success in *Hinduisation*, reaction has set in and a situation of a 'clash of cultures' is ready to precipitate in India. With the BJP losing the elections, the clash has been averted for a time. But the Congress Party is also a Brahmin Party. The Congress led administration might change tactics but not the objectives. The indigenous peoples of India have always resisted Brahminic domination and their policy of absorption and extermination. The *Vedic* are forever seeking to dominate, absorb and exterminate. How can the two cultures co-exist? As founding fathers of racism, the *Vedics* are the worst racists in the world. Now they are worried that those they hate and wish to oppress do not fear them.

It is a matter of conjecture rather than certainty, which way politics will turn in India. It appears that the agenda of *Hindutva* will be pursued with new themes and methods. The Brahmins may wage a 'peace offensive' against neighbours to equip themselves with new weapons for pursuit of 'Hinduisation of the natives'. As long as Brahmins are in control of Delhi, *Hindutva* would remain at the top of the political agenda. With the BJP out of power, its influence will not erode. The Congress Party, despite being in power, appears unable to evolve a new agenda or to orchestrate a strategy to counter *Hindutva*.

With the constraints of ruling the country removed, the BJP is seeking to evolve new approaches and methods to pursue their agenda. The pressure on the *Bahujan* to embrace Hindu identity will continue. If the pressure works, the *Bahujan* could lose influence and power much faster than they gained it. But if they evolved an agenda that established and secured their political identity, they could get power and control in several states of India. But they cannot assert their non-Hindu identity without a non-Hindu agenda. The *Bahujan* need to evolve their own 1) political objectives, and 2) a view of the world. Without clear objectives, a positive approach to their role in the region and their own unique view of the world, they would not crystallise their separate identity.

## Conclusion

### 34. Perpetual War between Brahmin & Bahujan

The history of India is dominated by a series of bloody battles between two cultures - the egalitarian culture of its native peoples and the racist culture of the alien Aryan barbarians. The highly civilised natives - Dravidas and Adi-Dravida - who founded one of the world's greatest civilisations in the Indus Valley refuse to accept the graded caste system (racism) imposed by the Aryan Brahminic forces but embraced the egalitarian values of Buddhism. The deadliest Aryan aggression on the Indian culture and civilisation began with the destruction of Buddhism. This war between the invaders and the natives that began thousands of years ago continues even to this day.

### 35. Gandhi's Assassination

The partition of India in 1947, the assassination of M.K. Gandhi by a Brahmin in 1948, the two 'Gujarat caste wars' of 1981 and 1985, the Meenakshipuram mass conversion of Untouchables to Islam in 1981, the 'Hindu War on Sikhs' in 1984, together with the assassination of Indira Gandhi (1986), the anti-Mandal Commission war and violence (1991), the demolition of the Babri Masjid (1992) and the massacre of Muslims that followed, the brutal suppression of the Kashmiri struggle for self-determination, tyranny against the Jharkhand Tribal movement, North East India's Mongoloid Tribal movement for separation, Tamil Nationalist (Elam) movement, the rise of regional and caste-based parties, the wholesale upper caste (Aryan) joining of the Hindu Nazi party (BJP) deserting the Congress, the original Brahminic party of India, and the formation of the coalition government headed by the Hindu Nazi party in 1998 are all landmarks in this ongoing war and violence between the two cultures and two civilisations.

Even before the partition in 1947, India had witnessed serious convulsions in consequence of formidable challenges. The big welcome received by the two egalitarian religions of Islam and Christianity, which the original inhabitants embraced readily in order to escape the persecution by Aryan racists. The angry reaction in the shape of the Arya Samaj and Brahmin Samaj movements are also an important part of the history of the sub-continent. The rise of Sikhism in the Punjab was the result of anger and frustration of the indigenous peoples against the oppression by high castes who preached and enforced obsequiousness in the face of oppression and inequality. Mahatma Phule in Maharashtra, Sri Narayana Guru in Kerala, Periyar E.V. Ramaswamy in Tamil Nadu were great defenders of the culture of native Indian peoples. Babasaheb Dr. Ambedkar launched his powerful Dalit movement to fight Aryan cultural aggression. The entry of Western imperialists like the British, Portuguese, French etc. and the welcome they received proved how much the natives hated the Aryans. The period of Moghul rule that preceded that of Western colonialist also received similar welcome.

### 36. Mischief of Historians

The native peoples of India never surrender completely to the Aryan Brahminic forces. They might have been weak and often powerless but they hit back furiously when they got the opportunity. But Indian historians, who are mostly Brahmins or other Aryan, did not record these events as a battle between the two cultures and civilisations. Intellectual dishonesty is a noted Aryan trait.

The Aryans are not the only foreign elements in India. There are several foreign groups, most notably the Jats and the Mongoloid Tribals of the North East. Even the people called Rajputs are foreign. So also are the Jews and Parsees (Zoroastrians), and even the Gujjars and the Banjaras (Romas). But none of these foreign races is hated by the native peoples – only the Aryan Brahminic races are. This is because none of the migrant races committed any cultural aggression on the native Indian peoples, only the Aryan *Vedics* did. All other foreign invaders - Muslims as well as the European Christians - were welcomed on Indian soil. The Muslims in particular mixed with the local population and treated those who converted to their faith as equals. The result is that the Muslims in India are not a separate race; most of them are converts and a majority of them are of native races. Islam gave the native people a taste of egalitarian freedom. For all these reasons, it is right and proper the Muslims must join hands with the native peoples in their struggle to redeem their honour and their dignity, and to regain their sovereignty.

Guru Nanak – who founded the egalitarian Sikh religion to liberate the oppressed native Indians - belonged to an Aryan upper caste. He can be considered to be their redeemer who introduced them to an egalitarian faith. That leaves only the tiny Aryan Vedic Brahmin (3% of the population) race that remains adamantly opposed to egalitarianism in any form. They constitute the most hated foreign element on Indian soil. The situation has not changed even in the 4000 years since the Aryans arrived in India and imposed their diabolical *Varna* (caste) system on the simple native peoples of India. They enforced it with deceit and fervour in equal amount. It is the oldest and most enduring system of social engineering founded on xenophobia and sustained by caste apartheid. In its viciousness and durability it is indeed unparalleled in the history of mankind.

### 37. Brahmin War on Kshatriyas

The Aryans do not only hate the indigenous races; the *Vedic* Brahmins are hated by the warrior caste, the Kshatriyas. The BSO does not only discriminate against the native peoples but also against their own *dwija* (twice-born) - Kshatriyas (warriors) and the Vaishyas (merchant class). King Janaka, a Kshatriya, was the leader of the first intellectual revolt against Brahmanism. His daughter was *Sita*. King *Dasarata* (Kshatriya) was a stooge of the Brahmins and his son was *Rama*, who the Brahmins later promoted to godhood. The two famous Brahminic epics — the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* - written like fairy tales are an account of war and conflict between Brahmins and Kshatriyas in which the Brahmins finally vanquished the Kshatriyas.

The wholesale slaughter of Kashatriyas by a legendary dwarf Brahmin, Parasuram, culminated in the final victory of Brahmins. The target of Brahminic aggression in India was not only the indigenous races but also the Aryans of lower castes. Such is the intensity of the Brahminic paranoia; they are full of fear and hate feeling threatened and under siege all the time. Their siege mentality is so acute that they even fear their own shadow. *Vedic* society is founded on suspicion and deceit with Brahmins perpetually agonising whether or not their victims are still unaware of the truth.

Both *Rama* and *Krishna* were not Brahmins. *Rama* was a Kshatriya, *Krishna* was a Backward Caste *Yadava*. *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* narrate the stories that resulted in the defeat of the Kshatriya. After vanquishing the Kshatriyas and the powerful *Yadava* race, which had embraced Buddhism, the *Vedic* promoted both *Rama* and *Krishna* to godhood. When the greatest heroes of the two powerful communities of the Gangetic belt were deified and made the *Avatar* of *Vishnu*, the rebels gradually came under Brahminic control. The Brahmins used two powerful weapons – corruption and co-option – to establish their supremacy. After vanquishing the powerful Kshatriyas this micro minority of *Vedics* resumed being a separate – aloof and superior. Once again, the Hindu Nazi party (BJP) under the leadership of *Vedic* Vajpayee shouts down all those yelling for *Hindu Rashtra*. What they mean and want is Brahminic imperialism where the native races comprising over 85% of the country's 1200 million population would be their slaves.

Hinduism is not like other religions. It is a political ideology with only one objective – to secure the submission of non-Brahmins to Brahmin hegemony. It is imperial in its objective but it is like no other imperialism. An imperial power oppresses and exploits; Brahmin imperialism seeks much more; it seeks enslavement and thought control. Hinduism is pure theatre. It accepts into its fold those who can see moral in mythology, truth in tales, piety in philandering gods and princes, merit and holiness in priests who know nothing and do even less. It has survived so long because of its unthreatening façade, and colourful rituals and festivals. But it is changing its methods. Its policies do not only impact the internally oppressed who have been invisible; the impact of its war and subversion against neighbours is quite visible. The history of India has been a series of bloody wars between Brahminic forces and the native *Dravidas* and *Adi-Dravidas*. It is this struggle between the two forces that flows as an under-current in all social, religious, cultural and political upheavals that have rocked India until this day. This struggle shall continue until the subjugated native Indian peoples free themselves from Brahminic Imperialism.

### **38. Bid to Swallow Dr. Ambedkar**

Lord Buddha was the first to resist *Vedic* Aryans and their oppressive religion. After a long time, it was Babasaheb Dr Ambedkar who put up the most powerful challenge to Brahmanism. The *Vedic* got M.K. Gandhi to lead a fight against Dr Ambedkar that culminated in the signing of the infamous 'Poona Pact' in 1932. This Pact merged the non-Hindu Untouchables and Tribal peoples into Hinduism and



helped the Brahminic forces to boast that Hindus constitute a majority (80%) in India whereas the fact is that the Hindus are a minority (15%) and the non-Hindus are 66%.<sup>51</sup>

If *Sakya* tribal king Buddha was the first to fight the greatest fight of the indigenous races against Brahminic aggression, Babasaheb Dr Ambedkar's was the last and the most famous to fight in order to save India from the jaws of Brahmanism. The *Vedic* forces crushed Buddhism over two thousand years ago but it is in Independent India that the Brahmin has come to rule over India. The much stronger and more confident *Vedic* have inflicted a deadly blow on Dr. Ambedkar's movement. Today, the *Vedic* road-roller appears unstoppable and is bludgeoning the spiritless and lifeless native Indian peoples. Even the White Western racists and their Zionist masters who control the world, have joined hands with the Brahminic forces. They feel on top of the world.

'No imperial power ever imposed on a weaker people a more ruthless and soul destroying domination than the Brahmins did on the rest of their fellow citizens, and no race of superior men ever arrogated to themselves such haughty supremacy and false greatness as they have'.

This is the verdict of Swami Dharma Thirtha, a great Hindu leader and Sanskrit scholar from Kerala, in his book, *History of Hindu Imperialism*.<sup>52</sup>

### 39. Downward Slide of India

Just beyond the zenith, lies the steep slope of decline and fall. In the case of India, its economic fortune may continue to improve; its social atrophy is unstoppable. The downward slide would continue as long as this war between the alien Aryan *Vedic* forces and the simple, innocent and hard-working *Bahujan* continues. But the *Vedic* forces, which have ruled India since 1947, do not see it like that. They have their hands on all the levers of wealth and power. As long as their position is secure they do not care what happens to the *Bahujan* majority. They have already *hinduised* the judiciary, the bureaucracy, the media and even the defence forces. Every part of India and every section of its population is in ferment but the rulers are unmoved. They fear that even a minor change in their course to correct any imbalance or to reduce the intensity of the war and violence raging all over India would threaten their rule. This mentality makes the *Vedic* unique in the world. They refuse to learn from history. They do not read history; they simply revise it when its lessons do not suit their need.

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<sup>51</sup> VT. Rajshekar, *Mahatma Gandhi & Dr. Ambedkar - Clash of Two Values*, Dalit Sahitya Academy, 1999-second reprint.

<sup>52</sup> *History of Hindu Imperialism* (1992 edition, Dalit Educational Literature Centre, PO Box 2296, Madras).

The rulers of India are not ready even for a slow-down in their aggression. The oppressed native peoples are at last awakening and are also not willing to surrender despite having been made destitute, rendered powerless and completely enslaved. The war continues on all fronts but it is on the political front that the oppressed have come to life. The *Vedic* Aryan rulers of India believe and hope that their long deprived victims will be content with a share in power and allow them to make the rules and set the agenda. Who will prevail; time alone will tell! □

# Fight to Finish Brahmanism

V.T. Rajshekar

## 1. Bangalore Seminar

I attended a seminar on 'Brahmanism' at Bangalore (India) from 14 to 16 March in 2003. The speakers gave a very gripping account and a touching description of the horrors of Brahmanism. I admired the clarity displayed in identifying the enemy. They described the symptoms of the disease and even identified its cause but very few offered a cure. I decided I would underline remedies rather than focus on description or analysis of the chief social affliction of India – Brahmanism. It takes courage to venture forth trying to find and articulate solutions particularly when many of the remedies suggested in the past did not work or only half worked.

Brahmanism is about 3,000 years old. During this period of time it has had several names. It changed its dress and its appearance. The latest name is 'Hinduism' and the bucket in which it is now carried is the RSS (Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh). Brahmanism is not even an ideology; it is anti-human thought, a mental disease. Buddhism challenged Brahmanism and prevailed but was later swallowed up by it. Every social movement in India, right from the days of *Charvaka*<sup>53</sup> and Jainism, was against Brahmanism but it defeated every protest movement. Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, Veerashaivism<sup>54</sup> — all got brahmanised. Even Christianity and Islam are getting brahmanised. No religion in India has escaped the influence of Brahmanism. If India is poor and suffering, it is because of Brahmanism. All of us have failed to fight Brahmanism. This is what the seminar participants said.

Many foreign invaders came into India. All of them assimilated into the local indigenous population. The only people who refused to assimilate and maintained their distinct identity and kept aloof were the Aryan Brahmins. Even the Aryan Kshatriyas and Vaishyas merged into the local populace and were diluted but not the Brahmins. Brahmanism stands for falsehood, treachery and deception. These are the

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<sup>53</sup> *Charvaka* was a leader of a protest movement within Brahmanism.

<sup>54</sup> *Veerashaivism* is the name of a movement against Brahmanism in Karnataka named after its founder.

weapons they use to keep the indigenous people as slaves Divide and rule was not a British invention; it was the Brahmins who devised it but used it much more artfully dressed as 'unite and rule'. The custom of burning the dead is a Brahmin custom. Since the Brahmins had no homeland of their own, they had no land to bury their dead. Hence they resorted to burning their dead. This is what they said.

The Brahmin claims that 'Hinduism' is the only non-violent religion of the world. Why then, do all the statues of Hindu gods placed in their temples carry deadly weapons? Why is the very architecture of temples – built on high ground often as forts with ramparts – so militaristic? Why are Hindu paintings so focused on themes of war? The *Charvakas* were the first to condemn the entire Brahminic scriptures as false. The Brahmins used the *Puranas*<sup>55</sup> to fool the non-Brahmins. The Vedas and other Hindu scriptures were full of contradictions. That is what they said.

Islam reigns in 48 countries of the world - Christianity all over the world. But Hinduism, which claims to be the oldest religion of the world, is confined only to India though it is older than both. Even inside India it is getting weaker. The Hindus themselves fear that by the end of the 21st century, Hinduism will be reduced to a minority. It was given its present name – Hinduism - by the Muslims. This Hindu *dharma* has no founder, no single sacred text. It does not have a universal name or a universal god and yet they call it a religion. They say beef-eating is prohibited in Hinduism but in their holy epic – the *Ramayana* – it is stated that when their god *Rama* visited with his brother *Lakshmana* the home of the sage *Vasista*, he cut the youngest calf and cooked it to feed the god who immensely enjoyed it. Beef-eating had for long been the exclusive privilege of the Brahmins. Vatsayana recommended beef-eating.<sup>56</sup> It was Adi Shankara who stopped beef-eating to kill Buddhism. This is what they said in the seminar.

The Brahmins say that merit is their exclusive monopoly. How come that *Kalidasa*, *Vyasa*, *Valmiki* were all Dalits? Why have no Brahmins created any great scripture? Why could Brahmins not produce a Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, they asked? Brahmanism today is our Enemy No.1 and yet the Brahmins rule because they are an alert community. They confine literacy and education to themselves and deny it to us. They perpetuate our enslavement by perpetuating illiteracy and ignorance. This is their chief weapon. They said. We have to reject all the Vedic gods and go back to our *desi* (native) deities. All Vedic gods are exploiters, they said. One speaker said:

There is nothing like Brahmanism without the Brahmin. Brahmanism cannot be separated from the Brahmin. Brahmanism came from the Brahmin only. If you are a Hindu, you cannot escape from Brahmanism. Though *Gayatri Mantra* was made by Viswamitra, the Brahmins never gave him the honour because he was not a Brahmin. The *Gayatri Mantra* has now become the property of the Brahmins. The correct name of Hinduism is Vedic *Dharma*. We non-Brahmins have taken to Hinduism without being Hindu. We have all become the concubines of a man calling himself Brahmin. Right from the days of the

<sup>55</sup> The two epic stories the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* are called the *Puranas*

<sup>56</sup> Dalit Voice June 1, 2003 p.14: *Beef-eating during Vedic period*.

Vedas, the Brahmin has done just one thing: preserving his supreme position’.

The Brahmins possess lots and lots of information but they did not produce a single intellectual because they had no social concerns. Swami Vivekananda, who made Hinduism famous all over the world, had bitterly criticized Brahmins. Today it is the non-Brahmins who are carrying the Brahmin on their heads. During the *Dipavali* festival, we burn Bali Chakravarti who saved us and India from Brahmanism. Brahmins killed Bali by using the dwarf Brahmin Vamana<sup>57</sup>, they said.

Brahmins never support social change because social change will wipe out poverty in India. Dayananda Saraswati, a Gujarati Brahmin, was killed by fellow Brahmins for trying to reform Hinduism through his Arya Samaj movement. Brahmins also hated Vivekananda because he was a *shudra*, they said. Brahminism is more powerful and more dangerous than the atom bomb. It has caused more violence and bloodshed than all the world wars put together. This was the essence of the criticisms made by the different speakers at the seminar.<sup>58</sup>

The speakers were C.S. Dwarakanath, Advocate, Fr. Albert and Chand Peer of the Indian Social Institute, Prof. K.S. Bhagavan of Mysore University, Nidumamidi Swami, Prof. Shivrudra Kallolikar, C.S. Laxmi, M.C. Raj, Prof. Ambrose Pinto of St. Joseph’s College, Bangalore, Dr. Samata Deshmane of Bangalore University, Sridhar, Editor of the *Agni*, Prof. Narasimhaiya, Agrahara Krishnamurthy, Prof. Lohitaswa, Kalle Sivothama Rao, Prof. Hasan Mansoor, President of the Karnataka PUCL, Ju.Ho. Narayanaswamy, Prof. Mogalli Ganesh, P.S. Sridhara Murthy, Mrs. Jyoti Raj, Mrs. Vijaya Mahesh, Mrs. Amrita Athradi, Prof. Babu Mathew of National Law University, Bangalore, Prof. Ravi Verma Kumar, Advocate, Bangalore, Dr. Banjagere Jayaprakash and many other scholars. They spoke with passion and eloquence; their comments were sharp, their criticism well directed; and the target was Brahmins and Brahmanism. But no one suggested a remedy or cure.

I was a bit disappointed because the speakers did not go into the anti-woman practices of Brahmanism. Even a Brahmin woman is a virtual *Shudra*. She has no right to wear the ‘sacred thread’ and hence cannot become a temple priest. Even the wife of a temple priest cannot enter the *sanctum sanctorum (garbha gudi)* of a temple. Brahmanism sanctions all sorts of punishments against women including Brahmin women. She has no right to inherit parental property. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, as India’s first Law Minister, introduced the Hindu Code Bill to confer equal rights on Hindu women but the Bill was opposed by all the Brahmin men including the Brahmin Prime Minister Nehru but was supported by all Brahmin women MPs in India’s Parliament. It was in protest against such powerful Brahminic opposition that Dr. Ambedkar resigned as the Minister of Law. Such is the power of the male under Brahmanism — fully sanctioned by the *Manudharma Shastra*.

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<sup>57</sup> *Vamana* is a figure in Hindu mythology credited with miracles.

<sup>58</sup> Dalit Voice April 16, 2003 p.7: *Brahmanism can’t be cured & hence endured?*

Brahmanism sanctions *sati* (widow-burning), dowry, child marriage, and prostitution – the *Devedasi* system of temple prostitution of Untouchable girls. The declining ratio of females to males in India is due to mass female foeticide that is a widespread practice in all parts of India. Death of females is already weakening India's social fabric. Brahmins prefer boys as do all the upper castes (Hindus) even though they are the most educated people of India. The list of anti-women practices is just too long. But the speakers at the seminar spoke only of the *symptoms*. But what is the use of describing the symptoms without prescribing a treatment? I did not want to talk about the symptoms but diagnose the disease. I also wanted to prescribe the right medicines for a permanent cure. After having worked in the *Indian Express* for 25 years and as the Editor of the *Dalit Voice* for another 25 years, I have reached the conclusion that Brahmanism exists and thrives as long as the Brahmin exists and thrives. A Brahmin changes his appearance and manner, assumes different names, contrives themes and theories, propounds philosophies, changes its language, and is forever trying to hide the truth and confuse his target.

The Brahmins are only about 3% of the Indian population of 1,000 plus millions. They survived, even thrived, under foreign occupation because they have relied on foreign patronage throughout history. I have often wondered, is it because they are the original and the only permanent occupiers of India? They are a micro-minority; if the majority even shouted loudly enough they will catch the first plane and run away to America, their new fatherland. Like a chameleon that changes its colours, the Brahmin has been changing the name of the religion he professes. The current name of his religion is 'Hinduism' even though the two words - Hindu and Hinduism - are nowhere to be found in the Brahminic Scriptures. Having changed colours so often, Brahmanism has now become a problem for its creators. Even the Brahmins need to be saved from Brahmanism. There will never be peace in this subcontinent until the Brahmin himself can see that Brahmanism is a disease that is affecting the health and happiness of all the people of the country.

The Brahmin now finds the new name of his religion – Hinduism – to be inadequately inclusive and flexible to impose his will. The latest catch phrase is 'cultural nationalism'. This is as dangerous as it is subversive. It is a slogan to secure conformity without providing equality, for demanding obedience without providing consensus on objectives. It provides a rationale for pogroms against religious minorities; it provides the underpinning for an environment characterised by fear devoid of fraternity and harmony. Only a 'nation' can talk about 'nationalism'. But India is not a nation. Every time the indigenous peoples have tried to forge India into a 'nation', the Brahmin came in the way and frustrated the emergence of any basis of cohesion and harmony. It is not the native peoples of India who are responsible for shattering any prospects for making India a 'nation'. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar tried to unite India into a nation but he had to admit, with great sorrow, that he had failed. When India is not a nation, how can there be 'cultural nationalism'? Whose culture? Which 'nation'?

## What can be done?

### 2. Our Own Media

India is a country of villages. There is no trace of Brahmanism in the rural areas of India. There are temples and there are priests who live on gifts and alms; there is no paid clergy in India. There may be reverence for a *pujari* (temple priest) but he is a person without a skill or a profession who lives by *mantras* that no one understands. Hinduism is big only in the cities where it is possible to play mind games with the help of the modern media. Electoral politics has added a new dimension to the scope of mind games but it has also made the people more fickle in their perceptions. The independence movement was led by a nominally secular Congress Party but it was the Hindu Mahasabha<sup>59</sup> that dictated the Congress agenda. That dichotomy has persisted. As long as the fight was with the Muslim League, the Congress flourished by garnering the entire non-Muslim vote and the majority of 'natives' were totally sidelined. The Brahmin-controlled media continues to sustain the spectre of a 'Muslim threat' and the Brahmins continue to sideline the native peoples and rule the country. The truth indeed makes people free. It is only by having a Dalit-controlled media that Dalits could know the truth and get into the position of articulating a social and political agenda for the native majority peoples. Until then, even if Dalits get into positions of power and authority, the Brahmin will continue to rule

All the great revolutionaries who fought against Brahmanism like Dr Babsaheb Ambedkar, Periyar E.V.Ramaswamy, Dr R.M.Lohia, had their own media. All the leading newspapers and the more powerful electronic media are now under Brahminic control. Some media pundits do employ token Dalits as journalists but only those who toe their line. I have spoken to Muslims who are very much interested in supporting a media that is not the spokesman of the Brahmin establishment. But having been the worst victims of Brahminic repression and demonisation by the media they are afraid. They also look towards the native peoples of India to give them a platform from where they could struggle for their rightful place in society. I have often wondered why the *Bahujan* (Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes/Backward Castes) do not understand the importance of the media. I have come to the conclusion that they have been so culturally crushed and economically so deprived that they have also become intellectually impoverished and are easily satisfied by a few crumbs off the Brahmin table. Among the weapons to fight Brahmanism, I give the utmost importance to our own media. *Dalit Voice* was started without means and it has flourished because of it; it could neither be bought nor browbeaten.

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<sup>59</sup> The *Hindu Mahasabha* was a secret organization of Brahmins whose leaders later formed the RSS.

### 3. Need for Smaller States

If one looked at the political complexion of different states in India, one finds that there is hardly a state with a Brahmin chief minister. Except in Marxist-controlled West Bengal where the Brahmins deceived the people in the name of Marxism, the chief ministers of all the states in India are non-Brahmin. In West Bengal, Brahmins, Baidyas and Kayasths — the three tiny *Bhadralok* upper castes — used Marxism to further tighten their casteist-racist rule. West Bengal and Kerala are the standing examples of Marxism underpinning Brahmanism. But the Union Government at Dehli has remained under Brahmin control without the crutches of Marxism; it has used 'Secularism' for the same purpose. Despite the political control at state level slipping out of Brahmin hands, all the Prime Ministers and most cabinet ministers have been Brahmins. Even when non-Brahmins were put in high profile posts, the Brahmins continued to decide the national agenda and policies.

The Brahmin is uncomfortable in the role of a leader; he is a habitual (mis)leader. He is in his elements as a minister and an advisor conspiring rather than leading. In any case, who would elect a Brahmin? The vote banks in India are entirely caste-based and the Brahmins do not constitute a majority anywhere. They can never win and hold an elective office. A potent weapon to strike at Brahmin power is to create smaller and still smaller states. This would have the beneficial effect of tight and harmonious communities that would make it impossible to sideline the indigenous peoples in pursuit of grandiose Brahmin schemes and ambitions. This would also strengthen India's political unity and integrity. In Karnataka, I recommend the separation of Old Mysore from the Lingayat-dominated North Karnataka. The Vokkaligas fearing the Lingayat over-lordship had opposed the formation of Karnataka. But the Lingayats with the help of Brahmins deceived the Vokkaligas and formed Karnataka and then installed a Lingayat (S.Nijalingappa) as its first Chief Minister. There are many other peoples struggling for statehood. If Vidarbha, Telengana, Harit Pradesh, Gorkhaland and Saurashtra achieved the status of states, power will flow further down and Brahmin power will further shrink.

All those fighting against Brahmanism must bear in mind that *Akhand Bharat* is a Vedic slogan. It was once the sole aim of the RSS. They want to rule all of British India that had very large provinces. They wanted to continue the set up because of two reasons. One, the bigger and more disparate the states the greater the chance for internal disharmony and disorder that would require Union intervention and assistance to counter. Two, the bigger the state, the bigger the 'Muslim problem', the better the chance to sideline or put down every kind of opposition. However, it did not work that way. With the majority of the Muslims separated in Pakistan, it was the diversity of castes, languages and regional aspirations that made it imperative for India to make states smaller in response to popular aspirations. The Brahmin rulers submitted to populist pressures to delineate boundaries along ethnic lines. But their reason has been different. They thought that India divided into small states would make the states that much less viable and less able to become stand-alone political entities. But that is not necessarily correct as proved by the experience of the Soviet



Union. Small states have flourished just as well as the large states after the break up of the Soviet Union.

The truth is that even large states consolidate into a union when they share a higher purpose and small states can engage in a violent liberation struggle for secession when they cannot merge identities in the absence of a common higher purpose. For the impoverished and oppressed of India, small states makes more sense because they have experienced that caste-based parties have brought them closer among themselves and to their leaders. The 'caste identity' has crystallised into a clear national identity in several parts of India and the process is accelerating. No political system will work in India unless it takes that into account.

#### 4. Who is a Brahmin?

Nobody spoke at the seminar on the special characteristics of the Brahmin. The Brahmin is indeed unique. That is, a Brahmin is one who must be a Brahmin by birth. I cannot become a Brahmin. No one can become a Brahmin but one can become a Muslim, a Christian or a Sikh. A Brahmin is one who must be born to a Brahmin father. The mother is not important. The Brahmins are the only people in the world who possess some special characteristics at birth that make them high – privileged by birth. One sees White American Krishna Consciousness fellows (ISKCON) jumping up and down like monkeys on thoroughfares displaying their cross-thread; they are not Brahmins. Many others also display the 'sacred thread'. But the ten *Paisa* thread is no passport to Brahmin hood. A Brahmin is one who is born a Brahmin. All those White Western Christians claiming to be Brahmins have the status of *Shudra* – maybe Hindu but certainly Untouchable.

#### 5. Jews of India

The only other people in the world who possess similar characteristics are the Jews. Brahmins are indeed the Jews of India. I have devoted a complete chapter to this subject in my book, *Brahmanism* (DSA-2002). Just as 3 per cent Brahmins are ruling India, 3 per cent Jews are ruling America. After having stayed apart artificially, the two brothers have joined hands and the Brahmins hope to become a powerful force with their new international connections. How to confront Brahmanism that has allied itself to aggressive expansionism is indeed a question of global significance. No one in the seminar addressed this issue. Perhaps, they think it is unwise, impossible or both! It is easy to justify refrain because Brahmanism has not faced a serious defeat after it destroyed Buddhism. Not only did it swallow every protest movement like Veerashaivism, and Periyar E.V.Ramaswamy's Dravida Kazhagam, it is now Brahminising Sikhism and Christianity. Even Revolutionary Islam has not escaped being targeted; Muslims live under great peril and fear in India.

The victims of Brahmanism feel so helpless that they cannot even dare discuss their plight. The 2003 seminar in Bangalore was the first public discussion of the issue.

No doubt the victims under threat of being swallowed up are worried and anxious but they have no philosophy and no strategy. The philosophical underpinning of Brahmanism is weak. Without help from its new-found friends, it was losing to the philosophy of National Liberation. This is the philosophy on which the UN is founded. The right of national self-determination is already challenging Brahmin over-lordship over India and the Israeli occupation of Palestine. National Liberation is certainly a powerful weapon against oppression and apartheid of the caste system and pogroms against religious minorities.

Superior philosophy by itself cannot win because Brahmanism is neither a philosophy nor a religion. It has survived solely because of its clever strategy and tactics. Fighting Brahmanism is like being faced with a worm. The worm is helpless and looks harmless; it is easier to look away rather than stamp on it. It hides more often than it hits. But it is alert and attacks its victims unawares. Encouraged by its friends, the Brahmin has risked coming out of its hole and wants to play the role of an imperial power on the world stage. It is not powerful but it is remorseless. The torment and the agony of its victims in India are becoming unbearable. That may well hasten its demise. Imperial India would die of its own contradictions. The surer strategies for combating Brahmanism involve little effort, no violence but require clarity of thought, and a lot of resolute patience.

## **Law of Contradictions**

### **6. Hinduism a Bundle of Contradictions**

To confront and combat Brahmanism, one has to understand the Law of Contradictions. It is because of two reasons. One, the *Vedas* and all the other 'sacred scriptures' are a big bundle of contradictions. Arun Shourie, a Punjabi Brahmin, admitted this in his book<sup>60</sup>. Two, the inner contradictions are a treasure trove of clues that help identify a line of action to unsettle the vehicle of the contradiction and derail it to destruction. Without studying this Law of Contradictions, it is impossible to confront the menace of Brahmanism, let alone defeat it. But what is this Law of Contradictions? I have studied this law, which has been articulated in the writings of Chairman Mao Tse-tung. It has helped *Dalit Voice* to make predictions that have always proved to be right. The Law of Contradictions is the first chapter in the *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*. It is quite apart from the theory of Communism.

### **7. Clash of Opposites**

This law is founded on the 'Law of Unity of Opposites', which is a fundamental law of nature and of society and therefore the fundamental law of thought. It represents a great revolution in human knowledge. The Marxists used this knowledge in their

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<sup>60</sup> Arun Shourie '*Hinduism: Essence & Consequence*' Vikas Publishing House, New Delhi, 1979

materialist dialectics. In the years that I have been the Editor of *Dalit Voice (DV)*, I have confronted countless contradictions. My colleagues and I overcame each one of them almost effortlessly because we have applied the law in practice for decades and have mastered this law. I have this in a pocket book form on my study table and I have read and re-read it many times. It is necessary that this tiny book on 'Law of Contradictions' be re-written and adapted to the complex conditions peculiar to India so that *Bahujan* victims fighting Brahmanism may find in it comprehensive guidance and a ready reference.

Contradictions are present in all processes of objectively existing things as well as in subjective thought; they permeate through all these processes from the beginning to the end. Changelessness is the hallmark and the essence of Brahminic philosophy. They say that change is also continuity in another shape. But the truth is that the seed of change is always present even in most tranquil of conditions and places. Contradictions between the old and the new, productive and non-productive forces, upper and lower castes, the urban and the rural, the rich and the poor, the landlord and the landless, the factory-owner and the worker, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, are always present. To bring about change and to make progress some of the contradictions need to be sharpened and brought into focus. Brahmanism asserts that misery, exploitation, slavery and pain have existed throughout history and that cannot change. Therefore, to fight Brahmanism, one has to go for the opposite and lay stress on change, more change and frequent changes.

Evolutionary development is the result of the clash of contradictions inside a thing. The fundamental cause of evolution and development is not external but internal. Changes in society are due chiefly to the development of internal contradictions within the society. The Brahminic people sidestep, ignore, belittle and discourage the exposure and resolution of internal contradictions. They know that resolving contradictions require facing them. They prefer peace, tranquillity and the *status quo*. They do not want to stir the stinking pond that is India. But it is only by stirring up the dirty water and making it flow that the water gets purified and drinkable. The victims of Brahmanism must always encourage the clash of ideas, classes, and the clash of castes. If there had been no sharpening of the contradictions, the Congress Party, the original Brahminic party, would not have died. The caste contradiction is the chief contradiction; it must be brought into the open. Any change that a show down brings would favour its victims.

### **8. Hate what the enemy loves; love what he hates**

Crisis, struggle and fight are all a part of everyday life of individuals as well as peoples. These are vehicles of change and progress; a society thrives by clash between contradictions. Every person or society with power and privilege is interested in maintaining the *status quo*. It is those who need to do better who seek a clash in order to expose and resolve contradictions. '*Hate what the enemy loves and love what the enemy hates*'. This is the essence of the Law of Contradictions. In their impact, internal revolutions are many times more powerful than the forces that

impinge externally. This is true for individuals as well as society. Even external forces bring about enduring change by aligning themselves with internal forces for change.

It is only thorough study and perfect understanding of the Law of Contradictions that a revolutionary effort can be successful. It is easy to be sidetracked by minor or peripheral contradictions and thus be bogged down and end up as failure. A clever enemy will try and identify the contradictions within the revolutionary leadership, its organization or methods, exploit shoddiness and exaggerate minor slips into blunders with the entire enterprise ending up in frustration. The Brahminic society of India is itself a bundle of contradictions that can confuse any ordinary person. Those fighting Brahmanism have to be extraordinary persons with thorough knowledge of history and a perfect understanding of society with its myriad of contradictions. Their public and private life should be spotless and they should have exemplary and sterling character and integrity established by living a disciplined life.

### **9. Case of Dr. R.M. Lohia and Black America**

The Brahmin is an extraordinarily cunning and crafty animal - in fact a master crook. He puts every facet of his adversary's life, character and conduct under the microscope to find chinks in his Armour. If he finds any weakness, any contradiction, he will exploit it to keep him on the defensive and fully preoccupied in meeting the one contradiction thus making him forget the many contradictions that he had set out to sharpen, expose and confront the Brahmin with. He creates much confusion by spurious ideas and arguments that prolong the fight long enough that the adversary gives up or dies. Being a bundle of contradictions, Brahmanism is an easy target. It wins by evading focus on its own contradictions and focusing on the contradictions in the enemy camp. That is why those who set out to combat Brahmanism should not suffer from even a single contradiction. That is vitally important.

The case of Dr. R.M. Lohia constitutes a revealing study. He undoubtedly ranks third among India's greatest revolutionaries *after* Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and Periyar E.V. Ramaswamy. But he suffered from two main contradictions. He had deep hatred for the English language and a deep dislike for Marxism. No doubt, he was the father of the Backward Caste movement in the entire Hindi belt but the Brahmin who kept a strict vigil on him found these two contradictions and pushed him ever more deep in crisis as he attempted to explain, why? If one has a thorough understanding of the Law of Contradictions it is not only possible to avoid being confused; it is possible to confuse the enemy and frustrate them. It is the role of a sharp intellect to identify the contradiction and resolve it in a split second. When one is in a revolutionary movement, it is like being in a combat situation; the contradictions will be too many and one has to react quickly to resolve the baffling contradictions.

One example from the recent past is very apt. The Brahminic rulers of India thought

that their monopoly over the media had generated so much dislike and aversion to Mrs. Sonia Gandhi that the victory of the BJP was assured. I am not a supporter of M.K. Gandhi's Congress, the original Brahminic Party of India. I believe that the Congress policies are the cause of all the problems that India faces. But here the question was not the Congress Party but of Sonia Gandhi. When the Brahminic forces so forcefully and unanimously denounced her, what could be the stand of all those opposed to Brahmanism? Love what the enemy hates! That is what the Law of Contradictions required. Sonia Gandhi was supported; the Congress Party won a surprise victory. But it was not so surprising; the result was a certainty by the Law of Contradictions. The Blacks in America have become a power to be reckoned with by bringing into the open the contradictions in American society. The religion as well as the polity of America was egalitarian and racial discrimination was a contradiction that was clearly untenable. The same happened in South Africa where the Blacks overthrew the White Apartheid regime by underlining the glaring contradiction entailed in denying majority rule.

### 10. Dalit-Backward Caste Contradiction

One more example is very apt for our times. Brahminic people are encouraging and grooming some Dalit writers, funding them and giving them wide publicity in their papers, to mislead Dalits and say the Brahmin is not their enemy but the real enemy is the BC - Backward Castes.<sup>61</sup> Did Babasaheb Dr Ambedkar, who is our final authority on this subject, say this? No. It is true the Backward Castes (BCs) persecute Dalits in rural India. Yes, there is a contradiction between the Scheduled Castes (SCs) and BCs. This is well reflected in the antagonism between Mayawati and Mulayam Singh Yadav in Uttar Pradesh. But Mayawati is heading a party called the *Bahujan Samaj*, which includes the BCs. If all the SCs start identifying the BCs as the enemy then there will be no *Bahujan Samaj*. BCs no doubt constitute a contradiction but they are a minor contradiction. Those Dalits interested in fighting Brahmanism would be bogged down with their attention diverted and wasted in trying to resolve or fight this minor contradiction

### 11. Muslims Unable to Confront Brahmanism

The Muslims are the natural enemies of Brahmanism because Islam is its opposite, its nemesis. The two are like mongoose and snake. The Brahmins worship the 'cow'; the Muslims relish it as food. Islam prohibits idol worship; Brahmanism is nothing but idol worship. Islam is egalitarian; it asserts that every one (regardless of race, caste or colour) is born equal and innocent (without any burden of the sins or crimes of parents or the past). Brahmins see such a religion as an anathema and a poison. That is why Brahminic people have spun thousands of stories to malign Islam and Muslims. Those who have not studied Islam and Muslims are easy prey and their minds begin to nurse a prejudice against Islam and Muslims.

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<sup>61</sup> The BCs are a group of castes between the *Shudras* and the Untouchables. (Dalit Voice June 1, 2002 p.5: *'Brahmin writer manufactures a new enemy for Dalits*

Just because the religion of Islam is juxtaposed to Brahmanism it does not mean that the Muslims of India can fight Brahmanism better. When the Muslims of India had a political objective (Pakistan), their own political party (the Muslim League) and their own supreme leader (Jinnah), it was not easy for the Brahmin to find let alone exploit contradictions in their objective, organisation or the leader. They did try but the more they tried the more they exposed their own contradictions. Now that the Muslims in India do not have a clear political objective, the Brahmin finds it easy to exploit contradictions in the policy of Pakistan, in the history of Islam and the lofty aspirations contrasting with the abject conditions of the Muslims in India. The Muslims simply cannot fight Brahmanism and the Brahmins know it. They have made a deep study of Islam and the Indian Muslims.

The Muslims of India do know who is their Enemy. But that is all. They have not made a study of this 'enemy'. Their *madrassas*<sup>62</sup> do not teach Indian history and social sciences which are very important to prepare them for a fight. Many Muslims do not even know that the Brahmins are their oppressors, not all the others they vaguely recognize as Hindus. They are ignorant of Brahminic tricks. They get quickly confused. That is why the Muslims are failing to fight the Enemy.<sup>63</sup>

## 12. Brahmanism is the 'Principal Contradiction'

Even when dealing with different contradictions, one cannot treat all the contradictions equally. There are major and minor contradictions, antagonistic and non-antagonistic contradictions, fundamental contradictions, principal and peripheral contradictions, temporary and permanent contradictions etc. There are so many varieties of contradictions; all of those cannot be treated equally or immediately. Each contradiction is different and each needs different treatment depending upon the time, the place and the situation. Dalits as leaders of Indian revolution must make a deep study of this law and of the 'enemy'. Only after a deep study, they can launch the struggle against the enemy. Fortunately for Dalits, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar has done much of the job for them. There is hardly any aspect of the 'enemy' he has not studied. Babasaheb was a man without any contradictions. Study the enemy, study its literature, study Hindu society, and study the bundle of contradictions in Hindu society. This should be the first duty of Dalits – each one of us.

The relationship between Dalits and Backward Castes no doubt is a contradiction, which has to be fought. There is no difference of opinion on that. But that time will come only after we have fought and eliminated the principal contradiction, which is Brahmanism. Resolving a contradiction means taking a quick decision, answering a

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<sup>62</sup> Ilyas Patel DV June 16, 2002 p. 6: '*Madrassa syllabus must include Social Science & History*'.

<sup>63</sup> Rajendra: *Muslim Failure to See Through Brahminical Tricks — A Dalit Viewpoint*, Dalit Sahitya Academy -2002.

question, settling a dispute, finishing the work in hand. For the leaders it involves making plans and directing operations with calm courage. Those who are able to resolve contradiction quickly have no confusion; they arrive at the right conclusion, make simple plans and produce results almost effortlessly. At a given time one is confronted with numerous contradictions. Of these, some contradictions get intensified and some can be temporarily resolved. At this stage, new contradictions may suddenly crop up. It is in such complex situations that a deep study of the Law Contradictions is of real help.

### 13. Use of Double Standards to Conceal Major Contradiction

The Hindu Nazi party - the RSS - for instance has a *swadeshi* wing, which wants to encourage everything made in India and boycott or destroy everything made outside India. But the RSS is the party of the upper caste rulers of India who have their heart in America. They love everything Western. They speak their language (English) and flaunt everything made in the West. They like foreign perfume, foreign cars, even foreign wives and Scotch whisky. How do they reconcile such behaviour of the high caste Hindu with the *swadeshi* stand of their Nazi party? They just don't. If it made sense, it would be ordinary. If it does not make sense, it is a proof that the person who considers it nonsense has no sense. The Brahminic forces thrive on double standards and confusion. Former Prime Minister Vajpayee eats beef but his party is against cow slaughter. He talks *swadeshi* but drinks *videshi*. His Education Minister wanted education in Sanskrit but Brahmins educate their children in English. The Sanskrit *patashalas* are today educating non-Brahmin students.

Brahminic people often resort to complete *volte-face* and suddenly confront the people with baffling contradictions that throw every one into utter confusion. It is their way of asserting that they always know better; the opinion and the view of the rest of us do not matter. That is the Brahmin way of evading contradictions; he gets the rest of us used to not questioning him. But the successful use of the Law of Contradictions requires that we question everything; that is also the democratic way. The people need an answer on the spot; they must not be content with lies and evasive answers. The people can ask questions at election time but there are so many parties in the ruling coalition that everyone can avoid responsibility for the failures and excesses and claim credit for the few things that work. Politics in India has been evolving into a means for evading principal contradictions and focusing attention on peripheral or minor contradictions. It is only the *Bahujan* parties that have a need, in fact a duty, that attention never strays too far or for too long away from the ultimate principal contradiction – Brahmanism.

### 14. Identifying the Principal Contradiction

To identify the principal contradiction – a contradiction that influences all other contradictions - at a particular point in time in a specific area is not easy. In a country like India with its myriad of castes, classes, communities, religions, languages, regions etc., the relationship between the principal and the peripheral

contradictions is a mind-boggling problem. An ordinary person would be simply too confused. And Brahmanism thrives on our confusion. The Law of Contradictions teaches us that at every stage of the development of a process, there will be only one principal contradiction that plays the leading role. With reflection and experience one can apply the Law of Contradictions, identify the principal contradiction and resolve it with ease. Once the principal contradiction is identified and understood, all other minor contradictions resolve easily.

The principal contradiction in India is Brahmanism. But it keeps raising issues to distract attention and waste effort. At this time it is engaged in impressing upon Dalits that the BCs are our real enemy (principal contradiction) and divert our minds, time and energy to fight the BCs. Dalit activists and writers get confused and commit all sorts of mistakes that further add to their confusion. The Brahminic forces have been consistently telling us that the Muslims are our enemy. But when they need their votes they are not the enemy but merely 'mised people'. Clearly, they resolve a contradiction temporarily or create a temporary contradiction as it suits their purpose. They are able to do so because they have full and complete control over the media. They can make any somersault with impunity and leave the rest of us in utter confusion, completely paralysed, unable to think properly, speak coherently or act wisely. But the victims of Brahmanism have to understand how the Brahmin mind works. Neither the BCs nor the Muslims are the enemy, it is Brahmanism that has to be fought and finished first. Brahmanism is the principal contradiction in India; all the other contradictions are peripheral. Once the principal contradiction is eliminated all other minor or non-antagonistic contradictions like the BCs or Muslims would disappear.

### 15. Terrorism Identified with Muslims

Brahmanism has been deceiving us in more recent times by suggesting that 'terrorism' (read Muslims) is the main enemy of society. The truth is that the Muslims are the main targets of pogroms all over India, particularly in Kashmir and the BJP ruled states. In the past, they succeeded in diverting our attention and deceiving us notably in 1991 when the reluctance to implement the Mandal Commission Report had created a mass agitation. The Brahmin directed and consumed the time and energy of the agitation against the Muslims by creating a problem over the Babri Masjid. The BCs, the main beneficiaries of the Mandal Commission report, and Dalits who spearheaded the agitation, fell into the trap of Brahminic treachery. All the zeal and zest of the agitation got sidetracked, its objectives were compromised and all of India got busy in a pogrom against the Muslims. The principal contradiction in India, therefore, is Brahmanism. All the other contradictions are minor, temporary or non-antagonistic.

There are thousands of scholars among *Bahujan* castes and among Muslims, Christians and Sikhs but it is indeed amazing that none of their scholars or leaders has shown any awareness of the Law of Contradictions. That is why their scholars are long-winded and vague and their leaders indecisive and unsure when they are not



downright wrong. In contrast, every Brahmin is an expert in the Law of Contradictions. His 'sacred scriptures' constantly underline the importance of identifying the enemy and confusing him to make him err and blunder. The Muslims, Christians and Sikhs are not as confused as Dalits and BCs. Their religions have given them a better grounding. But the *Bahujan* having been totally *hinduised* (enslaved), they are easily deceived and made to act criminally often against their own best interests.

### 16. Dr. Ambedkar Proved Right

M.K. Gandhi supported by Brahmanism launched a struggle against the British for the 'freedom of India'. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar disagreed with Gandhi. He said the Untouchables were persecuted not by the British but by the Brahminic forces. Gandhi and Dr Ambedkar had differing views on the principal contradiction but the judgement of Babasaheb was right. History has proved him right. Brahmanism is a socio-cultural force that is fascist in its nature and methods. It is not an economic force; it is not a political force. Brahmanism used its social power of coercion to secure political power and then used it to gain economic power after several decades of socio-cultural counter-revolution. The RSS was established in 1925 but the Brahminic revival began with the destruction of Buddhism by Adi Shankara centuries earlier. A number of Hindu socio-cultural-religious leaders led the revival of Brahmanism. Dayananda Saraswati, Savarkar, B.G. Tilak, Raja Rammohan Roy, Aurobindo, Vivekanada, Lala Lajpat Rai and M.K. Gandhi were the most prominent names among them. None of them worked for political power for Brahmins. Their attention was fully focussed on the revival of Brahmanism as the vehicle and instrument of socio-cultural revival, which meant misleading the people into accepting slavery in the name of redemption.

M.K. Gandhi was the most successful among them in confusing the masses of India. Though not a Brahmin himself, he conferred the greatest benefits on Brahmanism by defeating Dr. Ambedkar through the 'Poona Pact'. By this Pact made between M.K.Gandhi and Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar, the Untouchables of India opted for a 'joint electorate' with their oppressors forsaking the protection of a 'separate electorate' they were offered by the British. The Muslims refused to accept a similar deal offered to them and maintained their separate national identity that helped them secure sovereign freedom in Pakistan. By entering into the 'Poona Pact' the Untouchables accepted perpetual slavery. After obtaining the acquiescence of the Untouchables, Gandhi quickly diverted the attention of the country to 'driving the British out'. His idea was to catch the Muslims on the back foot and prevent the Untouchables from realising their mistake and reversing their decision. The Hindu revivalists were true to their cause, they did not seek political power, and they were content with putting a Brahmin - Jawahar Lal Nehru - in power as the first Prime Minister of India.

Even after independence, the RSS and other Brahminic forces did not work for political power. They confined themselves to tightening their socio-cultural hold on

the masses by a process of *Hinduisation* of the SC/ST/BCs. The political wing of the RSS - the BJP – won two elections and ruled India for seven years but it did not forget that its agenda was to *hinduise* the indigenous peoples of India. Brahmanism has only recently taken an aggressive and violent stance after decades of efforts in socio-cultural revival. Dr. Ambedkar advised that Dalits also undertake a thorough-going socio-cultural revolution before trying to capture power through the vote. The whole superstructure - social, cultural, educational, judicial, financial, bureaucratic, media and political - is rigged to suit Brahmanism. How can we the persecuted slaves capture political power? A revolutionary effort is needed to demolish this superstructure through a socio-cultural revolution.

## 17. Place of Antagonism

The socio-cultural redesign of India to suit the *Bahujan* majority would neither take that much time nor face that much resistance as the redesign to suit Brahminic minority rule. The important thing is to have the objective clear. The Brahminic people are Aryans and hence are foreigners. This is not our claim; it is a claim made by the Brahmins themselves. The SC/ST/BCs are indigenous peoples of India – the children of this soil. Antagonism between the two, therefore, is natural. But the Brahminic people and SC/ST/BCs, who are persecuted by them, have been co-existing for centuries! Even under Muslim and British rule! How could the two antagonistic forces exist together? This is because other contradictions developed that prevented their mutual antagonism reaching a stage to cause open hostility, clash and finally revolution. For any contradiction to be resolved, it does not only have to be the principal contradiction but also an antagonistic contradiction.

But the safety valves and diversions that prevented the contradictions between the Aryan and the non-Aryan to become antagonistic and spill over into conflict and confrontation are now absent. The Brahmins are a mere 3% of the population - a minuscule minority. They have been engaged in the social engineering of India since 1925 to make the practice of pogroms against selected minorities and slavery of the majority possible. Before the project was complete, its *Bahujan* victims have become aware. Politics is in utter confusion already. The RSS-BJP design is still in place and waiting for a return to power. There is no alternative design in existence but there is awareness that the Brahmin cannot be allowed to assume the power to think on behalf of the entire society. If they continued as at present the contradictions in the society would be sharpened and antagonism could reach such an explosive stage that the very life of the Brahmin will be in danger. He knows that too. That is why he is using all the power of the media, temples, myth-making, Sanskrit, rewriting of history to direct our anger against the non-antagonistic contradictions - Muslims and Christians.

The SC/ST/BCs including Muslims, Christians and Sikhs (the *Bahujan*) must know that the contradiction between Brahmanism and them is the principal and antagonistic contradiction. Unless it is resolved, it would continue to be sharpened until it explodes into a revolutionary war. The result of such a war would be the

overthrow of Brahminic rule. That is how the Law of Contradiction operates; one prevails, the other goes under. Brahmanism is well past the point of being fit to be sold even to Brahmins. The challenge before India is to find some other model if it is to avoid being atrophied socially. Its political leadership appears to be worried about the political disintegration of India. But that is not the threat it faces. It may in fact become more lean and fit and return to health if it resolved the contradiction between nationalism and Brahmanism by creating several nation states in India. The threat it faces is of social collapse while it invests too much capital into staving off political disintegration. That is the implication of the Law of Contradictions for India.

### 18. Gandhi - a Counter-revolutionary

There are some do-gooders among Dalits who say, "Are there no good Brahmins? Why blame the Brahmins alone?" To such do-gooders our reply is: read history. We have no quarrel with any individual Brahmin. Our fight is against a system that is oppressing us. Brahmins themselves are also victims of Brahmanism. They also have to be saved. But when the battle lines are drawn, the *Bahujan* have to be on one side and Brahmanism on the opposite side. The clash between the two is inevitable. This clash can be postponed but it cannot be avoided. A social revolution in India is necessary as well as entirely practicable and would be highly beneficial. This is the message given to us by all the great revolutionaries of India: Buddha, Mahatma Phule, Guru Nanak, Sri Narayana Guru, Babasaheb Ambedkar, Periyar E.V. Ramaswamy etc until the arrival of M.K. Gandhi who was a counter-revolutionary. He misled the oppressed masses and deceived them. The contradiction between the Aryan and the indigenous peoples of India was not resolved; it was sidetracked as attention was focused on a peripheral 'communal contradiction'.

### 19. Why Counter-revolutions Succeeded?

Contradiction and struggle are universal and absolute. But the form of struggle may differ according to different circumstances. Dalits, BCs, Vokkaligas, Lingayats - all those who spoke at the seminar - were against Brahmanism. Over 90 per cent of the Indian people hate Brahmanism. Why then, are they not able to land a punch on the face of Brahmanism? This is because they have not studied the Law of Contradictions. Most have not even heard of this Law. This Law tells us the difference between principal and peripheral contradiction, major and minor contradiction, temporary and permanent contradiction, antagonistic and non-antagonistic contradiction. All contradictions are not equally important or require urgent resolution. At this time, for example, the Brahmins have fanned BC-SC hatred and are seeking a clash between them in order to 'divide and rule'. But we must not make the mistake of treating a minor or non-antagonistic contradiction as the principal contradiction. Such mistakes are the cause of our failure to put up a fight against Brahmanism despite our overwhelming numbers in population. We have to finish the principal enemy first. Mobilizing the means to fight the principal enemy is our main task. We have to study of the Law of Contradictions to find the

best and the most deadly weapon to destroy Brahmanism. What is that weapon? That weapon is: *love what the enemy hates, hate what he loves*. If this one lesson is mastered, Brahmanism can be beaten into pulp.

## **Weapons to Fight Counter-Revolution**

### **20. Reject Gandhi and Gandhism**

M.K.Gandhi may have been killed by a Brahmin but the main beneficiaries of his deception are also the main preachers of Gandhism. This is a glaring contradiction. The Brahmins hated Gandhi. Even today, on the day of the assassination of Gandhi (January 31), the RSS distributes sweets. But in public they treat him like a god and subject anyone who speaks the truth about him to vile abuse. One deadly weapon against Brahmanism is to reject Gandhi and Gandhism because it is an attractive mask behind which the Brahmin hides. What does this rejection mean? It requires that we reverse what Gandhi did. He made the *Bahujan* submit to Brahmin rule by the Poona Pact and drove a wedge between the Muslims and Dalits. We should reject the Poona Pact and assert that castes (*jatis*) are nations and have a right to national self-determination. Foreign or not, Islam is the opposite of Brahmanism. It teaches justice, equality and brotherhood and the Muslims embrace any one as equal who embraces Islam. Let us bury that hatchet and make friends with Muslims. Love what the enemy hates and hate what the enemy loves. And do so with open pride as it constitutes a slap on the face of Brahmanism as well as Gandhism.

### **21. Beef-eating**

Dalits are beef-eaters. The Brahmin has made beef eating a cardinal sin and makes a point of imposing a ban on beef eating even on Muslims and Christians whose religion permits it. There is no scientific rationale for it. In fact, it is a rich and inexpensive source of protein. Many of the upper castes eat meat and almost every one eats fish. Why do the Brahmins make such a big issue of it? It is because they see it as an instrument of *Hinduisation* (imposing its culture and values without offering the comfort of a bond of fraternity) and a symbol of their power to make and enforce rules to establish their hegemony. If they can ban a practice permitted by the religions of the majority, they show that they are the real rulers - they set the agenda; they make the rules. Defying Brahmin made rules is to defy his hegemony. Since he attaches so much importance to a ban on beef-eating, the eating of beef openly constitutes defiance of Brahmanism that breaks the chain of Dalit subservience more surely and permanently than perhaps any other act.

I met Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale in 1984 and suggested to him that since the Sikh religion places no restriction of beef eating, he should ask his followers to almost ritually eat beef. He did not see the point and preferred the more vigorous and violent reaction to the pogroms against Sikhs at the time. We all know what happened. The Brahminic rulers of India ordered the Indian Army to storm the holiest shrine of the Sikhs – the Golden Temple - after bombarding it for days,

killing thousands of devotees and fighters that included the noble saint. The Sikhs have a cast-iron case for national self-determination. How can India depend on the loyalty of a proud people after having meted out the treatment to them that it did in 1984? Equally, the Sikhs have to see that the most violent way is not always the most successful way. There are ways that are infinitely more effective in fighting Brahmanism. Beef eating openly is one of them.

### **22. There are no good Brahmins: keep all of them out!**

During the seminar there were many speakers who criticized Brahmanism but suggested united action with 'liberal or progressive Brahmins'. But that is a contradiction in terms. How can one be a Brahmin as well as 'liberal' or 'progressive'? Medha Patkar, Swami Agnivesh, Ramkrishna Hegde, Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer, E.M.S. Namboodripad are even more dangerous because they put on a mask of Socialism. Their objective is dissuading people from fighting Brahmanism. They want to mislead us into blind alleys, even into supporting Brahmin hegemony. Tagodia, Narendra Modi, Uma Bharati, even L.K. Advani are our friends. They do not hide their hate. They do not only criticize, they also kill Muslims, Dalits and Christians. None of us has any difficulty identifying Bal Thackeray as the enemy. We have been misled always by those who posed to be our friends who misdirected our struggle and betrayed our cause.

We must follow the rule: 'Never admit a Brahmin'. Buddhism was betrayed by the Brahmins because they were admitted into the *Sangha*. The Brahmins never admit a non-Brahmin into their inner circle. Even their temples have a different door for non-Brahmins. Everybody is required to remove his shirt to allow the checking of the 'sacred thread'. But Dalits are not Hindus. We have no need or desire to enter their temples. All over India, untouchable Dalits live in a separate part of the villages and are quite content with that. We do not enter their part of the village or insist on drinking from their well. We want to be left alone to socialize and work with our own people. But there are communist and socialist parties and NGOs, invariably led by Brahmins or upper castes, which are springing up all over India to help 'us' gain our human rights. They give us nothing. They only help the ruling castes by smoothening the rough edges of the system that causes so much suffering. But our people would rather bear their pain and suffering in privacy with their characteristic dignity. They remember the warning of Periyar E.V.Ramswamy. He said: Brahmins are good servants but bad masters. India was all right when the Brahmins were servants. It is when they become masters or a part of the inner circle that they cause trouble and mischief.

### **23. The Language Contradiction**

The language issue is yet another contradiction that remains unresolved. India is a country of many languages and associated literature and culture. But language was not the basis of the national identity of the peoples of India. The caste mosaic was superimposed on the ethnic mosaic that was reinforced by social apartheid and the

practice of Untouchability. The result was a myriad of divisions, the absence of any basis of solidarity and an environment of fear and suspicion. This made communication difficult and the cultural development that results from free and frequent social interaction was stymied. The ruling elite using a foreign language for communication further exacerbated this situation. In the past, all the literature was in the Sanskrit language, which was unknown to the people and the monopoly of the Brahmins. The indigenous peoples were not only social outcasts as Untouchable; they were totally unlettered in the 'ruler-speak' and utterly ignorant. They used the local languages that changed every hundred miles or less. There were as many as five hundred languages in British ruled India and many of those were not even written languages.

The British introduced the English languages as the medium of knowledge and instruction, which had two revolutionary effects. One, the transfer of knowledge from the West to India was direct with the effect that it was not just know-how but also Western values and culture to which the people of India were introduced. Two, the British did not restrict education to Brahmins or the high castes. In fact, they recognized that the indigenous people of India had been oppressed socially and denied opportunities in education and employment. They reserved quotas for Scheduled Castes in education and employment thus opening up new vistas for them on a scale unprecedented in their history. It would not be an exaggeration to say that Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar would not have been the great leader that he was without the benefit of an education in the English language.

On independence, the original Brahmin Party - the Congress Party - realized that wide knowledge of the English language would make the people equal and break the spell of Brahmin hegemony. In the name of recognizing the ethnic diversity of India, they redrew the boundaries of states on linguistic lines, thus underlining language as the feature of ethnic identity that was officially recognized. They hoped that it would suppress religion and caste as the basis of national personality. They would not even record the caste or religion of persons during the census. But it did not have the desired effect. With the state boundaries providing a geographic confirmation to ethnic personality, the pieces of the Indian mosaic are less blurred at their edges. But the *jati* factor did not go away, it became the sole determinant of identity. Different *jatis* compete and cooperate freely in elections.

The authors of the plan to delineate boundaries anew, however, did succeed in their other objectives. They hoped that with the state languages coming into focus, more and more people would speak and use the state language. This, it was hoped, would have the effects of reducing movement and migration across state boundaries and causing people to blame misrule on the state government. They also hoped that the English language, associated with the discredited British *Raj*, would fall into disuse and become the monopoly of the upper castes. One finds the politicians of Karnataka exhorting that every one should even eat and sleep in Kannada but they send their own children to English medium schools and speak even to their pets in English. At the same time, the Brahmin Jati Party (BJP) is trying to revive Sanskrit.

Clearly there are contradictions that need to be resolved. The *Bahujan* can do two things. One, they should learn the English language like it was their national language and use it to compete with the English educated upper castes. Two, they should purge all the languages of Sanskrit words like the Tamil people have. The two would eliminate the feeling of inferiority produced by centuries of oppression.

#### 24. The Contradiction of Identity – ‘use caste to kill the caste system’

What is going on today inside India is a fight between the indigenous *Bahujan* (SC/ST/BCs – 65 per cent - who with Muslims/ Christians/Sikhs – 20 per cent - are 85 per cent of the population of India) and the alien Aryans (who are 15 per cent). The top Aryan caste, the Brahmins, are only 3 per cent but they are the ones fanning the flames of hatred between the different sections of indigenous people and making them fight each other. Brahmanism has centuries of experience in making the *Bahujan* fight each other rather than the Brahmins. They have succeeded, to a great extent, in *hinduising* the Backward Castes and encouraging them to persecute Dalits. On the other hand, they have given Dalit writers regular columns in their daily newspapers to repeat *ad infinitum* that the real enemy of the Dalits are the BCs. This kind of mischief will be used more often if the Brahmin succeeds in sharpening such temporary contradictions.

The *Bahujan* castes have nothing to do with the Hindu *Chaturvarna*. In their caste system, there are four *varnas* - Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra. The *Bahujan* are not a part of this caste system. *Our castes are our ethnic identities*. India had hundreds of different tribes; *Bahujan* castes and sub-castes are the named after their tribes. Since we use the same term – *jati* – as the Hindu to describe our castes, we have come to be confused about the true nature of our castes. Our castes constitute our tribal and ethnic identity. Until an individual decides to change his identity (by converting to a religion) the *Bahujan* have no identity other than their *jati*. When we talk about the caste system being abhorrent and against the laws of nature, we talk about people being unequal by birth – the principle that underpins *Chaturvarna*. But our castes are our ethnic identity; these do not underpin inequality or confer privilege.

The indigenous peoples of India divide into hundreds of castes, sub-castes, tribes, sects, ethnic groups want to retain their identity but the Brahmins want to destroy this identity. **After using the caste system for social hegemony and control for centuries, it is the Brahmin who is eager to abolish castes. It is because we, the Dalits, have come to employ *jati* solidarity as an instrument to gain political power.** I have been saying for some time now that the best way to fight the curse of the Hindu caste system is to underline and emphasize the ‘ethnic caste system’. After having consolidated their caste unity through their mutts, gods, and their own banks and educational institutions, the *Chaturvarna* people are telling us about the evil of the caste system. We are not going to be taken in this time by the ‘abolition of the caste system’ as we were taken in by M.K. Gandhi’s pleas for the ‘abolition of separate electorates’ launched during his fake ‘freedom movement’.

During the three decades leading up to partition and independence in 1947, Brahmanism fooled us in the name of a fake 'freedom struggle' that was actually a movement to enslave the *Bahujan*. By signing the Poona Pact the Untouchables of India thought they had sacrificed their separate national status to 'strengthen' the so called 'freedom movement'. But the truth is that the Brahmin, after it secured state power, used it to deny the *Bahujan* their national status forever. Abolishing the caste system (in law only) has become the need of the Brahmin because he would otherwise be reduced to being a permanent minority. The long oppressed *Bahujan* has since turned the caste weapon against the Brahmin; it is the need of the oppressed that the caste contradictions are sharpened for that is now an instrument for victory. The 'abolition of the caste system' is just as fake as the 'freedom struggle'. The truth is that the Brahmins made a somersault in their objective and strategy and agreed to 'partition' when they realised that Dalit-Muslim unity was imminent; if power had been transferred to them, it would have made the Hindu castes a permanent minority in 'independent India'. C. Rajagopalachari, known as the 'Southern Fox', was the brain behind the Congress accepting the 'partition' as the 'lesser evil'.

The sharpening of caste contradictions – its methods and impact – has been different in different states of India. In Karnataka, for example, there are three ruling castes: Lingayats, Vokkaligas and Brahmins. How did the three become rulers? They became rulers by strengthening their ethnic identity. They strengthened their *jati* organisations, established their own religious mutts (priestly order) educational institutions, banks, cooperative societies and even a secret militia. After strengthening all these, they were able to capture political power. And political power was then used to further strengthen their *jatis*. It is through their *jati* strength they came to power - not the other way around. In Andhra Pradesh, the Reddys and Khammas always rule the state. In UP, Mayawati became the Chief Minister by strengthening the identity of her Chamar *jati*.

After having developed their *jatis* through their mutts, their gods, their own educational institutions and banks etc., the Brahmins are now telling our people to destroy our castes. They cite the book by Dr. Ambedkar, '*Annihilation of Caste*' to mislead us. Babasaheb wrote this book not for our *Bahujan* castes but the Hindu castes. The SC/ST/BC castes are ethnic identities, kin groups, who are the original inhabitants of India. They are outcastes to the Aryan, they are outside the caste system. Our *jatis* are not a part of the Hindu caste system. If *Bahujan* castes consolidated and strengthened their identity, they can also become rulers. *Kurubas* (shepherds) of Karnataka are the largest single caste group under the BC list in the state but they have never ruled the state. But Deve Gowda became the Chief Minister of Karnataka. How? All the Gowdas came to Bangalore with a stick and some stones in their pockets and threatened Deve Gowda's Brahmin rival, Ramakrishna Hegde. Four Brahmins were beaten up on the day of the election. The Gowda muscle power made Deve Gowda the Chief Minister and he later even became the Prime Minister.



The fiercest opponent and critic of my ethnic identity thesis are the Brahmins. Why? Because they realize it constitutes a serious challenge to their fake 'abolition' of the caste system. The Law of Contradictions says 'Love what the enemy hates'; we have to love the ethnic identity thesis. But some unthinking Dalits oppose my thesis although their number is dwindling. They are not able to understand why? They still talk of the 'Annihilation of Caste'. The only way to destroy the caste system is to make the oppressed castes the ruling caste. My thesis is "*use caste to kill the caste system*".

### Religious Conversion

#### 25. The Only Escape

Since Brahmanism is revered as a religion, the principal contradiction in India is that of religion. Those interested in fighting Brahmanism have to understand the role of religious conversion in dealing with the contradiction. The Hindu Nazi leaders have themselves acknowledged that their religion (Brahmanism) would be reduced to a minority by the end of this century.<sup>64</sup> Buddhism had practically wiped out Brahmanism until *Adi Shankara* came on the scene and launched his violent revivalist activities. No other weapon is as deadly to Brahmanism as conversion and that is why promoters of Brahmanism are trying to introduce a Central legislation to ban conversions. Some states have already legislated to ban conversions. Tamil Nadu, under a Brahmin Chief Minister, has recently introduced a ban on conversions. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar experimented with several different remedies to liberate the Untouchables and finally arrived at the conclusion that religious conversion was the only way and embraced Buddhism in the last years of his life<sup>65</sup>.

#### 26. The Road to Self-respect

Conversion may not improve the economic status of the converts but poverty has never been the main problem of the Untouchables. Nowhere have our people complained of poverty. Their problem is the denial of human respect and dignity and social oppression. The feeling of deprivation is the result of the denial of dignity much more than the denial of opportunity. Conversion instantly restores to them human dignity as it marks the making of a free choice and self-assertion without which there is no dignity. Conversion is the most powerful step in the long march of Dalits towards liberation. This may well become the ultimate weapon if it is employed by large numbers – whole villages – and if it is attended by opposition or persecution. The shackles of Brahmanism are ingrained in the social norms and culture of India. It is impossible to cast them away without dramatic gestures under wise leaders. There is no more powerful gesture than mass conversion in a public ceremony.

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<sup>64</sup> Dalit Voice May 16, 2003 p.11: '*Hindus will be a minority by 21st century end?*'

<sup>65</sup> Dr. B.R. Ambedkar: *Why Go for Conversion?* Dalit Sahitya Academy -1987.

Convert to which religion? This question would naturally arise. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar embraced Buddhism. In Tamil Nadu, the Untouchables preferred Islam. In Kerala and Andhra Pradesh, they chose Christianity. In Maharashtra, the trend is in favour of Buddhism. In the Punjab, many Untouchables have sought salvation in Sikhism. In different parts of India, Dalits preferred different religions according to the welcome they get from the religious community they joined. But all over India the Untouchables are unanimous on one point, that religious conversion is the only road to self-respect.

## 27. Not born but made Hindu

Some people ask: 'since the Untouchables are not Hindus, the question of quitting Hinduism should not arise'. It is indeed a historical fact that the Untouchables are not Hindus. But they are human beings who also bend before social pressures. As the original inhabitants of India, they cannot be Hindus. The religion of the Aryan is not their religion. The Aryans came into India nearly three thousand years ago, imposed caste apartheid and ruled as foreign conquerors for centuries. Even today the upper castes do not allow Untouchables inside their temples. Those who cannot worship together cannot be of the same faith. The people who cannot intermarry, cannot eat with each other, drink from the same well, whose shadow is a peril, cannot be of the same faith. With the advent of democracy, in a land of many religions, in the last one hundred years or so, the Brahmin felt the need that the Untouchables must be *hinduised*. After having been spurned for centuries, acceptance of the Untouchables into the Hindu fold was sold as a gesture of reconciliation, a change of heart, a new beginning, the dawn of freedom. But it was no such thing. The objective was that the Dalits should not flex their political muscle in their own right or embrace an egalitarian faith. Dalits are not born Hindu; they cannot become Hindu; they have merely been induced to 'call themselves Hindu'.

There were three reasons for the Hindu castes to coerce the Untouchables into the Hindu fold in the last one hundred years.

1. Hinduism becomes the 'majority religion' of India only if the Untouchables and the Tribals are counted as Hindus. To count them as Hindus was the focal point of the political stratagem of M.K.Gandhi. In the name of *dharti* (earth of one's birth) he succeeded in selling to the Untouchables his *dharm* (religion) that was not really a religion – just apartheid underpinned by the *chaturvarna* caste system. Untouchables and the Tribals are a staggering 30 per cent of the population of India. The Backward Castes – who are neither *Shudra* nor Hindu – are 35 per cent of the population. If they walk out of the fold of Hinduism, the *Chaturvarna* Hindus are about the same in number as the Muslims – 15 per cent.
2. Since every national political party including the Marxists are Hindu parties, their very existence as viable parties would be imperilled if the

*Bahujan* vote bank abandoned them completely. That has happened at the state level in many parts of India with the result that *Bahujan* parties have captured power in many states. But they have neither crystallised a national agenda nor transformed themselves into separate nations. But one or the other will happen in due course of time. No wonder the Hindu national parties are increasingly depending on friends overseas.

3. The economy of India is primarily agricultural and it thrives on the availability of Dalit slave labour. It would collapse if the Untouchables embraced an egalitarian faith, refused to be slaves of their *chaturvarna* masters, and started to migrate to the cities in large numbers.

For those reasons, the Untouchables who are not born Hindus, are forcibly made to call themselves Hindus, not in the interest of the Untouchables but in the interest of their oppressors. The State itself is used to promote an inclusive form of Hinduism – that counts the SC/ST/BC as Hindus while Hindu society continues to exclude and oppress them.<sup>66</sup> The dichotomy between the form and reality becomes apparent every time a large number of *Bahujan* convert and embrace a religion. Our Hindu ‘saviours’ start screaming when conversions take place but they return to being ‘slave drivers’ as soon as the ‘crisis’ has been contained. Our ‘saviours’ are indifferent to our misery. Nay, they are the instruments of our misery. The Brahmin propaganda machine is working over time to keep us slaves, which we will remain as long as we are considered and counted as Hindus. Gandhi *hinduised* the *Bahujan* misleading us in the name of his fake ‘freedom movement’. We are the majority, we refuse to be slaves. We are not Hindus. We will choose our religion ourselves. We will not be fooled again.

### 28. Role of Conversion

Our self-avowed ‘well-wishers’ often ask, ‘what is the use of conversion? Other religions also have castes. Why jump from the frying pan into the fire?’

Our reply is:

(1) Yes. We know. If followers of non-Hindu faiths in India practise caste discrimination, the contagion has gone from Hinduism. In no other faith is caste apartheid sanctioned by religion except in Hinduism.

(2) Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar has given this call for conversion only to our people - Untouchables who are no more than animals or slaves under Hinduism - not to our oppressors or those slaves who enjoy their slavery. We do what is best for our salvation; we are the masters of our destiny.

The social and religious aspiration of Dalits is not only to liberate themselves but

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<sup>66</sup> Dalit Voice Editorial Sep 1, 1987; ‘*The state used to promote Hindu religion?*’

also to save India. According to Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, the Father of India, who conducted a series of experiments in this field, this is only possible by religious conversion. It is the best and the simplest, inexpensive and the most non-violent way not only for the liberation of Dalits but also to transform the country. The Christians in India did not come from Rome, or Muslims from Arabia; they were SC, ST or BC before they converted and joined the ranks of fellow Christians and Muslims as equals and were given due respect as such even by upper caste Hindus. If 20 per cent of the people - Muslims, Christians and Sikhs - can get instant equality and dignity, and enjoy self-respect, why shouldn't the rest of us?

## 29. Never Ending Caste War

As long as the Bahujan remain in the Hindu fold, they have to fight the *Chaturvarna* Hindus every day to get their rights. The caste conflict is a permanent feature of our rural life where Dalits are subjected to violence, made to work without payment and their women treated as beasts of burden and violated with impunity. Hinduism is no religion; it has no theology. Caste apartheid, perpetual exploitation and oppression are Hinduism. There has been no escape from it for centuries; why should it be different now? It is true that electoral politics can and has brought power to the *Bahujan*. But it is elusive and may be temporary unless we can underpin it with a proper religion and a universal theology to make ourselves a part of the comity of nations that enjoy equality, mutual respect and sovereign dignity as a norm not as a gift of the high and mighty – of the proverbial or actual Brahmin.

Dalits have become Bishops, Imams, Sheikhs and Sikh *Sants*. If there are sects and castes within those religions, they can resolve such contradictions without undermining their religion. But without the caste system, the entire edifice of Hinduism collapses. Kill the castes and Hinduism is dead. It is by acceptance of being in the Hindu fold, however reluctantly or partially, we have allowed this depraved culture to thrive and be recognised as a religion. We have a duty to ourselves, to history and to the majority living in fear and bondage, that we grasp the nettle and renounce Hinduism fully and finally and exit from its door forever.

Choice of which religion to embrace is a personal matter. Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar preferred Buddhism. It was the religion of our forefathers that was defeated because its commitment to pacifism was total and was truly egalitarian, while Brahman Pacifism was for preaching and it had a warrior caste to use for resort to violence. Buddhism has no holy scriptures; its hallmarks have all been compromised by most of its followers. Christianity is a world religion with scriptures and a universal theology but it has a chequered history in South India where it embraced caste apartheid even in the churches. It is the religion of the white man who is first white then Christian. As for Islam, it would be mad to suggest that anyone converted to the faith that is being viciously demonised and the Muslims are being stereotyped as terrorists. But it is the fastest expanding faith embraced by peoples of all races and colour. Its holy book is unaltered and is in a living language; it has a universal theology that is buttressed by its theology of liberation. I have been impressed by the

ecstasy experienced by those who convert to Islam. Whatever faith one chooses, every conversion is a nail in the coffin of our tormentor over the centuries – Brahmanism.

### 30. Stop Worshipping Aryan gods

It has been detailed in the earlier chapter how the Aryans subverted the folklore – that is practically our history – and made villains of heroes and heroes of villains. It is true that folklore is not good history or good religion. But that is all we have unless we convert to a proper religion with divine scriptures and a universal theology. But that is not a transformation that is imminent, or even possible. But a lot of work is being done to identify distortions of history and separate Aryan gods from indigenous gods. This is as necessary and helpful to the *Bahujan* as the distinction being made between the *Bahujan* castes (*jatis* that are ethnic in nature and origin) and the *Chaturvarna* castes of the Hindus. The *Bahujan* live, work and worship separately anyway. We must remove the Aryan gods from our temples and remove the distortion made by the Brahmin in our history and folklore. That is an essential first step towards a formulation of our own national identity. But the Aryan gods are not the only element of contamination and impurity; there are new developments that are aimed at much more sinister falsification of history.

The BJP Government started a project to review history to make it justify their imperial and expansionist ambitions. The project is still under way and it would continue with private funds if public money were refused. Even the historically well-established facts like the Aryan invasion of India are being disputed. It is claimed that the Aryans did not come from the outside but they were already there albeit in the Indus River Valley that is Pakistan today. The rationale for this gross distortion of history is two-fold:

- (1) Since Hindu Revivalists including the RSS and its political wing - the BJP - have been castigating Islam and Christianity as foreign faiths – a contaminant in the purity of Indian mythology - Dalits and other indigenous peoples of India took the cue and started to assert that Brahmanism is the ultimate foreign faith that was brought in by Aryan invaders. It was also pointed out that the Aryans imposed the scourge of the caste system whereas Islam and Christianity are both egalitarian. It became necessary to 'revise' history and present the Aryan as indigenous rather than foreign invaders.
- (2) By presenting the Aryan homeland as Pakistan, it was hoped to add another prop to the bogey of *Akhand Bharat* - claiming that Pakistanis are blood brothers of Brahmins. But the Pakistani Aryans have all converted to Islam and the Muslims identify themselves by their belief and not birth or blood. That raises the big question: 'who should follow whom?' Pakistan has a better case for the people of India to embrace Islam!

Such Machiavellian tricks do not work but they do cause a lot of pain and distress to a lot of people. As for the *Bahujan* of India, who have already been the victim of the travesty of history, it is becoming too much. We are sick and tired of Brahmin propaganda, distortions and fabrication that are all aimed at some dubious objectives of no interest to the starving millions – jobless, undernourished, afflicted with AIDS and many other such diseases while India squanders its scarce funds and resources in pursuit of some megalomaniac project. That is why the *Bahujan* of India are convinced that Brahmanism must be destroyed if India is to be saved. It would help if we stopped worshipping Aryan gods but it would not be enough. It would help if large numbers converted to egalitarian faiths but it would not be enough. It would help if we voted faithfully for our caste brothers and sisters but it would not be enough. It would help if we crystallised our national identities based on our *jati* but it would not be enough. But all these together might, just might, bring the colossus down and pave the way for *Bahujan Samaj*.

## **India: a Broken Mirror**

### **31. Broken is Better**

Mogalli Ganesh, a Dalit Professor from Hampi University, has described India as a 'broken mirror'. According to him India was once a large mirror that the invading Aryans broke into pieces and the indigenous tribal units today are holding on to a small piece of that mirror. He posed the question: should we join all these tiny broken pieces together or hold on to each broken piece?

My reply is India has always been a broken mirror; it was never one large mirror. It was only the British who made an attempt for the first time in history to join these broken pieces but they did not succeed. Even when British India was one country, there were several hundred princely states that were outside the British Empire. Hyderabad was the largest state outside the British Empire. So were old Mysore, Kashmir and Travancore-Cochin. Were the people in those princely states better off or worse off? The fact was that different rulers (who were Muslims, Hindu or Sikh) provided patronage and protection to different kinds of people. The British were wise to give internal autonomy to nearly fifty per cent of the area of their empire. The oppressed and the alienated had an option to migrate and escape their tormentors. Freedom in 1947 denied that to the oppressed and the alienated of India. They are subjected to pogroms and terror to secure their obedience to those they detest and forced to perform functions and roles they would not perform if they had a choice. That is why I call the freedom struggle a 'fake'. It did not bring freedom; it helped to herd the free roaming sheep to their slaughter. That is the truth about the freedom the *Bahujan* enjoyed since India became free. Multiplicity of states was a safety valve, not an instrument of oppression. In fact the *Bahujan* castes as well as the Muslims and Sikhs flourished more under princely rule.

The Aryans did not break the mirror of India; it was already broken. The British did join the pieces to make a mosaic but could not make a whole mirror. A broken

mirror can never become whole. Every tiny piece is a perfect mirror but a patchwork would reflect hundreds of images of the face looking into the patchwork. What, in any case, is the point in making a large mirror of many small pieces? It would not reflect a whole image; it would be useless. It would entail effort, ingenuity and cost but it would still be useless. What is wrong with a small mirror? The large one's are needed by those with a huge ego; the rest of us are better off with small ones. The tiny mirrors represent the castes, sub-castes or tribes – identities characterized by integrity and continuity, internal harmony and tranquility. They might have a need for an arrangement not to rub each other the wrong way and tarnish the mirror. But they have no intrinsic need to be held or fixed together. It is the ruling classes or castes that might so wish.

It has been the historic desire of the Brahminic forces to have the power to fix the pieces to make a patchwork they can call whole – even holy - *Akhand Bharat*. But India is not a nation; it has never been a nation. A broken mirror can never be made whole. Brahmanism wants to join the broken pieces artificially using Hinduism as cement. But crushing *Bahujan* people into pulp makes the cement. They understand that now. They are not going to be pulped; there is no cement. The mirror of India should remain broken - each piece staying in the use of its historic owners. The beauty of this mirror is that it is a broken mirror; the Constitution of India calls it a Union of States. Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar – who wrote the Indian Constitution – gave the pieces of this mirror, control over their destiny by giving them the right to secede. That control has since been withdrawn by a constitutional amendment. Another safety valve was discarded.

Now that the *Bahujan* have learnt how to work the system, the Brahmin has come up with another stratagem. They call it 'cultural nationalism'. It is the name of the new cement, but is it really? The pieces have a life and a will of their own. They cannot be held together by coercion however cleverly clothed. The *Bahujan* must not allow all the political gain they have made by sharpening the caste contradictions in India to be lost. *Hindutva*, cultural nationalism, and *Akhand Bharat* are different faces of the same coin – all a part of the stratagem to keep the *Bahujan* slaves of the caste Hindus - all against nature; all against humanity. India is not really a mirror; it is more like a zoo. All types of animals, birds, fish and reptiles lived and flourished in it as long as the laws of nature were not disobeyed. The greatness of India is in its dazzling diversity. It can still flourish if came into line with the laws of nature and allowed each one of its people to determine their own destiny.

### **32. Caste-based Political Parties**

Caste based political parties are emerging all over India. The Brahmins are apprehensive and their response is hate and ridicule. They make fun of Mayawati, Laloo Prasad, Dr. Ramadoss, Mulayam Singh Yadav and call them casteist. But everything in India is selected or elected on the basis of the caste. Caste- based parties are an extension at our '*caste identity*' thesis. Since India is not a nation, the national parties are dying. The future is for small, caste-based or region-based

parties. Caste is not dead. It will never be dead, it is alive and going strong. Every caste is alive. The BJP is actually a *Brahmin Jati Party* of Brahmins and Banias. There are parties for Jats, Khammas, Marathas, Nairs; every *jati* has its own party. We must encourage this trend. The Brahmins have studied my book on 'caste identity'. They refuse to review it; they refused even to criticise its contents lest it gets publicity. They know I am right. To fight Brahmanism, we have to strengthen every caste and sub-caste. I reiterate that Brahmanism will be dead if we used the *Bahujan* caste solidarity to kill the Hindu caste system.

To drink water using one's hand, all the five unequal fingers are required to be shaped into a cup and held tight together. Even if one finger is loose or withdrawn, there cannot be cup; it would be impossible to drink water. The Brahmin is forever exhorting the need for unity and unison because that is how he can achieve his purpose. His purpose is clear to him but what is the purpose of the *Bahujan*? Are we forever to bend over backwards for the Brahmin to achieve his end? The opinion of almost every speaker at the seminar was that it was not possible to destroy Brahmanism or face the challenge of Hinduism. They said that if every *jati* is strong enough to get its rightful share in proportion to its population, what is wrong in being or remaining as Hindu? It is important to understand what is wrong.

### 33. Seeds of Self-destruction within Hinduism

Hindu culture is based on inequality, discrimination, deviousness, doubletalk and oppression; it does not provide a basis for social harmony or national solidarity. Besides, it is not a religion; it is an instrument to subvert other people's religions. That many of the original inhabitants of India call themselves Hindu even though it is a non-proselytising religion to which they never converted or could convert is a living proof how Hinduism destroys the soul of every religion it impacts. It destroys the identity of people without giving them anything in return except the rigour of being born again and again as penance for their sinful lives. When the Brahmin talks about unity, it is unity in his obedience, as penance. It is willingness to die and kill for him, to till his fields and demand nothing in return, to run his commercial and industrial enterprise with a pittance as salary content with perpetual poverty and indignity – all as penance for sins unknown that can never be forgiven. Brahmanism is a social system that institutionalises and sustains human slavery.

Every people on this earth have shaken off the shackles of mythology and the social oppression that it sustained. India is a land of myths. One arrogant myth is that India is the oldest continuous civilisation. Is it Aryan? If that, its roots are foreign. Is it Buddhist? If that, it was defeated and destroyed in India. The truth is that the roots of Islam are deep and the attraction of Christianity considerable. I do not accept that the Indian mythology has something in it that makes it an adequate substitute of religion. Why should India be the only part of the planet where the people celebrate their slavery to gods they made themselves and who need sacrifices of food, life, and honour to satisfy their hunger and lusts? Why should we accept Untouchability and apartheid that stands rooted out even in black Africa? If being a Hindu marked an



association with something vibrant, new and promising, there would be a point in sacrificing my identity in the interest of my future. But Hinduism offers me nothing except a life of rigour, pain, hunger and destitution. The Brahmin indeed wants unity; he wants it desperately. But unity to what end? To oppress internally and aggress externally? No! That is not acceptable to me. I want to be free. I particularly want to be free of having to sing hymns of mythical conquests of warriors and lustful princes. I want to be free of having to demonise, kill and oppress my fellow human beings because they have discarded the myths and embraced a religion.

I do not accept that Brahmanism cannot be destroyed. It has to be destroyed if the billion plus people of India have to live some semblance of life with security and dignity. On the contrary, I believe that the end of Brahmanism is nigh. Brahmanism flourished because India was under foreign rule of people with some tradition of justice and equality. Now the protection of foreign rule is gone but the politics of the vote has opened new vistas for the indigenous peoples of India. I reiterate that Brahmanism has to be destroyed. It is not going to be destroyed by the power of a religion (Islam or Christianity); it is not going to be destroyed by a theory or philosophy (Marxism or Maoism); it is going to be destroyed by the majority spurning Hinduism. It is going to be destroyed by its own wanton killing of Muslims, Sikhs and Christians in Kashmir, in Punjab, in Assam, in Gujrat and the slavery it imposed on the *Bahujan*.

### 34. The Example of Sikhs

The Sikhs are unique in the sense that they wear their identity. The theology of the Sikh religion is a mixture of Hinduism and Islam. The founder of the Sikh faith - Baba Guru Nanak - was also given Muslim rites on his death. Several chapters of the holy book of the Sikhs - Guru Granth Sahib - were written by Muslim and Untouchable saints. Yet, the Sikhs are neither Muslim nor Hindu; their identity is separate. After the end of Sikh rule in the Punjab the British made use of the equidistance of Sikhs from Muslims and Hindus and their small numbers to make them close friends and encouraged them in the Indian armed forces. They distinguished themselves in military service, thus attaching pride with their identity. The Sikhs had a separate political party of their own - the Akali Dal - even before independence in 1947. They struggled and got their language - Punjabi - recognised and got a separate state - Punjab. That the Indian constitution does not recognise their religion as separate but a part of the Hindu faith, has no effect on the Sikhs. They are enterprising; they help each other; and they get respect - grudgingly but surely.

Other *Bahujan* are also spurned and embraced by the Hindus in the same manner as the Sikhs but they have not been able to establish their distinct identity. They keep debating the merit of being included in the Hindu fold and thus effectively remain within the fold. Brahmins are experts in causing confusion about identity. They have been successful in sustaining apartheid and social exclusion while maintaining a façade of inclusion thus enjoying the benefits of the political submission of the

*Bahujan*. Destroying Brahmanism is not difficult; it is ready to die. But it cannot be killed by anybody other than its principal victims - the indigenous peoples of India. If they get distracted by power and consider that as proof of inclusion, they will not enjoy power for too long. We were fooled once before in 1932 when we signed the Poona Pact and did not insist on our separate identity ensured by separate electorate. The indigenous peoples of India are not Hindus; they have only one identity – their ethnic identity represented by their *jati*. In India today, castes are nations. The goal of the *Bahujan* is national self-determination.

## India of the Future

### 35. India of Multiple States United by a Compact

It took nearly 60 years for India's hungry masses to understand why they are hungry. It is because of the social engineering carried out by the Aryan religion – Brahmanism. Even now they have not fully understood who is their enemy. The upper caste exploiters control every political party and the Brahmin dominated media is diverting the attention of the hungry masses from their exploitation to non-issues. Brahminic strategy and tactics are superb; they believe they can keep the masses tranquil and asleep. When they do get out of control, their energy and anger is misdirected so that it is futile. The masses return to their sleep and slumber. They have come to believe they can do no better than getting angry from time to time. Now they experience catharsis by frequent elections. But there is an undercurrent that makes the Brahmin nervous. Catharsis may not be enough; a revolution might be in the offing. They want to head it off.

The genocide of Muslims in Gujarat in 2002 is an important development. It has removed the mask of non-violence and exposed the fascist face of India to its own people as well as the whole world. Hindu upper castes are desperate; they have started to use the machinery of the state to carry out their pogroms. I call that the transformation of *Hindutva* to *Moditva* (after the Chief Minister of Gujarat – Narendra Modi – who conceived, planned and conducted the genocide of Muslims using the party as well as the state administration). I believe that a challenge from *Moditva* would call for a response that would mark the unfolding of a new era in which Ambedkarism would triumph. I believe that on the basis of my observation of nervousness among Brahmins. I believe that because every 'ism' has failed in India, transformed and pressed into the service of Brahmanism. It is only Ambedkarism that has not only survived but also continued to flourish. It has done so because it never wavered in identifying the enemy – Brahmanism.

I believe that in the situation that is fast approaching, the *Bahujan* can lead the way to turn the problem into an opportunity. It would entail a task for cartographers, who would need to draw the map of India in the 21st Century. In the new century, India would have to say good-bye to its imperial dreams and redraw its map as nation states. I see the entire South Asian sub-continent being rocked by the aspirations of the new generation that would transform the outlook of Asia, particularly South

Asia. India has seen turbulent times ever since it became independent in 1947; it has seen no peace. It has been in one civil war after another as the crafty Brahmin took control and imposed the rule of the 15 per cent *chaturvarna* over the *Bahujan* masses. The 21st century started with the West (particularly the USA) becoming more aggressive. Brahmanism saw that as an opportunity to come out of its fascist closet and embrace fascism openly. As wealth is created and consumed by ever decreasing numbers in India, the *Bahujan* are being pushed back into crushing poverty, illiteracy, widespread disease, unemployment, begging and prostitution – into slavery without formal masters.

### 36. Ambedkar Era

With the help and connivance of the newspaper industry, the rulers of India have drummed the idea into every head that India is a Hindu nation despite the fact being that 85 per cent of the population is not Hindus. They insist that India is a 'nation' and its populace of a billion plus is 'one people' and that the religion of an overwhelming majority is Hinduism. The rewriting of history to prove such notions has become a national industry that has made 'distortion and denial of history' into a fine art. Murli Manohar Joshi – the Brahmin Education Minister in the BJP Government – has presented a new history, new geography and even a new sociology based on the teaching of his *Vedic Machiavellian* guru – *Chanakya*. The point is: what is the purpose of India in making such fabrication and distortion? They have not put in all that effort to put it aside and ignore it! How would they act on it? Use it for subversion? Whose subversion? Dalits? Muslims? or all *Bahujan*?

The truth has been out for a long time. Dr Ambedkar has spoken and written on every conceivable issue. Will the 'revision of history' prevail over the truth? I believe not. I believe that the *Bahujan* will take up the challenge and stick to the truth about history. I believe it will become evident that the internal imperialism of Brahmanism is just as diabolical and vicious as any foreign imperialism. I believe that the *Bahujan* peoples will crystallize and consolidate their national personality. I believe that *Moditva* has woken up the tiger in the *Bahujan*. The Muslims and Christians – who stood separate and aside in the past – are able to do so no longer. They have seen that the *Trishul* is not in the hands of the Brahmins but in *Bahujan* hands. They know they are in mortal danger and they need friends within India to survive. The solidarity of the victims of Brahmanism, thought to be impossible, is slowly materializing. An India of nation states is slowly taking shape in the minds of the *Bahujan*; it would soon be the task of the experts in demography and cartography. What would India look like when the accursed *Gandhi yug* (20th Century) comes to a close and Ambedkar era begins?

This question needs thorough examination so that the non-Aryan indigenous people of India may properly guide their children how to step into the Ambedkar era. Careful preparation will have to begin and a strategy needs to be devised for entry into the long awaited Ambedkar era with ease and in peace. I made this clear in my

Nagpur speech<sup>67</sup> that Marxism, Gandhism, the Naxalite Movement, JP's Total Revolution and now Hindu Nazism of the BJP, have all failed. The only lighthouse on the dark sub-continent that still remains is Ambedkarism. Its time has come. It is *Moditva* that has made it possible. Can its arrival and success be derailed? I believe, not! As the edifice of the state crumbles, its symbolic power - the military and the police, their weapons and uniforms, their parades and shows - would become more impressive and more frequent. But all this is done to instill fear, not to underpin confidence. *Moditva* has shown us not to feel afraid when a display of power is made; it shows the enemy is nervous.

Neither the ruling *chaturvarna*, who are 15 per cent of the Indian population, nor their slave *Bahujan* who are 85 per cent of the population, are a single united house. India is not a nation; it has never been a nation. It is a country of several nations, said Dr, Babasaheb Ambedkar, Father of India.<sup>68</sup> This is proving to be true as India enters the 21st Century. What will be the task of map-makers of India for the 'Ambedkar Era?'

### 37. National Self-determination

The bitter experience of the past 56 years has finally taught the *Bahujan* and the Muslims, Christians and Sikhs that if India has to remain peaceful, each and every nation within India has to exercise its right of self-determination. The Vajpayees, Narendra Modis and the Murlī Manohar Joshis alone cannot rule India while the rest remain their obedient servants and slaves. Every 'nation' has now realized the importance of equal sharing and equal caring. No one can put his hand into another's pocket and steal while they go on working regardless. It is not the non- Aryan *Bahujan* alone who have no human rights, even the *Shudras* who constitute 66 per cent of the *Chaturvarna* are also resentful because they are at the receiving end of the flak from the victims of Brahmin hegemony. The *Kshatriyas* and *Vaishyas* also feel neglected. The solidarity of the *chaturvarna* has broken down.

Caste contradictions are killing Hinduism. Babasaheb Dr. Ambedkar wrote a book titled 'Annihilation of Caste' to save Hindus from the evil of their caste system. When the *chaturvarna* Hindus themselves are a house divided, how could India become a Hindu nation? The thinking Hindus are deeply worried over the chaos setting in although it is hiding the cracks and fissures by periodic hypnotic stunts managed through the mass media they control. That raises the question, '*Moditva* is hastening the break up of India on caste lines. Is this not a contradiction?' No! The Hindu Nazis are resorting to pogroms and genocide to intimidate and hope it will create a semblance of 'unity' and help establish *Hindu Rashtra*. It is not their 'intent' to break up India; it is the effect of their actions. Did I not stress, "Strengthen every *jati* (nation) and Hinduism will be dead?"<sup>69</sup> Do I not keep saying that the 'Sacred

<sup>67</sup> Dalit Voice Aug.1, 1999, p13 '*Brahmanism is swallowing Ambedkarite Movement also?*

<sup>68</sup> Dalit Voice Sept, 1, 1991: '*India is not yet a nation: Dr Ambedkar's historic speech in the Constituent Assembly on Nov.4,1948*'.

<sup>69</sup> Dalit Voice Editorial, Dec 16, 1993.

Brahmins' are better for the *Bahujan* than the 'Socialist Brahmins' because they do not evade contradictions and speed up their resolution?

### 38. Sacred & Socialist Brahmins

The 'Sacred Brahmins' are the Hindu Nazis who aggressively and violently enforce their rule, call the Muslims terrorists, anti-national, cow killers, Pakistani agents and do every thing to *hinduise* Muslims and Christians. If they do not submit, the Sacred Brahmins do not hesitate from killing them. The Babri Masjid demolition; hundreds of anti-Muslim riots; war, violence and pogroms in Kashmir; genocide in Gujrat are all the work of these 'Sacred Brahmins' who follow the edicts of the RSS and their leaders are V.D. Savarkar, B.G.Tilak, Golwalkar etc. They say what they mean and the Muslims, Christians, Dalits and all the other persecuted nationalities have no confusion about them and find no difficulty in identifying them. In contrast with the 'Sacred Brahmins', there is another section of the Vedic who present themselves as friends of the Muslims, Christians, Dalits and Tribals but actually they dispense slow poison. They kill our people by deceiving them. I call them 'Socialist Brahmins' and they are more dangerous because they pose as friends but are really the enemy. Deception and betrayal is their business. They include Marxists and Gandhians, who evade contradictions, avoid exposure and delay resolution of contradictions. Between the two, the 'Sacred Brahmins' are better because they sharpen contradictions and accelerate their resolution.

It is the 'Sacred Brahmins' who have helped transform *Hindutva* into *Moditva* in such a short period of time. The real face of Socialist Brahmins – notably in the Congress Party – was not exposed until the destruction of the Babri Masjid, but it now stands exposed. The return of the 'Socialist Brahmins' of the Congress Party to power has produced no shift in policy. India under Congress rule is still a friend of Israel and refuses to honour the pledge made under Congress rule to allow the Kashmiris to decide their future by a plebiscite in the state. Brahmins – sacred or socialists – are two faces of the same coin. Both of their faces are exposed. Neither can be trusted. Brahmanism is evil. It is deceitful and duplicitous; it thrives on betrayal. Every one inside India as well as the neighbours of India knows the truth about India. It has plenty of fascist friends in far off lands. But it is still dying; there is no cure for its contradictions within.

### 39. Conclusion

In a book titled '*History of Hindu Imperialism*' written by Swami Dharma Thirtha in 1941, he said:

"Brahmanism never stood for any religious doctrine or faith. Its life and soul, then, as it is now, was the caste system with the Brahmin as the highest sacerdotal caste, and its vital interest was priestly exploitation."

Brahmanism is alien to India; it has no fixed theology or ideology; its gods are earthly, its faith mundane. It has imposed a culture of division and deception, of hate

and suspicion on much of South Asia which perpetuates strife, prevents social harmony and precludes peace and tranquillity in a region where pacifism prevailed for thousands of years. Brahmanism cannot be reformed. It is like a disease that needs to be cured, with bitter medicine, even surgery.

It is the victims of Brahmanism - the *Bahujan* together with Muslims, Christians and the Sikhs - who have to administer the medicine or wield the surgeon's knife. The medicine is to stop worshipping Aryan gods; castigate and reject fraudulent theories like Gandhism and Marxism that provide new avenues to Brahmins for social control; learn English and purge indigenous languages of Sanskrit words; organise, join and vote for *jati*-based and regional political parties; own and operate high quality media - print and electronic - that represents *Bahujan* aspirations and interests; eat beef, shun the upper castes, and beware of subversives and spies. This medicine has been administered with patchy passion but little planning and forethought. Its result is double edged. While the *Bahujan* have secured a near permanent share in power, the down side is that they have begun to think that electoral politics is an effective remedy whatever the disease - even if it is undiagnosed. That is quite wrong, even suicidal.

The *Bahujan* have been taking part in elections on the basis of a 'joint electorate with Hindus' after signing the Poona Pact but the power remained in the hands of the upper castes with token representation of the *Bahujan* by traitors and turncoats. It is only after the formation of separate *Bahujan* parties and voting on *Jati* basis that some real share in power has been secured. But what is the point in sharing power when the national agenda is still dictated by the Brahmin and the system still protects his power and privileges. The rest of us get a share without the power to write the agenda, the share in power is a 'concession' that is by its very nature temporary and can be withdrawn. The *Bahujan* do not really have a national agenda. This is because their outlook is not imperialist while the glitter of Brahmanism lies in its imperial ambitions and its fascist agenda. Given a chance, the *Bahujan* would like to stand by the weak and the oppressed within India and all over the world. That is only natural. After all, the *Bahujan* have been the victims of the most continuous, the most rigorous, and the longest repression in entire human history.

It is impossible to predict if the Brahmin would like to have a show down with the *Bahujan*. With the rise of *Moditva*, it appeared likely. Now with the Congress Party returning to power, it seems less likely. But the Congress Party does not seem to realise that it cannot evade the glaring contradictions in the society forever. It may again prove to be just another - albeit more devious face - of Brahmanism. If that happened, the BJP and *Moditva* would return with a vengeance. The show down would become inevitable. The *Bahujan* are not without weapons to succeed in that show down. I have already indicated what they are. We would have to use the ultimate weapon - *convert and migrate*. That is what happened in the sub-continent before; it might happen again. If that is what it takes, that is what the *Bahujan* of India would have to do to regain their dignity as sovereign states. That would surely mark the beginning of the Ambedkar era. □

## The Sikhs are a Nation

### Struggle for Sovereign State of Khalistan is Bound to Succeed

*Dr Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President Council of Khalistan*

#### 1. Khalistan is Inevitable

India spreads the myth that there is no support for Khalistan, the sovereign Sikh homeland that declared its independence on October 7, 1987. It says that the assault by the Indian Army on Durbar Sahib (generally known as the Golden Temple) in June 1984 crushed their movement for independence and that the Sikhs have abandoned their dream of Khalistan and decided to become proud Indians. They could not be more wrong. The Sikh nation has been 'crushed' at least twice before in its history and it emerged triumphant every time it was pronounced dead. Once again the news of the demise of the Sikh nation appears to be exaggerated. Arrogance is the hallmark of imperialism and it is no surprise that 'imperial arrogance' characterizes the conduct of India even though it masquerades on the world stage as the 'largest democracy in the world'. The Sikhs ask the rulers of India, "Why doesn't India uphold democracy and allow the Sikh nation a free vote to decide if they have indeed abandoned their dream?"

#### 2. Congress Appoints a Sikh Prime Minister

The ruling Congress Party has a Roman Catholic (Sonia Gandhi) leader and a Sikh Prime Minister – Dr. Manmohan Singh. The Sikh Nation is happy for the both of them. But has anything changed? No! Once again it is apparent that *in India the rulers can be changed but the rules never change*. The agenda of the Indian state has always been devised and implemented by Brahmin mandarins. That is still the case. There will be cosmetic changes but no change of policy or direction until the Brahmin mandarins are removed from power. The Sikhs welcome that the Congress Government has decided to repeal the infamous BJP legislation – POTA – that gave the police power of arbitrary arrest and indefinite detention. But it makes little difference to the Sikh political prisoners 50,000 of who have been incarcerated without trial and charge since 1984 under earlier laws just as vicious. The Sikhs have not forgotten that it was a Congress Government that ordered the attack on Durbar Sahib in June 1984 and it was under Congress rule that Sikhs were massacred in Delhi in November 1984. The Congress Party has yet to atone for its bestiality on the two occasions. Many had hoped that the Congress Party might have

been chastened by the long time it spent in opposition but there is no sign of it yet. On the contrary, it has appointed those who led the pogrom in Delhi – Messrs Tytler and Bhagat – as Ministers in the Cabinet of Dr. Manmohan Singh.

The Congress Party defeated the BJP, which was openly anti-secular and determined to exterminate religious minorities, but it has yet to dress the wounds that fester. Those responsible for the genocide of Sikhs in the Punjab have yet to be punished; brutal repression in Kashmir and Assam continues; the genocidists continue to rule in many states still unpunished and unrepentant in Gujrat as well as Maharashtra. The hope that ‘unfettered democracy’ and ‘true secularism’ would provide the basis for solidarity in the Indian Union has been shattered. On the contrary, it has become clear to the alienated majority – the Sikhs, Muslims, Christians, Dalits, and non-Hindus outside the *chaturvarna* but counted as Hindus – that India is a Brahmin Empire. Its rulers use the mechanisms of democracy – coalitions and false hopes – and share power with several political entities but their methods are repressive and their objective is extermination of religious minorities. India’s secularism as well as its democracy is bogus. India thrives on repression of the hapless; it would crumble like a cookie if it did not have helpless peoples inside and allies outside to persecute them. At the moment, the targets of the Brahmin blood lust are the Sikhs, Christians and Muslims. The Hindus are a peculiar lot; they sacrifice infants to their gods, are ghastly to the widows but are outraged by cruelty to cows.

### **3. Struggle for Sovereignty is a part of Sikh Faith**

Guru Nanak Sahib, the first guru, founded the Sikh religion in the late fifteenth century in the Punjab. The human landscape of the subcontinent was characterised by religious intolerance, political oppression, and the social tyranny of the caste system. Guru Nanak Sahib preached a simple message of devotion to ‘One God - the Creator of the entire Universe’. He inspired constant remembrance of ‘The One’ rekindling inner strength, achieving spiritual awareness and harmony between the individual self and universal self. From the basic premise of the relationship between the Creator and His Creation, Guru Nanak Sahib derived the principles of equality, fraternity, justice, respect for human dignity, and freedom of conscience for all without any distinction of caste, creed, colour, race, gender, or social status. The Sikh religion is monotheistic and egalitarian – a nemesis of Hinduism.

Guru Nanak Sahib and his nine successors, Guru Angad Sahib to Guru Gobind Singh Sahib, led the Sikh people and guided them by laying down the law and by self-example. They did not only preach, they also led the Sikh people in their struggle against oppressive rulers. The Sikh religion – its very nature, its teaching and its history – is a resistance movement. Guru Nanak Sahib struggled against the excesses and atrocities of the first Moghul ruler Babar. It is indeed ironical that the Sikh religion – a movement for egalitarianism - came into confrontation with Muslim rulers whose religion was fiercely egalitarian. It is a fact of history that the Muslims and the Sikhs of the Punjab had few differences and lived in peace and harmony with each other. The Sikhs had profound respect for Muslim saints like



## The Sikhs are a Nation

Hazrat Mian Mir and Pir Budhen Shah and the Muslims held high office under Sikh rulers. But the dynamics of imperialism is quite different to that of religion.

The conflict between the Muslims and the Sikhs was inevitable. The Muslims were the holders of imperial power and Sikhs their challengers. Several of the Gurus died fighting Moghul rule. Guru Arjan Sahib became a martyr upholding the principles of the Sikh faith and accepted the will of God. Guru Tegh Bahadar Sahib sacrificed his life in defence of the weak - defending human life and human rights. In 1699, the Sikh faith underwent a transformation under its tenth and the last guru, Guru Gobind Singh Sahib. He laid the foundation of a militant nation - Khalsa Brotherhood - at the historic *Vaisakhi* Congregation at Anandpur Sahib. This is celebrated every year in April as the Sikh holiday of *Vaisakhi*. He initiated the Sacrament of Steel (*khande di pahul*), ordained the first five Sikhs as Singhs "the *Panj Piaras*, or the Five Beloved Ones" and instituted the Order of the Khalsa. From that day forward, he commanded the Sikhs to mark their distinct identity through five symbols or the five Ks: unshorn hair or *Kes* symbolizing a natural and saintly appearance (worn under a turban); a special comb or *Kangha* to keep the hair clean; a steel bracelet or *Karrah* symbolizing discipline and gentility; *Kirpan* - a symbol of courage and commitment to justice, truth, freedom, and human dignity (words like dagger, sharp knife or sword cannot and must not be substituted for *Kirpan* because of similarity in shape and usage); and *Kachherra* special knee-length under shorts symbolizing chastity.

Guru Gobind Singh Sahib completed the mission of Guru Nanak Sahib, infused a new spirit in the Sikh Nation, and designed a new road map for the Sikhs. He also established a distinct identity for the *Khalsa Panth* (Khalsa Brotherhood), and gave the blessing to Khalsa to be sovereign and independent. He said: "*In grieb Sikhin ko deon Patshahi.*" and "*Khalsa Bagi Yan Badshah.*" ('Pray that the poor Sikhs to be rulers' and 'Khalsa shall be rulers') Guru Gobind Singh died in 1708. Two years later, in 1710, Banda Singh Bahadur established the first Sikh *Raj*. It lasted until 1716. From 1716 to 1765, Sikhs were persecuted severely by the Moghul Emperors. During this period, the Sikhs experienced the *chhota ghalugara* (small holocaust) and the *wadda ghalugara* (big holocaust.) In 1762, one third of the Sikh population was killed in three days.

In 1765, the Sikhs regained sovereignty and established several Sikh *missals* (free cantonal republics) as well as the principalities of Patiala, Nabha, Faridkot, Kapurthala, Jind, and Kalsia. This lasted until 1799 when Maharajah Ranjit Singh established *Khalsa Raj* in the Punjab by uniting the *missals* and principalities. He marched into the capital of Punjab - Lahore - and hoisted the Sikh flag, manifesting the spirit of liberty reaffirmed at the *Vaisakhi* of 1699. This *Khalsa Raj* lasted until 14<sup>th</sup> March 1849, when the British conquered the Punjab. But the Sikhs' quest for their sovereign state continues in pursuit of the command of their Gurus for assertion of Sikh nationhood. The Sikhs were recognised as a sovereign power by the countries of Europe until 1849. Sovereignty, once gained is never lost. The British kept that in view in dealing with the Sikhs. They always treated them as a national entity and treated them with deference, which resulted in reconciliation and peace.

The Sikhs have always been a separate nation and treated as such. Sovereignty is their inalienable right; it is not subject to the caprice of the government, least of all of the Indian Government that was conferred sovereignty as a 'gift' by the British.

Maharajah Ranjit Singh's rule was the Golden Age for the Punjab. The Sikhs brought an end to Moghul rule in the Punjab and resisted invasions by Afghan rulers from the North and the West. Under the command of General Hari Singh Nalwa, the Sikhs defeated the Afghans and occupied Kabul. This led to a treaty that ended further invasions by the Afghans and the demarcation of a boundary of the Sikh *Raj* at the Khyber Pass. Kashmir, which was held by the Afghans at the time, was conquered by the forces of Maharajah Ranjit Singh in 1819 and annexed to the Punjab. During the rule of Maharajah Ranjit Singh, Hindus, Muslims, and Christians all had a share of power alongside the Sikhs. All of them were represented as ministers in his Cabinet. The *Faqir* brothers, who were Muslims, were trusted ministers in the inner circle of Maharajah Ranjit Singh. General Ventura, a Christian, was in charge of the artillery.

Like the Muslim rulers, the Sikhs were also betrayed by the Hindus they trusted. Two Dogra brothers (Dhian Chand *alias* Dhian Sinh and Lal Chand *alias* Lal Sinh) wielded enormous power in the court of Maharajah Ranjit Singh. But they were traitors who betrayed the Sikhs to the British and helped engineer the defeat of the Sikhs. Earlier, when General Nalwa was fatally wounded by an Afghan bullet, he wrote his last letter in blood to bid his last *fateh* (farewell) to Maharajah Ranjit Singh in which he asked for more troops. But the letter was intercepted by one of the Dogra brothers who were out walking with the Maharaja when the messenger arrived. When the news of the death of his General (Hari Singh Nalwa) reached Lahore, the Maharaja was enraged at the delay and ordered the army to march towards Afghanistan. The river Jhelum was in flood but Maharajah Ranjit Singh led his horse boldly into the river. The Sikh Army followed and was able to cross the river, engage in battle and defeat the Afghans.

#### 4. Sikhs under the British Rule

The British had always coveted the fertile lands of the Punjab. After the demise of Maharajah Ranjit Singh in 1839, they got their chance. The British had infiltrated their agents – notably the Dogra brothers – into the inner circle of the Sikh *Raj*. The successors of Maharaja Ranjit Singh lacked his wisdom and experience and conspiracies flourished. Sikh rulers were murdered, one after the other. There were several battles between the Sikhs and the British that were characterised by valour but the Sikhs lost usually because of treachery. The Anglo-Sikh wars ended with the signing of surrender in 1849 when the Sikhs lost their sovereignty as well as their empire. The Punjab was annexed with the British Empire but a large portion of the Sikh Empire – the hilly region of Jammu and Kashmir – was sold by the British to Gulab Singh Dogra for 40,000 pounds as a 'reward' for their treachery. Jammu and Kashmir has ever since been a veritable trophy given by conquerors to traitors

Since 1849, the Sikh Nation's desire for sovereignty has not diminished. The Sikhs always recite the *dohera* (couplet) "*Raj Kare Ga Khalsa* (Khalsa shall rule)" after their morning and evening *Ardas* (prayers). The British were aware and careful; they refrained from a direct clash with the Sikhs after securing their submission. They extended patronage to Hindus and Muslims with the aim of eroding Sikh power. The Muslims were encouraged to join the British Indian Armed Services and the Hindus were put in charge of Gurdwaras. It was the British who started the process of *Hinduisation* of the Sikh faith. Since there was no priest caste or class among the Sikhs, Brahmins eagerly filled the vacuum and started to conduct even Sikh religious ceremonies. It took the Sikhs some time to realise that their new priests were not converts to the Sikh faith; they were infiltrators and subversives whose mission was to return to idol worship, focus on *melas* (festivals) and dilute the egalitarian and militant spirit of the Sikh faith.

The Sikhs eventually realised that they had to make friends with the British in order to survive as a separate faith with some modicum of dignity. The Sikhs were the best fighters in the whole of India and the British accepted them with open arms once they decided to join the Indian armed forces. However, the Sikhs remained divided. Many of them did not bury the hatchet with the British and continued to play in the hands of the Hindus. The Sikhs were in the forefront of the struggle against British rule. Although the Sikhs were just 1.5 percent of the population of British India, they gave over 80 percent of the sacrifices in its freedom struggle. Of 2,125 Indians executed by the British during the freedom struggle, more than 1,500 were Sikhs (70.6%). Out of 2,645 exiled by them, 2,147 were Sikhs (81%).

### 5. Sikhs' Struggle for Sovereignty Betrayed

The Sikhs had hopes for great things in India after independence in 1947. Since the Muslims were in majority in the Punjab, it was easy for the deceitful Hindus to make the Sikhs see them as their principal competitors and therefore the enemy. The Sikhs did not realize that the Congress Party under the leadership of the Brahmin-Baniya clique – Gandhi, Nehru and Patel – wanted to consolidate all the peoples of British India on an anti-Muslim platform and had hijacked their freedom struggle for sovereignty and independence. The Sikh leadership was ill advised in not responding positively to the suggestion by the leader of the Muslims, Mohammed Ali Jinnah, who promised the Sikhs their separate sovereign state if they opposed the partition of the Punjab. He told them at the time, "You have seen the Hindus as co-slaves and you will know when they will be your masters and you (the Sikhs), their slaves".

British India was partitioned into two countries; the Muslim majority portion became Pakistan and 'everybody else' got India. By a sleight of hand all the princely states lost their autonomy and legitimacy and the many peoples of India lost their identity. They had no idea that 'independence' would rob them of their national identity and 'democracy' would turn out to be a 'charter of betrayal' allowing the new rulers to renege on treaties and promises. The people of India had never been so

terrorised as under 'democratic rule' in the so-called largest democracy in the world. The rulers operate from behind a mask they keep changing. In India today, justice is reduced to jiggery-pokery; rights can be secured only by rebellion. The Sikhs now see that the 'Father of the Pakistani nation, Mr Jinnah' was right. In the euphoria of 'freedom', they lost sight of the significance of the fact that the partition was based on 'Muslims' and 'Non-Muslim' and the Sikhs had been reduced to merely being 'non-Muslims'. India was free but the people of India became the slaves of a clique that at best represented the caste Hindus who are no more than 15 per cent of the population.

It is unfortunate that the Sikh leadership overlooked the teachings of the founder of the Sikh faith, Guru Nanak Singh. In Guru Granth Sahib, he is quoted: "*Mathe Tikka Terrh Dhotti Kakhai, Hath Chhurri Jagat Kasi.*" In his teachings Guru Nanak Sahib had described the Brahmin as the 'butcher'. With those 'butchers' as rulers of India, 'democracy' has become an instrument for manipulation and subversion. It is used as a safety valve against rebellion but that is the only use India has for 'democracy'. Whatever it concedes at one time, it withdraws as soon as the situation returns to normal. After waiting for decades, one people after another have come to see that 'democracy' in India denies the one freedom that matters (to right to decide one's national destiny) and allows many freedoms that do not. The people of Pakistan have become free but those who live under Brahminic rule have yet to experience the '*glow of freedom*'.

The Sikhs had been in the forefront of the struggle for freedom since the 1930's. They looked at the Hindus as equal partners and placed trust in the promises made in public by their leadership. At its Lahore Session of December 31, 1929, the Congress Party resolved:

"...in future, the Congress shall accept no constitution which does not meet with the satisfaction of the Sikhs".

Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India said on January 9, 1930:

"...the brave Sikhs of Punjab are entitled to special considerations. I see nothing wrong in an area set up in the North of India wherein, the Sikhs can also experience the *glow of freedom.*"

The leader of the Congress Party – M.K.Gandhi – said on March 19, 1931

*"I ask you to accept my word and the Resolution of the Congress that it will not betray a single individual much less a community. Let God be the witness of the bond that binds me and the Congress with you (the Sikhs). When pressed further Gandhi said that the Sikhs would be justified in drawing their swords out of the scabbards as Guru Gobind Singh had asked them to, if Congress would renege on its commitment."*

The Sikhs feel betrayed. They trusted the words of Nehru, Gandhi and the Congress party (reaffirmed in resolutions of the Indian National Congress) that they would have '*the glow of freedom*' in Punjab and that no law affecting Sikh rights would be passed without their consent. It was on that basis that the Sikhs took part in the freedom struggle of India, alongside the Hindus rejecting a similar offer made by the leader of the Muslims – Mohammed Ali Jinnah.

Soon after independence in 1947, the Sikhs realized that Nehru and the Hindu leadership had lied to them. *The promise of autonomy was a cruel hoax.* Soon after independence, the Indian government issued a memo to police commanders and deputy commissioners of Punjab calling the Sikhs 'a criminal class' and ordering that they be closely watched. Instead of experiencing the '*glow of freedom,*' the Sikhs had exchanged British Colonialism for Hindu Imperialism. They discovered that they had been better off under British rule. Not just the Sikhs, all the religious minorities have been tyrannised, discriminated against, ridiculed, oppressed, abused and subjected to state sponsored pogroms when they demanded that the promises made to them be fulfilled and they be given their God-given right of national self-determination. The Muslims in India made no such demands. They are reviled for being the co-religionists of Pakistanis who are the only people to have succeeded in securing their right of national self-determination. The persecution of Muslims, instead of terrifying other peoples of India, has earned the Muslims respect and made the minorities hopeful of their future.

### 7. Watershed of 1984

In June 1984, the Indian government launched a military assault on the holiest Sikh shrine, Durbar Sahib in Amritsar, which is the centre and seat of the Sikh religion. This was the equivalent of attacking the Vatican or Mecca. The ostensible rationale for the operation code named '*Operation Bluestar,*' was to evict 'terrorists' from the complex. However, the real purpose was to kill their leaders - *Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, General Shabeg Singh and Bhai Amrik Singh* – and terrorize the Sikh nation. There were thousands of devotees on the premises of Durbar Sahib - mainly women, children and the elderly – 20,000 of who were killed in the artillery bombardment and wanton use of automatic weapons against people already cut off and under siege. Why? Because the Sikhs demanded what was promised to them by the Congress Leadership. Clearly, the Congress Party had to do some explaining; it chose bombing. Even the Moghul Emperors, who also laid a siege around Durbar Sahib, did not enter or desecrate its premises. But the holy Brahmins as rulers are not constrained either by their promise, by their duty of care to life of those they rule, or sanctity of their places of worship. On the contrary, they are pleased that they have 'taught the Sikhs a lesson' and 'broken the back' of the Sikhs' freedom movement.

The reality is quite different. *The wanton use of force, employing armour, artillery and helicopter gun ships has robbed the Indian state of its legitimacy and any claim to the loyalty and obedience of the people whose temple it targeted. As predicted by*

*Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, the desecration of Durbar Sahib made Khalistan inevitable.*

The attack on Durbar Sahib was followed by a systematic genocide of Sikhs in several brutal military operations in some of which 'nerve gas' was used. Young Sikh boys of ages 8 to 13 were taken from their parents and asked if they supported Khalistan? When they answered with the Sikh religious incantation "*Bole So Nihal,*" they were shot dead. The Indian forces shot bullet holes in the Sikh scriptures, the *Guru Granth Sahib*, written in the hands of the Gurus. The brutal massacre of 20,000 Sikhs on the premises of Durbar Sahib during '*Operation Bluestar*' was carried out under total news blackout. The fury of the Sikh nation had no outlet. Many thousand soldiers who deserted their units to come to the aid of their brethren being slaughtered were apprehended, court martialled and shot in striking contrast with the deserters who formed the INA and fought on the Japanese side during the Second World War! They are celebrated as heroes every year even today.

The rage of the Sikh nation got an expression in the assassination of Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi by her Sikh bodyguards. What followed was not a riot; it was more like a civil war. It was a war in which the might of the State was on one side, the hapless Sikh civilians on the other. The Hindu mobs led and directed by the police and elected members of Delhi's ruling council did not have the courage to challenge and attack Sikh civilians openly. The cowards herded women and children into narrow and confined areas often in Gurdwaras and then set them alight. The 'Kerosene can' or Molotov cocktails has ever since been the preferred weapon of the Hindus; they like to torch and burn their victims alive and then loot and plunder the homes of the dead. Genocide of Muslims in Gujrat was carried out by frenzied mobs mostly with kerosene cans. That is the true face of the 'Hindu Civilization' – joy in the cries of humanity in the throes of death.

The massacre of the Sikhs in Delhi in November 1984 in which 20,000 Sikhs were murdered was carried out while the police were locked in their barracks and state-controlled television and radio repeatedly called for vengeance and bloodshed of the Sikhs. At least 50,000 Sikhs were picked up by the police, tortured and murdered but declared missing. Their '*unidentified dead bodies*' were secretly cremated and their ashes have never been returned to their families. The man who exposed the policy of secret cremation, human-rights activist Jaswant Singh Khalra, was kidnapped by the police on September 6, 1995. About six weeks later, in mid-October, he was murdered while in police custody and his body dumped in an irrigation canal. He was just one of the thousands of victims whose bodies were surreptitiously dumped in irrigation canals by the police after they were taken from their homes, lined up on canal banks and mowed down by machine guns. That is work, deserving reward in India.

Hon. Dona Rohrabacher, Member of the US Congress said, "For the Sikhs, Kashmiri Muslims, and other minorities *India might as well be Nazi Germany.*" The Punjab State Magistracy made public its findings and said that by its estimate over

200,000 Sikh men, women, and children were murdered by the Indian security forces in the decade after the Golden Temple massacre of 1984. Another 50,000 have been murdered in almost a decade since then, according to human rights groups. (These figures have been reported in the book *'The Politics of Genocide'* by Inderjit Singh Jaijee.) Would the Sikhs ever forget the pogroms and massacres? Never! The die has been cast. Their bloodshed has only made the Sikhs more resolute. This time, as they say in American, the Sikhs prefer not to get mad, but to get even

## 8. International Awareness of Genocide of Sikhs

India is as arrogant as it is deceitful. Its response to any news report that exposes the crimes of the Indian state against its people is to chide the accuser as 'erstwhile imperialists' in no position to give any lessons to those they repressed for a century. The Western media pundits are easily dissuaded. There are so many other places where atrocities are taking place and the media has to move on. Since the media battles are won by those who are persistent and stay focused, India often wins. India is usually able to preclude timely visits by the international media to the 'scene of its crimes'. The media needs government support in such an event. The Western administrations are usually soft on India for reasons the victims of the Indian state have never understood. After repeated refusal of visas or permission to visit the Punjab and Kashmir, the journalists often give up. However, the international media does get a look in from time to time often to good effect. It is for Diaspora Sikhs to make the media aware that genocidists of India flourish by this neglect.

The 'security forces' of India commit war crimes every day - murders, destruction of homes and the rape of women. Their victims do not even enter statistics - except as bounties claimed by policemen of their success in disposing off 'miscreants and terrorists'. The Indian press is a willing accomplice, perhaps even the prime vehicle, for transforming 'war crimes' into anti-terrorist 'successes'. They never say that law requires due process for indictment for an offence and that the deeds of soldiers and policemen whose crimes are un-punished become the 'war crimes' of their commanders and leaders. They praise the soldiers and policemen who commit or oversee heinous crimes as 'doing their patriotic duty' when they kill hapless unarmed civilians. Killing a Muslim or a Sikh is always 'patriotic'; killing a Christian is all right when no one is looking. There can never be any doubt about their deserving what they get.

But for the efforts of the Sikh Diaspora, the war crimes of the Indian security forces would have been completely ignored. Fortunately, one can still find a few congressmen in the USA who are ready to risk being on the wrong side of the 'patriotic media' of India or the United States. On October 6, 1993, the *New York Times* reported that 'the calm on the surface of the Sikh homeland had been achieved by unleashing a reign of police terror executed by 'ruthless and unrestrained policemen.' That reign of terror has continued ever since. In a series of

peaceful protests in the 1970s and 1980s, thousands of Sikhs were arrested and confined to jails.

According to a study by the Movement Against State Repression (MASR), India admitted to holding 52,268 Sikhs as political prisoners. They are held under a repressive law called the "Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Act" (TADA), which expired in 1995. Under TADA, it was routine to file the same charge against a person after he had been acquitted. It was also routine to file the same case in two different states a long distance apart to prevent the accused from contesting the case'. These political prisoners are being held without charge, trial, or access to legal counsel. Some have been held since 1984 - a period of 20 years! They are languishing in Indian prisons, reminiscent of Nazi concentration camps.

According to a 1994 report by the United States State Department, the Indian Government paid over 41,000 cash bounties to police officers to murder Sikhs. One of them received a bounty after murdering a three-year-old child. In the same year, the Indian newspaper *Hitavada* reported that the Indian government paid the late governor of Punjab, Surender Nath, the equivalent of \$1.5 billion to foment terrorist activity in Punjab and Kashmir.

MASR also co-sponsored with the Punjab Human Rights Organization an investigation of the March 2000 massacre of 35 Sikhs in Chithisinghpura (in Indian Kashmir) organized to coincide with the visit of President Clinton to India in the year 2000 to malign the Kashmiri freedom struggle. It concluded that Indian forces carried out the massacre. A separate investigation conducted by the International Human Rights Organization came to the same conclusion. Retired General Narinder Singh has said, "Punjab is a police state."

The book *Soft Target*, written by Canadian journalists Zuhair Kashmeri of *'The Globe and Mail'*, Toronto and Brian McAndrew of the *'Toronto Star'*, shows that India blew up its own airliner in 1985, killing 329 people, in order to blame the Canadian Sikhs for the atrocity and demonise the Diaspora Sikhs with their host communities and countries. The book shows that the Indian Consul General in Toronto pulled his daughter off the flight shortly before it was due to depart. An auto dealer who was a friend of the Consul General also cancelled his reservation at the last minute. Surinder Singh, Director of North American Affairs for the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi, also cancelled his reservation on that flight. The book quotes an agent of the Canadian State Investigative Service (CSIS) as saying, "If you really want to clear the incidents quickly, take vans down to the Indian High Commission (in Ottawa) and the consulates in Toronto and Vancouver, load up everybody and take them down for questioning. We know it, and they know it, that they are involved."

That the Indian campaign to malign the Sikhs is ongoing shows that the Sikhs have not given up but have become more resolute. India has not been able to silence the voice of the Sikh widows, orphans, and elders who have seen their loved ones



lynched, burned alive and tortured while in police custody. Those whose sons, husbands and fathers were mowed down in fake police encounters, terrorized and killed by police death squads, are neither willing to forgive nor forget. What has caused the total collapse of trust and faith in India is the manner in which the Indian courts have been willing to comply with the will of the government. The court system has been used to punish dissidents in false criminal cases while guilty officials go free. Last year, an eminent Professor, Davinder Singh Bhullar, was convicted of murder based on a false confession. Obtaining confession by torture is not new but basing convictions on such confessions is. The Sikhs and other minorities are routinely made to confess to crimes they did not commit. Life is not much better than death for them.

Amnesty International and other human rights groups have amply documented the genocide of the Sikhs and other minorities by the Indian government despite the fact that Amnesty International has not been allowed into Punjab since 1978 - a period of 26 years. No other country with perhaps the exception of North Korea has put more constraints on Amnesty International – not even Castro's Cuba.

### 9. The Case for Khalistan

On October 7, 1987, the Sikh Nation declared its independence from India, naming their new country Khalistan. The struggle to liberate Khalistan is more than a struggle against Indian oppression; it is a struggle to reclaim the lost sovereignty that is the birthright and the historic status of the Sikh Nation. The essence of democracy is the right to self-determination. As a former Jathedar of the Akal Takht, Professor Darshan Singh Khalsa, has said, "If a Sikh is not for Khalistan, he is not a Sikh."

Sikhs are struggling to free *Khalistan* in accordance with Articles 1 and 55 of the United Nations Charter and aspiring for "freedom, justice, and peace" as guaranteed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In violation of this provision, Indian executive law makes it illegal for any Sikh to peacefully advocate the independence of their homeland. Since 1984, any Sikh who has openly supported an independent Sikh state (Khalistan) has faced imprisonment, torture, and even death, as have the families of these individuals.

The Sikh Nation is culturally, linguistically, and religiously distinct from the Hindus of India. They have their own faith, language, and culture. Sikhs have their own identity and every claim to be a separate and sovereign nation. *No Sikh representative has ever signed the Indian constitution.* The Constitution, which proclaimed India a republic, has been 'rejected' by the Sikhs' elected representatives on behalf of the Sikh nation in its draft and final forms because this Constitution heaped upon the Sikhs the humiliation of denying the Sikhs their separate Sikh Identity.

India has resorted to the wanton use of force to keep the Sikh Nation from achieving its legitimate aspiration of freedom. Instead of settling the issue peacefully and

democratically, India has murdered over 250,000 Sikhs since its brutal military attack on the Durbar Sahib in June 1984. This attack filled the Durbar Sahib Complex with blood, human bodies, and limbs, which desecrated the Supreme Seat of the Sikh religion and polity. It was carried out by a clean-shaven General named K Brar, born in a Sikh family. A large number of Sikh soldiers left their units to try to stop the attack on the Golden Temple. Many of them are still rotting in Indian jails 20 years later. In the eyes of the Sikh Nation, they are heroes; in the eyes of the India, criminals and villains. A polarisation and parting of the ways has occurred. It is irreversible. Not every Sikh is a Khalistani, but for the vast majority of Sikhs there is no honour without their own separate and sovereign state of Khalistan.

India has been added to the State Department's 'watch list' of countries that violate religious freedom. Some members of the United States Congress have called for sanctions against India and for an end to American aid. Some have also endorsed self-determination for the peoples seeking freedom from India through a plebiscite. After the traumatic events of 1984, the Sikh nation is more than ever determined to seek its destiny in a free *Khalistan*. Only then the Sikh nation would prosper; only then will the Sikh Nation get justice. It is in the interest of all the peoples of India that India respects their will, acts in the spirit of democracy and allows the Sikh nation to exercise its right of national self-determination. The Sikhs want nothing exceptional. They have a distinct national identity underpinned by their religion as well history and they have a right to be sovereign; it is their birthright.

India is not a country; it is land of many peoples who have been many states far longer than a single state under imperial rule. The India of today was put together by the British Empire and they changed its boundaries several times merely for administrative convenience. Like other multinational polyglot empires such as Austro-Hungary, the Soviet Union, and others, India is bound to fall apart. The Imperial Chapter of History is closed; India struggles to swim against the tide. It could break up peacefully like Czechoslovakia but if it resorts to the use of force to deny its captive people their sovereign freedom, it would break up violently like Yugoslavia.

Despite the cruelty and excess the Sikh people have been subjected to, they have remained steadfast. They have been steadfast in reminding India of reneging on its promise that the Sikhs would have "*the glow of freedom*" in northwest India. They have been reminding India why no Sikh representative has ever signed the Indian Constitution. It is because India reneged on its promise. It has helped restore self-confidence and brought back the Khalsa spirit. The Khalsa are committed to the greater well being of the Sikh Nation and to the cause of freedom. They are proud of their history and remember the promise of their Gurus "*Khalsa Bagi Yan Badshah*" and are determined in their pursuit of sovereign freedom and for a better life for the future Sikh generations.

Last year's seminar on Khalistan held in Chandigarh shows that the flame of freedom still burns brightly in Punjab in spite of the Indian government's brutal

repression. Sovereignty is the destiny of the Khalsa. They must persevere in order to bring the present and future generations the experience of the '*glow of freedom*' without which they would wither and die as a nation. The Guru granted sovereignty to the Sikh Nation. We must achieve independence to fulfil the mandate of the Guru.

The Sikhs have shown by the revoking of the water accord that they can unite and take action to liberate their homeland, Punjab, Khalistan. There are tough times ahead but with resolute dignity that is the hallmark of the Khalsa, they will overcome any hurdle in their march towards sovereignty and freedom in Khalistan.

## **10. Hopes and Role of Diaspora Sikhs**

The Diaspora Sikhs expected Dr Manmohan Singh to make a goodwill gesture in his UN speech in September 2004. What they desperately wanted was the immediate release of all 52,268 Sikh political prisoners. If any of them have died or been killed, there should be an accounting how, and their remains should be returned to their families. Holding of such a large number of political prisoners and refusing to investigate and account for 'disappearances' that number in tens of thousands is a constant reminder to the Sikh nation that without sovereignty there is no dignity. With time the pain has not gone; it has been transformed into despondence and anger. With more time, as there is no protection provided by the state in its Constitution's Article 14 to life, liberty and livelihood of the people, the very legitimacy of the Union Government is now suspect. Everywhere in India, the people take the law into their own hands. The freedom struggles that were peaceful for decades have taken to arms. This is a clear manifestation of the despondency that prevails.

There are three million Sikhs in the Diaspora who have much higher income and standard of living than the Sikhs in Punjab, Khalistan. In the Diaspora they are not subject to intimidation by the Indian Government. They have relatives in the Punjab and ties of language, religion, and culture with their homeland. They fully share the anguish and pain of their brothers and sisters back home. They are willing to do everything to bring freedom to their holy and historic homeland. The Sikh Diaspora could make Punjab prosperous - a land of opportunity. But they cannot do so as long as it is under occupation by a theocratic state that labels them 'terrorists'. The truth is that a diabolical reign of terror in the Punjab has killed hundreds of thousands and impoverished the rest. Diaspora Sikhs refrain from visiting their homeland - Punjab - that is fast deteriorating into a rural slum empty of young men. The youth of our nation has been systematically murdered by the security and intelligence personnel or gone abroad to make a living. The Diaspora Sikhs see no logic or benefit of Punjab staying in the Indian Union. With the passage of time, their resolve is strengthening, not weakening.

## **11. Areas for Urgent Attention**

The Sikhs know from experience that India will not fulfil its promises; it is not in the nature of the Brahmin to recognise any right of anybody except when it has no other

choice. They know that regardless of who rules in Delhi, the thrust for imposing Hindu sovereignty over all the peoples of the subcontinent will continue. But that does not mean that the religious minorities should give up. They have a duty to expose the imperial nature of the Indian State and strive for better lives for their own people. For the Sikhs, there are several objectives short of 'sovereign freedom' that must be pursued with vigour. The first such objective pertains to the capital of Punjab, Chandigarh. It is still a Union Territory. It lies in the heart of the Punjab; it should be handed over to the State of Punjab.

The diversion of Punjab's river waters to Haryana and Rajasthan has been the cause of real concern in a state where the majority are farmers. The Congress Chief Minister of Punjab, Captain Amarinder Singh, has become a hero of the Sikh Nation by asserting Punjab's sovereign status and unilaterally revoking the arbitrary river water accord. He sets an example for peaceful methods for assertion of sovereignty. The Union Government has gone to the Supreme Court to challenge the decision of the State Assembly of the Punjab. The issue may be pursued in the courts but it will be decided in the streets of the Punjab. The Sikh nation must steel itself against coming challenges and be ready to support its elected leaders when they truly represent their hopes and aspirations.

Another issue relates to the prices of farm products. The farmers of the Punjab still get lower prices for their produce than even the cost of production. This is again an issue that the government of Punjab should deal with by itself. It can find export markets elsewhere if India is not willing and able to pay a fair price. Here the issue is two-fold: 1) fair prices and a system to guarantee for lifting of produce when private buyers or the union machinery is tardy, 2) the state government to have complete control over all aspects of agriculture including control over the price of inputs and the floor price of all farm produce. The State Government of the Punjab cannot by itself redress the absence of large industrial units, poor infrastructure and rising unemployment. Those can only be redressed by severing all ties with Delhi and reclaiming our lost sovereignty in a free and independent Sikh state called Khalistan, as declared on October 7, 1987.

If the State of Punjab moved in that direction and wrested control of its economy, Diaspora Sikhs would readily invest in industry and the service sector in the Punjab. The time has come for the Sikh Nation to take its seat among the nations of the world at the United Nations and send its ambassadors to countries around the world. This will promote the interests of the Sikh Nation and the Sikh religion worldwide. The Sikh Diaspora will gain tremendous respect within their host countries when they have their own sovereign country represented at the United Nations. The Sikh Nation must beware of collaborators. It may be sometimes unwise to voice support for Khalistan but every one can help. The Khalsa nation will judge every Sikh official – elected or selected – from the stand point of Sikh interests. Only those who work for: 1) the release of political prisoners, 2) fair compensation to the families of the victims of genocide, 3) Punjab reclaiming its water, 4) rehabilitation of infrastructure and 5) expansion of hi-tech industry, are true Sikhs.

### 13. Need for Political Unity

The mission to secure sovereignty is made easier if the Punjab State was to act with self-assurance and all the Sikh politicians, in the State of Punjab and their representatives in the Lok Sabha, acted in unison in support of their objectives. It is now quite apparent to all Sikh leaders – whatever their party affiliation in the past - that if Delhi had its way, it would make the Punjab a desert, impoverish the Sikh people, humiliate into submission the Sikh nation, subvert the Sikh religion, destroy its culture and eliminate the Sikh faith from the face of the Earth. They all know that Delhi government will always be a Hindu majority government whether the BJP or the Congress Party leads it. It could never treat Punjab fairly because its objective is to destroy the Sikh religion and the economy of Punjab.

*Without sovereignty, the Sikh Nation and the Sikh religion will perish.* The Brahmins know that very well and the Sikh nation also must. Merely having their own state within India has proven an insufficient guarantee of Sikh rights. Only sovereign, independent Khalistan with its own armed forces, its own diplomats, and its own free government will be able to protect the Sikh Nation's basic rights. Only then will the Sikhs be able to live in freedom, peace, dignity, and prosperity.

### 14. Conclusion

India is a polyglot country of many faiths, many languages (18 official languages), and many different cultures. It is many nations. History shows that such multinational states inevitably collapse. The Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Soviet Union are two prime examples. India is destined to follow in their footsteps.

As Home Minister L.K. Advani has said, "*If Kashmir goes, India goes.*" It will be good for India and good for the Sikhs to part company and live as separate nations, hopefully at peace with each other. The Sikh Nation is committed to achieving its independence by peaceful, democratic, and non-violent means. They want the break-up of India to be like that of Czechoslovakia, not like that of Yugoslavia.

The Sikhs want out of the *apartheid theocracy called India* where they are treated as serfs, ridiculed, attacked, murdered, humiliated, dehumanised and repressed in every conceivable way. By reneging on its promises, by breach of trust, by its betrayal, the rulers of India have compromised the very legitimacy of India as a state. Atrocities are committed against minorities and no one is brought to justice. The killer of Akal Takht Jathedar Gurdev Singh Kaunke, Swaran Ghotna, roams free. The police who kidnapped and murdered Sardar Jaswant Singh Khalra, a human rights activist, have not been brought to justice. Instead, the witness to the Khalra kidnapping has been repeatedly arrested on flimsy charges such as trying to hand a petition to the British Home Minister outside the Durbar Sahib.

The Sikh Nation is a nation of martyrs. They are commanded by our Gurus to oppose injustice wherever it rears its head. Sikhs have repeatedly laid down their

lives to fight injustice, tyranny and suspension of civil liberties and have succeeded in retaining political power. It is time to free the Khalsa nation from the tyranny of *Hindu, Hindi, Hindustan and Hindurva*. We must reclaim our lost sovereignty and lift our people out of the grip of tyranny and liberate our homeland – Khalistan.□

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### **Tribute & Acknowledgement**

I dedicate this chapter to Sardar Bhupinder Singh Mann, Sardar Hukam Singh, Sirdar Kapur Singh, ICS, MP, MLA, and Professor of Sikhism, the elected representatives of the Sikh Nation in the Indian Parliament who refused to endorse the Indian Constitution and thus freed the Nation from a duty of loyalty to it. They are the heroes of our Nation and we salute them for their principled courage. The Sikh nation remembers and pays tribute to Saint-Soldier *Shaheed*-Bilas Jarnail Singh Khalsa (Bhindranwale), General Subeg Singh, Bhai Amrik Singh who embraced martyrdom at the hands of the Indian Army and thus showed us who are our enemies. We also remember the Sikh infants, children, youth and the elderly, male and female, more than 250,000 of who upheld the principles of the Guru Khalsa Panth and sacrificed their lives to raise their voice against betrayals by Hindu politicians of the New Delhi administration, and denial of political, economic, religious and social rights of the Sikhs.

# The Sikh Nation & Khalistan

## (A Historical Perspective)

*Dr Awatar Singh Sekhon*

### 1. History of the Punjab

The Punjab is the historic homeland of the Sikhs. The Sikh religion and the Sikh nation were founded in this country. In 1710, the Sikhs partially freed their homeland from foreign rule. The period between 1710 and 1762 was characterised by 'hide and seek' during which the Moguls, the Afghans and the Sikhs alternately ruled the land. The Moguls and the Afghans were foreign rulers but the people accepted the Sikhs as rulers because they were of the people. The Sikhs had been the masters of the land until their surrender to the British troops commanded by Major General Gilbert of the British Empire. On March 29, 1849, Lord Dalhousie formally proclaimed the 'annexation' of the Punjab to British India for 'convenience of administration'.<sup>70</sup> It is worth mentioning that before Lord Dalhousie's proclamation, the word 'India' did not exist in any dictionary of the English language or on the world map. The word India was invented by the British Empire sometime after the 'annexation' of the Punjab that was ruled by Maharaja Ranjit Singh from 1799 to 1849.

During the Second World War (1939-45), the British rule in India had come under threat from Japan in the East and Germany in the West. There were two kinds of pressures on the British: 1) their need for Indian forces to defend the Empire, and 2) the need to keep India stable and peaceful for the duration of the War. The British responded by expressing intent to hand over the rule of India to the people after the War. The response of the Hindu leadership was to start the 'Quit India Movement' with the objective of bringing about a British defeat. The response of the Sikhs and the Muslims was the opposite; they joined the British Indian armed forces in large numbers. The Muslims understood the Congress motive, which was to force a precipitous hand over of power to them. The Muslims smelt a rat and resolved (in 1940) to carve their own homeland out of the Indian sub-continent. They had a wise

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<sup>70</sup> Dilgeer HS, Sekhon AS 1992 *The Sikhs' Struggle for Sovereignty: An Historical Perspective* (ed) A. T. Kerr. The Sikh Educational Trust, Box 60246, University of Alberta Postal Outlet, Edmonton, AB T6G 2S5, Canada.

and visionary leader – Muhammad Ali Jinnah – who put the weight of the Muslims of India behind efforts for British victory. The Sikhs also realized that Hindu leadership was up to no good and that its real intention was to annihilate all non-Hindus socially and politically. They also decided to put their weight behind British victory. But they wavered between friendship with the Muslims, who were majority in the Punjab, and the Hindus who were a majority on all India basis.

## 2. The Drive for Khalistan

The desire for their own sovereign homeland – *Khalistan* – was the driving force behind their eagerness to join the British Indian armed forces. It provided an opportunity to the Sikh people, who had been disarmed in 1849, to be introduced to modern weapons and warfare. The Sikh nation never gave up its quest to arm and become sovereign again. The heirs of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and the Sikh Generals of his Army had remained active in pursuit of the objective. A Sikh leader, Baba Kharak Singh, led a peaceful procession of 500,000 followers, which was a unique event in its size and scope in the history of the time.<sup>71</sup> In fact, the struggle for sovereignty began the day the forces of the Sikh Raj surrendered to the British and has continued ever since. In 1940, Dr (Bhai) Vir Singh of Ludhiana put forth the demand for Khalistan in a pamphlet. His proposal for *Khalistan* included all the areas ruled by the Sikh rulers of Punjab. Since then, every Sikh institution, religious or political organization, students' federation, and bulk of the Sikh intelligentsia have wholeheartedly supported plans for 'Azad Punjab' or an Independent Sikh State or *Khalistan*. In 1945, the Sikh leader Master Tara Singh demanded a *Khalistan* comprising Central Punjab as well as the districts of Lahore and Amritsar covering prominent Sikh Gurdwaras.<sup>72</sup>

The Sikhs were utterly dismayed when they found that the British were not ready to concede the demand for *Khalistan*. The Viceroy – Lord Mountbatten - himself told the Sikhs to 'keep quiet or be prepared for genocide by the British Army'.<sup>73</sup> Despite the threat, the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC) and the *Akali Dal*, demanded *Khalistan*, a Sovereign Sikh State, on March 10 and April 1, 1946. The Sikhs, however, agreed to go along with the Hindus, under protest, due to the British threat of genocide and repeated assurances of Congress leaders like M. K. Gandhi who said, "*I ask you to accept my word and the Resolution of the Congress that it will not betray a single individual much less a community. Let God be the witness of the bond that binds me and the Congress with you (the Sikhs). When pressed further Gandhi said that Sikhs would be justified in drawing their swords out of the scabbards as Guru Gobind Singh had asked them to, if Congress would renege on its commitment.*"<sup>74</sup>

<sup>71</sup> *The Times*, 29<sup>th</sup> December 1929.

<sup>72</sup> Sir E. Jenkins, Governor of Punjab, Press Statement on April 15, 1946.

<sup>73</sup> Lord Mountbatten's message to the Sikh nation: Viceroy's Report No. 8, CAB 127/11, XCA 04623 dated May 23, 1947.

<sup>74</sup> *Young India*, March 19, 1931



As long as the British were the rulers of India, the Hindu leadership unhesitatingly made promises that later events proved they had no intention of keeping. The history of post-independence India is a history of betrayal of every promise made to the Sikhs as well as the Untouchables. The promises were made not only by their leaders but also by their party – the Congress Party. “...in future, the Congress shall accept no constitution which does not meet with the satisfaction of the Sikhs”, was the resolution passed by the Lahore session of the Congress Party on December 31, 1929. Further assurance was given by Pundit Jawahar Lal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India: “...the brave Sikhs of Punjab are entitled to special considerations. I see nothing wrong in an area set up in the North of India wherein, the Sikhs can also experience the glow of freedom.”<sup>75</sup> On July 6, 1946, Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru, who was a personal friend of the Viceroy, Lord Mountbatten, repeated in a speech that the Sikhs’ interests will be ‘well looked after’; the Sikhs will also experience the ‘glow of freedom’.

### 3. The Sikhs yet to Experience the ‘Glow of Freedom’

The trust placed by the Sikh leaders in the Hindu leadership was betrayed even before the ink was dry on the instrument of independence. The Sikhs discovered the meaning of the ‘glow of freedom’ when *two million* were slaughtered at the Pakistan-Punjab border while freedom celebrations were going on in New Delhi in August, 1947. Tying the Sikhs to Hindu India was a blunder that has turned out to be a bigger disaster than any military defeat they had ever suffered in their history. The main events in the betrayal of the Sikh nation, that is the hallmark of post-independence history of India, are summarised below:

### 4. Suspicion of Loyalty of Sikh Soldiers

Just seven weeks after the transfer of power to Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, the Hindu Governor of Punjab, Chandulal Trivedi, issued a circular to the Deputy Commissioners of Punjab declaring the Sikh nation to be a lawless nation: “The Sikhs as a community are a lawless people and are a menace to the law-abiding Hindus in the province. The Deputy Commissioners should take special measures against them.” The Government of India directed the Indian Army to inform on Sikh military personnel: “Any knowledge of the *amritdharis* (initiated Sikhs) who are dangerous people and pledged to commit murder, arson and acts of terrorism should immediately be brought to the notice of authorities. These people might appear harmless from the outside but they are basically committed to terrorism. In the interest of all of us their identity and whereabouts must always be disclosed”<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Jawahar Lal Nehru, Lahore Bulletin, January 9, 1930

<sup>76</sup> Indian Army Gazette *Baat cheet*, Indian Defence Headquarters; News Report in Indian Express, September 18, 1984, p. 7.

## 5. The Sikhs Reject the Indian Constitution

The Indian Constitution passed on November 26, 1949, declared the Sikhs to be Hindus. This was out-rightly 'rejected', in its draft and final forms, by the Sikh parliamentarians: Sardar Bhupinder Singh Mann and Sardar Hukam Singh. They did not sign the document in which the Sikhs were not only denied a national identity but also their religious identity. The Sikh nation has ever since considered the Constitution of India as their '*death warrant*'. Later, the Indian Constitution was again rejected in the Indian parliament on behalf of the Sikh Nation by Sirdar Kapur Singh, ICS, Member of Parliament, member of legislative assembly and Professor of Sikhism, on 6<sup>th</sup> September, 1966.<sup>77</sup>

**6. Repression of Early Akalis.** From 1950 to 1958, the Sikh organizations engaged in peaceful agitations in order to remind the Indian Government to fulfill their promises to the Sikhs before independence. More than 54,000 courted arrest. A young man, Kaka Inderjit Singh, was murdered by the police and thrown in a water-well near Delhi, and the Sikh leader, Master Tara Singh was banned from entry into Delhi.<sup>78</sup>

**7. Role of Sikhs in End to Emergency.** In 1975, Indira Gandhi suspended civil liberties to retain political power after the High Court unseated her. The Sikhs were in the forefront of the fight against her autocratic rule. They courted arrest in large numbers; more than 50,000 arrests in six months. That compelled Prime Minister Indira Gandhi to restore constitutional rule and hold elections in 1977 in which she suffered a humiliating defeat. Out of power, she was charged on numerous counts and was incarcerated.

**8. Pandey Brothers - Hijackers - Reprieved.** In 1978, two Pandey brothers, belonging to high caste, secured the release of Indira Gandhi, by carrying out the hijacking of an airliner of the Indian Airlines. She was released when they threatened to blow up the aircraft. They were rewarded by 'Indira Gandhi's Congress Party by nominations' to seats in the Uttar Pradesh State Assembly.<sup>79</sup> The 'hijacking terrorists' predictably won in the elections and became 'law-makers'. That reveals the double standards of India. Violence, even crimes, by the high and mighty of upper castes are 'acts of courage' but violence is 'terrorism' when an entire people struggle for national liberation.

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8 Sekhon AS Dilgeer HS 1999 '*A White Paper on Khalistan (A True Story) The Sikh Nation* (ed AT Kerr)' The Sikh Educational Trust, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

<sup>78</sup> Dilgeer HS, Sekhon AS 1992 *The Sikhs' Struggle for Sovereignty: An Historical Perspective* (ed) A. T. Kerr. TSET.

<sup>79</sup> Sekhon AS, 'Two Pandey brother made law makers in UP' Int. Journal of Sikh Affairs 13(1):47

## 9. Operation Bluestar

To 'break the back' of the Sikhs' struggle for Khalistan, Indira Gandhi's administration waged an undeclared war in 1978.<sup>80</sup> That war has continued under successive administrations to this day. In 1984, the Punjab (Khalistan) was cut off from the rest of the world as the Indian Army launched a brutal assault on Durbar Sahib (also called the Golden Temple) at Amritsar killing more than 20,000 devotees on the premises, majority of who were women, children and elderly people. Most of the murdered were shot at point blank range and were cremated *en masse* to burn and bury all evidence. The Shrine was bombarded with artillery, looted, and the Sikh Reference Library containing invaluable historic documents was burnt down. Even food supplies in the community kitchen were plundered. The assault of June 1984, which was code named 'Operation Bluestar', was followed by several military operations code named Mund, Woodrose, Clean, Research, Black Thunder I, II, and III, Man-Made Floods, Night, Final Assault, etc. Since the beginning of 'Operation Bluestar' more than 250,000 Sikhs have been murdered. On the last count, 52,268 Sikhs are still in India's jails without trials or after the completion of their sentences.<sup>81</sup> The Sikh community is still traumatised. According to Dr Sangat Singh, a former diplomat in the Indian Foreign Service and a renowned Sinologist, the 'Sikhs were killed brutally and indiscriminately by Indian administrations'. His estimate of the Sikhs killed by the Indian State from 1981 and 1994 is between 1 to 1.2 million.<sup>82</sup>

**10. Pogrom Against the Sikhs in Delhi – 1984.** In the wake of the assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi by her Sikh guards, the Delhi Government killed more than 20,000 Sikhs and destroyed their properties in revenge for her death during October-November in 1984. At the time, Rajiv Gandhi (Indira's son, who also became the Prime Minister) said at the Calcutta Airport before leaving for New Delhi "*Let us teach these bastards - the Sikhs - a lesson.*"<sup>83</sup>

## 11. Air India Flight Sabotaged to Demonise Sikhs

The Sikhs in Diaspora were outraged by the assault on Durbar Sahib and they are not intimidated by India. In order to pin on them the label of 'international terrorists', the Indian Intelligence, which uses the code name of RAW (Research and Analysis Wing), sabotaged Air India Flight 182, on June 23, 1985, that originated in Canada and exploded off the coast of Ireland on its way to London. This reveals the extent to which India would go to get world support for pogroms against the Sikhs. India's Consulate-General in Toronto tried (unsuccessfully) through the Royal

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<sup>80</sup> M. M. K. Wali, Indian Foreign Secretary, June 7, 1984, Interviewed by Canadian Broadcasting Corporation in its programme 'As It Happens'.

<sup>81</sup> *Movement Against State Repression & Amnesty International*, Int.Journal of Sikh Affairs 11/2001

<sup>82</sup> Singh S, *Sikhs in History*, 1995, Hewlett, PO Box 453, NY11557, ISBN 0-9647555-0-5

<sup>83</sup> News published in all newspapers on October 31, 1984 in India

Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) to put the blame on Canadian Sikhs, even before the Airline released the official passenger list of the ill fated craft. The story was researched by two Canadian journalists and published in a book titled 'Soft Target: How the Indian Intelligence Service Penetrated Canada.'<sup>84</sup>

## 11. Cost of Demonizing Diaspora Sikhs

More than a million Sikhs have migrated to Canada, the UK and USA from their homeland in the Punjab since the Partition in 1947. As reported by an Indian newspaper *Hitvada*, the Indian government has spent, between 1984 and 1994, more than \$1.5 billion US Dollars abroad to malign the Sikhs in the eyes of their hosts and countrymen. The Indian government coerces the Sikhs in its employment – even Ministers and diplomats – to become Quislings. Civil servants, professionals, journalists, academics and writers are paid to infiltrate Diaspora Sikhs – some to spy on them, others to malign them in public and the press.

The whole idea is to distract attention away from the war crimes of the Indian leaders and the blatant abuses of human rights that are rampant. India has largely succeeded in portraying the legitimate struggle for freedom of its many captive peoples as 'mindless terrorism' by small minorities. The world does not know the truth that the victims of the Indian state are the majority; their struggle is not mindless, it for national self-determination. The Sikhs' are a separate nation who were promised their own sovereign state by India. It is the betrayal of its promises that is the cause of so many wars of liberation. India will not have peace until it lives up to its commitments – its agreements and its promises.

## 12. Cost of Suppressing Khalistan Movement

The price tag for the Indian occupation of *Khalistan*, Punjab, is estimated to be Rupees 86 billion.<sup>85</sup> In addition, in its effort to impress and intimidate the oppressed majority, India keeps buying costly weapons it neither needs nor can afford. It deploys ballistic missiles with nuclear warheads on the soil of *Khalistan* to attack Pakistan. Neither China nor Pakistan wants to invade India. Why should they? They are not mad! It is India whose imperial ambitions bring it in conflict with its neighbours. The megalomania of India's rulers is costing India a lot in money as well as its standing in the world. But the Sikhs will not compromise on *Khalistan*, however long it takes. The fact is that *India would be more secure with Khalistan as a buffer state between itself and Pakistan. Threats of war and sabre rattling do not provide a basis for peace or stability; accepting the principle of national self-determination does!*

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<sup>84</sup> Kashmeri Z, McAndrew B, ' *Soft Target: How the Indian Intelligence Service Penetrated Canada* ', 1989, James Lorimer & Company, Toronto, Canada ISBN 1-55028-221-2

<sup>85</sup> Expenditure on the armed forces attributed to counter-insurgency in the Punjab is estimated to be US\$3.7 Billion according to '*Chardhi Kala*' (Punjabi) of September 10, 1997

### 13. Internal cost of Imperialism

India is irresponsibly spending beyond its capabilities on its nuclear programme, at the expense of (i) public health amenities for its people, (ii) bread for hungry mouths, (iii) shelters for the homeless, (iv) solving the problems of its corrupt and criminalized political system (v) preventing productive agricultural land being rendered fallow by fortifications and wanton uses of tanks and military vehicles, (vi) upgrading its aviation equipment to prevent mid-air disasters, (vii) controlling unexpectedly heavy human density, (viii) providing a solution to its deteriorating economy, etc.<sup>86</sup> The worst victims of India's imperialism are not its neighbours but its people. It uses its intelligence and armed forces to 'terrorise' its people and follows an 'unwritten' policy of 'extermination of 'non-Hindus - the Sikhs, Muslims (particularly in Jammu and Kashmir), Christians, Dalits, and Adivaasis etc. That is not much of a basis for aspiring to be a world power – empty stomachs and a life of humiliation for the majority.

### 14. Human Rights Violations

Indian Army Brig. R. P. Sinha, on March 8, 1991 issued "...a threat to the villagers that all the males would be killed and their women taken to army camps to breed a new race if there was any militant activity in their village" in Khalistan.<sup>87</sup> There are many other instances of how the policy of intimidation and extermination is executed. But it is the threats made at the ministerial level that reveal how the Hindu leaders, seen on the international stage smiling obsequiously, really think. 1) Balram Jakhar, a Cabinet Minister and colleague of the former Indian Prime Minister, P. V. Nrasima Rao, said: " To preserve the unity of India, if we have to eliminate two crore (20 million) Sikhs we will do so". 2) Former Prime Minister, Chandershekhar, said in 1991 to a Sikh delegation at his residence: "You do not know the might of our armed forces. We will eliminate 10,000 Sikh youth and the world will know nothing about it." 3) Mukh-Sewadar of Akal Takht Sahib (the Supreme Seat of the Sikh Polity) Singh Sahib Bhai Gurdev Singh Kaunke, was abducted on 20th December 1993, tortured and killed, and his body dumped in a canal on 3rd January, 1994. No one has been charged for his murder.

### 15. Why No Outcry Against Genocide in India?

The world press is a powerful institution. Its outrage is hard to ignore when it sets its mind to exposing a calamity or a crime. But no one questioned Indira Gandhi why she ordered the brutal attack on the Durbar Sahib and desecrated the holiest shrine of the Sikhs? Not even after the event? The genocide of the Sikhs was carried out by the Punjab Police, Central Reserve Police Force and the Indian Army. Honours and rewards were given to those who mowed down Sikh youth lined along canals after

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<sup>86</sup> The Economist , July 15, 1995

<sup>87</sup> Dilgeer HS, Sekhon AS '*The Sikh Struggle for Sovereignty: A Historical Perspective*', (ed) AT Kerr, 1992

being taken from their homes for no other reason than that they were young. These were war crimes more heinous than any committed in former Yugoslavia. But India was not subjected to international scrutiny; there was no outrage inside or outside India; no one paid any attention to the biggest holocaust since *the holocaust*.

The Sikhs are desperate and angry. Instead of sympathy for being the victims of systematic genocide, they are demonised as terrorists - ridiculed inside India and vilified abroad. Much smaller nations that have suffered much less brutality have secured their right of national self-determination in the last two decades. But the proud Khalsa nation is unfortunate in being oppressed by a third rate country of the Third World. Is India forgiven every crime because it is so poor and backward? It is indeed poor and backward but that does not lessen the pain of its victims. No wonder the Sikh soldiers took the law into their own hands to avenge their humiliation!

### **16. Khalistan is Inevitable.**

There was a time when the Sikh Nation could have reconciled to an autonomous state within India. But two events have made that impossible. One, Operation Blue star: the merciless genocide of Sikhs in 1984 and continued incarceration of more than fifty thousand Sikhs ever since. These are scars on Sikh hearts that still cause pain and the proud Sikh nation is unable to forgive and forget. Two, the people of Jammu and Kashmir were also promised autonomy within India and their leader – Sheikh Abdullah – also fell for it. But when he said that the autonomy was a farce, he was dismissed as Chief Minister and put in prison. The case of Jammu and Kashmir has exposed that ‘autonomy’ given by India is worse than not having it. The Indian Army operating on its soil cares for no law; it kills the young and dishonours their women with impunity, and destroys homes and livelihood of the people with no restitution and recompense. All the laws are on paper only. The Indian soldiers are never punished; they get rewards every time they excel in cruelty and bestiality. India is above error, beyond scrutiny and totally unresponsive to law (national or international) or any norm of moral and civilized conduct. The Khalsa cannot be a part of such a nation, whatever the degree of autonomy.

India is not a *Zumhooriat* (democracy); it is *Zulmhooriat* (state founded on cruelty). It is a country that celebrates the desecration of a holy shrine (Durbar Sahib in June 1984) as a victory. It is a country where the hijacking by the Pandey brothers is an act of valour rewarded with a seat in the state assembly. It is a country where pogroms against minority religions are organised by its elected and public officials (against the Sikhs in Delhi in 1984, and against Muslims in Gujrat in 2002) and are deemed to be acts of religious devotion. It is a country where any ‘Hindu’ can abuse, shoot or kill a ‘non-Hindu’ with impunity like it was hunting - only less demanding in special weapons or skills. Clearly, there are two laws in India – one for the Hindus, the other for the low castes and non-Hindus - the Sikhs, Dalits, Adivasis, Christians, and Muslims in general. The Muslims of Jammu and Kashmir, in particular, have been the victim of the Hindu genocidists for the longest period of

time. They have lived under the most prolonged military occupation since 1948 in defiance of the UN that assured them that they would be allowed to decide their destiny in a plebiscite as long ago as in 1948.

## 17. Appeal to World Conscience

For a very long period of time, crimes committed by the state against its citizens went unpunished. But in the last two decades since the collapse of the Soviet Empire that is increasingly difficult. However, such punishment is meted out to those who the media identifies as criminals. Fate has punished many of the arrogant leaders of India but many are still on a long leash still masquerading as leaders. There are many high officials of state still not made to answer for their crimes. The present Congress led Government conforms to the rule of law but not in Jammu & Kashmir. It is perceived to be weak because it has hesitated to deal with the rogues and thugs who were ministers in the administration of AB Vajpayee. Persons like L.K. Advani, Uma Bharati and Shushma Swaraj who were in the forefront of the campaign to demolish the Babri Masjid and the India-wide anti-Muslim riots that followed, have yet to be dealt with by law. Most important, Narendra Modi, who planned, organised and executed the genocide of Muslims in Gujrat as its Chief Minister in February to November 2002, with the blessings of the New Delhi administration, is still the Chief Minister and apparently outside the reach of the law.

The vilest aspect of the oppression and genocide of Sikhs is that most of the policemen, soldiers and officers involved in those vicious operations were Sikhs. Those who hesitated were dismissed; those who refused were given exemplary punishments including being shot. That is the true face of India. A non-Hindu in India has to prove that he is loyal by eagerly killing his own people when the Brahmin State declares them to be disloyal to *Desh, Dharm or Dharti*. There is no room for conscientious objection or protection of law. If one is Indian, one is a slave of the high and mighty with no claim to will or dignity. Every non-Hindu is required to kill other non-Hindus from time to time to prove his loyalty to India. Regular pogroms have replaced the ritual of human sacrifice; the only difference is that pogroms entail much more death and destruction. But both underline the same feature of the Indian society; there is no value of the lives of non-Hindus; their blood is shed with glee to satisfy the blood lust of Hindu gods. It is this *dharm* that sustains a small minority of 3 % Brahmins in power in perpetuity.

The people have no trust in the state, only fear. There is no justice in India - only promise of a hearing. It is a strange country where no one questions the authority and the authority is under perpetual fear that it may be questioned. It is continually pre-empting being questioned. Even the political system has adjusted to this reality. The Government is always a coalition of many parties ever shifting in its composition, objectives and methods. No one can be held to account; they retire, lose elections or die before they can be questioned. The Hindus cannot rule justly; the caste system precludes that. No one in India knows the solution. But the Sikhs have seen that the Muslims who opted out of India live in peace and dignity in

Pakistan; those who remain behind live in perpetual fear of their lives. The Sikhs have been a sovereign nation and know how to rule themselves. They want out. They appeal to the world for help. They appeal to all the other oppressed of India to make common cause with them. Together, they all have a chance!

## 18. Work for International Criminal Court

On 27 October 1995, a Human Rights activist - Sardar Jaswant Singh Khalra - was killed at the Chhabal police station, Amritsar. He had compiled the details of 50,000 Sikhs killed by the Indian security forces personnel. His body was thrown into the Harike Canal. A S. Sandhu, a police officer who allegedly committed suicide but is believed to have been murdered, abducted a Sikh religious leader, Charan Singh,<sup>88</sup> tortured him and disposed off his body. Earlier, the same police officer had abducted Charan Singh's brother and his driver. The driver was killed by tying his legs to two jeeps, which were then driven in opposite directions.

A former Punjab Chief Minister, Prakash Singh Badal, used the state police to assault the Durbar Sahib Complex on 7th February 1998, desecrated its sanctity and deposed the democratically elected president of the SGPC. Shortly thereafter, Badal forcibly removed the Mukh-Sewadar or Chief of Akal Takht Sahib, the Supreme Seat of the Sikh Polity, Bhai Ranjit Singh. The administration of Prakash Singh Badal spent more than 20 million rupees in legal fees to protect the police officers of Punjab, who participated in committing crimes against humanity and the genocide of the Sikhs.<sup>89</sup>

All the administrations of India have protected those who engaged in crimes against humanity including genocide and massacres. The police officers who were totally devoid of humanity and respect for law have yet to be punished. That is why the Union Government has lost its legitimacy in the eyes of the Sikh nation. The State Government of the Punjab can restore its credibility and authority by two actions: 1) releasing all the prisoners held without trial and those who have completed their sentences, 2) a resolute inquiry into and punishment of the prominent persons engaged in genocide in 1984. The names of principals in the high noon of terror in 1984 are well known. They include high police officers, directors of the RAW and senior officers of the Indian armed forces. It is no secret who were the Indian politicians directly involved in the pogrom for the extermination of Sikhs.

The Sikh public want to see J.F. Rebeiro, K.P.S. Gill, Sarbjit Singh, Sumedh Saini (SSP who killed Professor Rajinder Pal Singh Gill (Bulara), Dr Gurnam Singh Buttar, Swarn Ghotna, Gobind Ram, Sanjeev Gupta, Izhar Alam, A.S. Sandhu, R.S.

<sup>88</sup> Kumar RN, Singh A, Agarwaal A, Kaur J, 'Reduced to Ashes: The Insurgency and Human Rights in the Punjab Final Report'. 2003 Vol I, Committee for Disappearances in Punjab, South Asia Forum for Human Rights, GPO Box 12855, Khatmandu, Nepal. ISBN 99933-53-57-4

<sup>89</sup> Osan SS 1999, 'The Real face of Prakash Singh Badal, Chief Minister of Punjab' Int. Journal of Sikh Affairs, 9:3-4, ISSN 91-85815-14-3



Bhullar, Joginder Singh, Raghbir Singh, D. R. Bhatti, Surendra Nath (a former Governor of Punjab); R.N. Kao, Gary (Girish) Saxena investigated and charged. The politicians directly involved included H.K.L. Bhagat, Jagdish Tytler, Arun Nehru, S.D. Sharma, S.S. Ray, Boota Singh, Zail Singh, L.K. Advani, G.L. Nanda, Balwant Singh, Beant Singh, P.D. Singh, Surender Nath, Prakash Singh Badal, G.S. Tohra, and HS Longowal.<sup>90</sup> In the armed forces, those responsible for the massacre of civilians and wanton destruction include Generals K. Sunderji, A.S. Vaidhya, K.S. Brar, R.S. Dayal, J.S. Bhullar, Arjun Singh, and many others who actually commanded formations used in the assault on the Durbar Sahib in June 1984. A public inquiry is needed because what is at stake is 'trust'. It has been twenty years since the traumatic events; some wounds are still raw but the Sikh nation is ready for the truth if India is ready to dress the wounds.<sup>91</sup>

### 19. Vital Need for International Support

The Sikhs are a nation; they interact with other nations more than with the captive peoples of India. Hon. Dona Rohrabacher, Member of the US Congress said, "For the Sikhs, Kashmiri Muslims, and other minorities *"India might as well be Nazi Germany."* According to the US Department of State, the Indian government paid over 41,000 cash bounties to police officers for killing Sikhs between 1992 and 1994.<sup>92</sup> Another Sikh, Devinder Pal Singh Bhullar, is about to be put to death in India for a crime even India admitted he didn't commit.<sup>93</sup>

The Indian Government has the entire Sikh Nation and the Government of Punjab in its tight control. The political party of the Sikhs (all factions of the Akali Dal), the religious institutions of the Sikhs including all Gurdwaras, the SGPC, Durbar Sahib in Amritsar, the Supreme Seat of the Sikh polity, Akal Takht Sahib, and Akal Takht Sahib's jathedars (Custodians) or Mukh-Sewadars (present and former) are all in the 'tight grip' of RAW and so is the administration of the Punjab (of Akalis or non-Akalis). The Sikh nation now fully understands what is the place of the Punjab in India – it is a colony. The Punjab had been a colony of the British but it is quite different when the colonial masters are Hindus. In the British *Raj* there was order based on respect for law and there was genuine autonomy in the provinces. In Hindu *Rashtra* subterfuge is the law. In India of today: 1) the people can change the rulers but not the rules; 2) the states have autonomy that can mean whatever the Chief Minister thinks it means but it means nothing when the military comes; 3) Sovereignty in India resides in its ruling classes, not its government or its institutions.

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<sup>90</sup> Singh G, 'Chakravayuh: Web of Indian Secularism', 2000, Inst. of Sikh Studies, Chandigarh, Punjab ISBN 81-85815-14-3

<sup>91</sup> *Report to the Nation: Oppression in the Punjab*, January 1986, US Library of Congress Card No 86-60058.

<sup>92</sup> Press Release by Council of Khalistan, Washington, DC. 1999. Int. J Sikh Affairs 9(2), 36. ISSN 1481-5435

<sup>93</sup> Hon. Edolphus Towns, Member of US Congress, Speaking to the House of Representatives on March 18, 2003

Addressing the House of Representatives, United States of America, on July 17, 2003, the Hon Dan Burton, Member of the US Congress for Indiana, made his colleagues aware of the situation in the Punjab. He said: "Mr. Speaker, last month marked the nineteenth anniversary of the Indian government's attack on the Durbar Sahib (Golden Temple) in Amritsar, the most sacred of Sikh shrines. The Indian government simultaneously attacked 125 Sikh temples, known as Gurdwaras, around India. It is reported that more than 20,000 Sikhs were killed in these attacks, which went by the name of Operation Bluestar.

"The Sikh Nation has never forgotten this atrocity against them. These attacks laid the foundation of a sovereign, independent Sikh homeland, *Khalistan*, which was declared independent on October 7, 1987. Last month, they once again observed *Khalistan* Martyrs Day on June 7, marking the anniversary of the brutal attacks on the Golden Temple and the other Sikh temples. Sikhs gathered in Washington, D.C. and protested outside the Indian Embassy. They chanted slogans and made speeches in support of freedom for the Sikh Nation.

"The Sikhs were equal partners in the transfer of power from the British and were supposed to have an independent state. Sikh leaders were promised that they would have 'the glow of freedom' in India and no law would be passed affecting Sikhs without their consent. However, that is not the case. I would like to have the Council of *Khalistan's* press release on the *Khalistan* Martyrs Day events placed into the Congressional Records following my statement."<sup>94</sup>

In a 74-page preliminary report on its ongoing investigation, the Central Bureau of Investigation admitted that it had *prima facie* found that a total 984 bodies had been cremated by the police after being labelled 'unidentified'. The justices of the Punjab High Court called these cremations "*worse than a genocide*," the justices also stated "*we shudder to think of such a thing happening in a democracy*".

## 20. Conclusion

The world's so called 'largest democracy' is ruled by the upper castes, who are no more than 15% of the total population of India. Yet they are able to manipulate the non-Hindu majority of Sikhs, Muslims, Christians, Dalits and other *Bahujan* (native) peoples who are 85% of the total population. India rules by wanton use of its armed force to 'terrorise' the people while holding the world in its spell behind the smoke screen of a parliamentary democracy. The truth is that elite-trader castes terrorize and strangulate the Sikhs in the Punjab (*Khalistan*) economically, politically, and socially. The Sikhs are a separate nation. On August 15, 1947, their homeland was gifted away to Hindu India and they were left without a country they could call theirs. The Sikhs have lived in peace and harmony with other faiths under their own rule as well as under the British rule. But their culture of sovereignty and fierce

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<sup>94</sup> *Int. Journal of Sikh Affairs* 11:31/2001, ISSN 1481-5435

independence precludes submission to Hindu India run under Machiavellian principles and *Manu*, *Shankracharya*, *Kautalya*, and *Aryasamajist* doctrines.

The struggle of the Sikh nation for sovereignty, independence and political power has been ongoing since 14<sup>th</sup> March 1849. The national objective of a 'sovereign state' pre-dates the grant of independence by the British and the creation of India of today in 1947. The Sikh objective does not, therefore, constitute 'secession' but the exercise of the 'right of self-determination' that is an inalienable right of a nation that was endorsed by a solemn promise made to the Sikhs by the Congress Party from whose platform the political struggle for the freedom of India was carried out. The Sikh's right to sovereignty is further underpinned by the following:

1. The Sikhs were a sovereign, independent nation with their own political system and geographical boundaries between 1799 and 14<sup>th</sup> March 1849.
2. The realm of Sikh Monarch Ranjit Singh was not a part of the British Indian Empire. Lord Dalhousie's proclamation of 29<sup>th</sup> March 1849 is amply clear that the newly conquered Sikh Realm was '*annexed*' to the British Empire for administration purposes only.
3. The Sikhs had never been '*subservient*' to anyone prior to 14<sup>th</sup> March 1849.
4. The Sikhs *rejected* the Indian Constitution of 1950, in its draft and final forms through their elected representatives (Sardar Bhupinder Singh Mann, Sardar Hukam Singh and Sirdar Kapur Singh, all members of parliament), in 1948, on 27<sup>th</sup> November 1949, in 1950 and on 6<sup>th</sup> September 1966, in the Indian parliament.

Sirdar Kapur Singh, ICS, MP, MLA and Professor of Sikhism stated in the Indian parliament "*Like the curate's eggs, though it might be good in parts, it is devoid of nutritional qualities and since its putrefaction is far gone, it is really unfit for human consumption.*" He went on to say that "After having carefully viewed the findings, the reports and judgements of judicial and quasi-judicial Tribunals and Forums that have dealt with matters and cases involving important Sikh interests, comes to the conclusion that the entire judicial machinery and the judicial process of the Independent India, under influences of certain section of political Hindus, is prejudiced and has been perverted against the Sikh people in India in relation to their just and legal rights."<sup>95</sup>

The Council of *Khalistan* shoulders responsibility to represent the Sikhs owing to the tight grip in which the Sikh nation is held in India. The Council is also the international face of the *Khalistan* Movement. It has been in touch with the

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<sup>95</sup> Singh K, *Saachi Sakhi* (True Story) The address of Sirdar Kapur Singh ICS, MP, MLA, and Professor of Sikhism to Lok Sabha (Parliament) on September 6, 1966 p295-304, published by Babbar Khalsa P.O.Box 77034, Stn. 'S', Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

American, British and Canadian Governments, where the Diaspora Sikhs are concentrated, for a peaceful resolution of the hiatus that has precipitated owing to the intractability of the Indian Government. The Sikh people cannot remain loyal citizens of India after having been subjected to the vicious and the most diabolical state terror on any people since the holocaust. This chapter is written in the hope that the wider world becomes aware of the pain in the hearts of the Sikh nation that makes it impossible for them to behave as if nothing happened in 1984. In fact, the die was cast and the point of no return was reached in 1984. India hopes that by expanding the area and the intensity of its internal war, it can get international support (in the name of international war on terrorism) to suppress legitimate freedom movements particularly that of *Khalistan*. This has made the *Khalistan* Movement international in its scope.

One fears that in moments of desperation, the angry get mad and act in a manner that is unwise and violent. But the onus to avoid madness lies on the state(s) – not the people. There can be no solution other than honouring the pledges made by Hindu leaders to the Sikhs. They have to allow the Sikh nation its right to be sovereign. With time and repression becoming longer, the desire for sovereign independence has become more intense. There is anger and instability in the Punjab where two nations – India and Pakistan - that have become nuclear powers, have a common border. That adds an element of ‘raw nerves’ into the equation. There is no point in advising caution and sense of responsibility to those who have nothing to lose. It is not a question to be resolved by give and take. It is a question of principle – the principle of national self-determination. India has to concede that to all those people that it brought under its rule without the consent of the people or have lost their trust because of wanton use of force. Since India appears unwilling to accept the authority of the UN or submit to universally recognized principles, the prospects for peace are not good. Imperialism stands defeated and finished everywhere else in the World; but it is the polity of India. It is not the Sikhs and the Kashmiris who are condemned to suffer, India is large enough to make many more, mostly its friends, suffer with it.

On its part, the Council of *Khalistan* will continue its efforts to secure a peaceful exit of India from *Khalistan*. It urges the two permanent members of the UN Security Council – USA and the UK – who have interest in peace and stability in the region and influence with India to help its leaders see the futility of efforts to rule a state against the will of its people. Indian obstinacy and intractability causes a lot of pain but brings no credit or kudos to it. In fact, by its policies India is making the whole of South Asia a powder keg that can explode into a nuclear holocaust of the 21st century. □

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## Part II- Pakistan & Afghanistan

*'In the wake of its victory in East Pakistan in 1971, India crowed: 'the Two Nation Theory was dead'. It rang true because Islam had failed to keep the two wings of the country together. But the people were pained by the 'certificate of death' issued by India but they did not quite believe it. They saw that it were the secular opponents of Pakistan who were joyous; the majority in Pakistan was sad. What the trauma of 1971 proved was that soldiers cannot defend that the intelligentsia is unprepared to uphold and guard. The intelligentsia had lost the battle in East Pakistan first. The politicians followed them. The soldiers were the last to be beaten but they did put up a fight; the scholars and politicians surrendered without much of a fight.'*

**+Usman Khalid+**

# Kashmiri Struggle for Freedom

*Syed Ali Geelani, Chairman APHC*<sup>96</sup>

## 1. The Unfortunate Become Resolute

The History of Kashmir has for a long time been characterised by misfortune. After centuries under benign Muslim rule by Mughals from Delhi and later by Afghans from Kabul, they suffered under vile rule of non-Muslims. Owing to internecine war in Afghanistan, Ahmed Shah Abdali and his Durrani successors could not protect their possessions, which allowed the Sikhs to conquer Kashmir and make it a part of their Kingdom of Punjab. Their rule did not last very long and the British defeated them in 1849 and annexed the territory of their kingdom to their possessions in India. That is when the real misfortune of the Muslims in Kashmir began. The British East India Company sold the hilly region of the Sikh Kingdom to a Dogra - Maharaja Gulab Singh – as a prize to the Dogras for having betrayed the Sikhs and helped the ‘Company’ defeat them. That is how a Muslim majority state passed under the rule of a non-Muslim absolute ruler who repressed them with abandon. As it turned out, that was not to be the first time the British betrayed the Muslim majority in Jammu and Kashmir.

In 1947, the British Government had the opportunity to undo the wrong the ‘Company’ had done a century ago, but it chose to perpetuate injustice. The Kashmiris were denied sovereign choice that was given to all the other parts of British India. What is worse they did so by deception in collusion with Congress leadership as if they wanted to punish the Muslims of South Asia for seeking national self-determination. They carried out the partition of their Empire in a manner that denied sovereign choice to many peoples in it and to make the Muslim State (Pakistan) difficult to defend. Although they accepted the principle of partition (Two Nation Theory) they acted unfairly when trusted as arbitrators. The Kashmir imbroglio is the product of their unfairness. The Boundary Commission headed by Sir Cyril Radcliffe, was appointed to arbitrate and delineate the boundary between

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<sup>96</sup> Syed Ali Geelani, Chairman All Parties Hurriyet Conference (APHC) - group of political parties in India held Jammu and Kashmir that struggle for freedom from Indian occupation – dictated this from his sick bed in Delhi on 27 December 2004 where he was convalescing after a surgical operation.

India and Pakistan. The Muslim majority District of Gurdaspur in the Punjab was a part of Pakistan until he gave all of it except Shakargarh Tehsil to India thus providing it a land link and a vital bridge over River Ravi that was used by the Indian troops to occupy the State of Jammu and Kashmir. It has since been revealed that he acted on the direction of Lord Moutbatten, the last British Viceroy who became the first Governor General of Independent India.

It has also been revealed that Lord Mountbatten worked hand in glove with Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India, to provide a quasi-legal cover to the deployment of Indian troops in Kashmir by lying and perhaps even forging a document that India calls the 'Instrument of Accession'. The Maharaja had been forced to flee to escape the wrath of the Muslim majority that was up in arms against his rule. Lord Mountbatten said the Maharaja signed the document ceding the State to India *before* he ordered the Indian troops to be deployed into Kashmir. Professor Alistair Lamb has written a book in which he publishes the research that found that Indian troops had already entered Kashmir before there could even be a contact between the emissary from Delhi and the Maharaja. The infamous 'instrument of accession' has never been seen or subjected to scrutiny; it is either a forgery or a hoax. Seventeen million people were robbed of sovereign choice by that hoax or forgery.

British India was partitioned into two countries - India and Pakistan - on the basis of the Two-Nation Theory – the Muslims being one of the two nations. The principle followed in determining the boundary between the two states was that contiguous Muslim majority areas would be Pakistan. Where it was claimed by the Congress Party that even the Muslim majority wanted to be a part of India, a referendum was held. Accordingly, the people of the Frontier Province in West Pakistan and the people of Sylhet in East Pakistan decided in a referendum that they wanted to be a part of Pakistan. The same principle and procedure should have been applied to the princely states of British India as well. But the British betrayed again; they gave that right to the rulers of princely states thus providing an opportunity for further betrayal and more mischief that has since resulted, beside the occupation of Muslim majority Jammu and Kashmir by India, three Indo-Pakistan wars and several wars of liberation inside India leaving the sub-continent in the grip of perpetual war.

Lord Mountbatten did issue 'guidance' to rulers of Princely States on 25 August 1947 what factors to keep in view while deciding whether to accede to India or Pakistan. These factors were three in number: 1) contiguity, 2) wishes of the people, 3) their cultural heritage. When the State of Junagadh acceded to Pakistan, India invaded and annexed that state on the grounds that it violated the 'guidance' given by the Viceroy. The State of Hyderabad, which wanted to become sovereign and independent exercising the option given to the ruler under the 'Independence of India Act' of the British Parliament that created Pakistan and India, was also invaded and annexed by India because it violated the 'guidance'. But when it was declared that the Maharaja of Kashmir had ceded the state to India in violation of the 'guidance' Pakistan's response was weak. It was left it to local Muslim communities

to fight the Dogra Army and Pakistan sent in civilian volunteers (mostly Pathan tribesmen) and military personnel disguised as civilians to face the Indian troops. Pakistan should have responded robustly; it did not. The people were on its side; Pakistan would have won; Kashmir would have been free in 1948.

The above story has been told many times to many different audience. The long running saga of the 'misfortune' of the Kashmiri people is familiar – so familiar that familiarity has begun to breed contempt. Even the Kashmiris are tired of telling their story; they know that behind the oft-expressed sympathy there is disdain and sometimes even satisfaction. That is why in 1989, the Kashmiris decided they do not want sympathy for the barbarity they put up with, they want support for their freedom struggle. They want to be known for their 'resolve' not their 'misfortune'.

## 2. British-Congress Collusion

The Congress Party was created by the British to promote 'secularism' as the polity of multi-faith India. Secularism in India did not have the same meaning as in the West where the concept originated. In the West it means the separation of the Church and the State and the primacy of the State. In the Hindu faith there is no Church as such but there is a priest caste – the Brahmin. The priests rarely want to be rulers; they prefer to be rule makers. That was also the case with the Hindu society. Believed to possess the power to foretell the future and being the caste that was lettered, they dominated white-collar jobs as bureaucrats. The Hindu society accepted the primacy of the Brahmin who was rule maker of their faith and rule enforcer of their state. In the Western sense, therefore, the Hindus are a 'theocratic society' that accepts the primacy of the Brahmin in matters of faith as well as state. That was the self-view of their society until the advent of the British *Raj* when the Hindu society began to call itself 'secular' and embraced secularism enthusiastically. The question is, why?

The British called everybody who was not a Muslim a Hindu. This was no accident; they sought to unite all the non-Muslims against the Muslim. Since the Hindu caste system precluded the unity in a society segmented by castes and practising Untouchability, secularism was used as a flag of convenience by the British to unite all the non-Muslims. But to the Hindu leadership it was much more. It furnished an argument to discredit monotheistic faiths – Islam and Christianity. Since Hindu polytheism embraced millions of gods, it is portrayed as a 'tolerant' faith; those who believe in only one God are 'intolerant'. Having assimilated the native peoples of India into the fold of Hinduism by accepting their gods but making their followers Untouchable and subject castes, wanted to employ 'secular tolerance' for the same purpose against monotheistic faiths. The Muslims could embrace 'secularism' without renouncing their faith and also receive praise for being 'tolerant'. Secularism in India has been used as a weapon for 'fusion of faiths' to deny the Muslims, Christians and non-Hindu native peoples of India their separate identity and hence their rights.



All the early work in articulating a vision of an 'India united by secularism' was done by British scholars and historians. The Brahmin contribution was restricted to feeling excitement and expression of gratitude – almost worship of everything British. But the British knew that India was not one nation. They underpinned their secular system with 'separate electorate' and reservation of quotas in jobs and education for the Muslims, other minority faiths, tribal peoples and Untouchables. One can understand why even the Muslims were attracted by secularism as an inclusive polity. But all that changed when the Congress Party transformed into a party that pursued a Hindu agenda. In the second quarter of 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the Congress leadership came to see the political protection (of separate electorate) to non-Hindus as conceding too much. They started to backtrack. The British were disappointed with the Congress that did not support them during the Second World War. A gulf appeared between the British and the Congress leadership that helped the Pakistan Movement. The Indian spin on that period of history is that Pakistan is the product of a 'conspiracy': 1) between the Muslim and the British and 2) of British policy of 'divide and rule'.

The British, however, remained eager to keep their imperial legacy – India united under the flag of secularism – intact. Collusion and confrontation alternated but the overall character of the relationship remained that of collusion. In the final days of the British *Raj*, particularly after the appointment of Lord Mountbatten as the Viceroy of India, the collusion was sinister in its scope as well as objectives. The long-suffering people of Kashmir are aware that theirs was the only state in British India whose people did not get to exercise sovereign choice and become a part of Pakistan, as they wanted. But they are not aware of the role played by Congress-British collusion in them being denied the choice. The British surely knew what the Kashmiris wanted. That they chose to undermine their will and frustrate them will forever remain a black mark on their history. I mention this because the Muslims did not learn the right lesson and are eager once again for mediation, arbitration and facilitation by forces that are 'natural allies' of India but claim to be even-handed and fair, even friendly.

### 3. Role of Secular Parties in Kashmir

Jammu and Kashmir was ruled by Dogras as an absolute monarchy. The politics of the State was dominated by demand for civil rights by all the subjects of the Maharaja whatever their faith or caste. The leading light in that movement was the National Conference led by Sheikh Abdullah. The Congress Party of India had no difficulty supporting a movement for civil rights that was much more modest than their own. However, when the Congress Party was transformed into one looking after Hindu interests only, Sheikh Abdullah, knowingly or mistakenly, ignored the change. It continued to warm towards Hindu leadership of the Congress party and spurned the Muslim League that had come to represent the hopes and aspirations of the Muslims of the subcontinent. There is little to be gained by speculating why the secularists continued to lead the Muslims in Kashmir at a time when the Congress Party had shown its true colours. It was perhaps inertia. It could have been isolation

of their state or arrogance of Muslim leadership in Kashmir. Whatever their reason, the secular leadership of Kashmiri Muslims did unroll the welcome mat for the Indian invasion in 1948 and allowed it time and opportunity to tighten its stranglehold over Kashmir.

If one wants to be kind, one can attribute the blunder to the naivety of the National Conference and its leader – Sheikh Abdullah. After all, he was dismissed as Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir and put behind bars when he protested against the withdrawal of ‘special status’ to the State. Perhaps secularism was more important to him and his party than sovereignty. That may be the reason why he preferred ‘special status’ (semi-sovereign) in India to being part of the ‘sovereign Muslim nation’ in Pakistan. But his successors – son and grandson – still swear by secularism; the National Conference continues to take part in elections; their leaders continue to cherish high office in India in defiance of the will of the Muslim majority. Is it because the National Conference is a party of conviction whose leaders act in accordance with their political beliefs and prefer ‘secularism’ to ‘*Azadi*’ - joining the Islamic Republic of Pakistan? This question lies at the centre of our claim that secular leaders of Kashmir do not represent the people of Jammu and Kashmir; their words and actions have harmed the Kashmir cause and helped perpetuate occupation by the Indian Army.

In 1947, the issue for the Muslims of the subcontinent was sovereignty; for the Muslims of Jammu and Kashmir, it is still the same. Our political problems were indeed somewhat different because we had a ruler who was hostile to our faith and repressed the Muslims more viciously than the British in parts of India they ruled. But on the issue of sovereignty, there was no ambiguity or doubt. Several generations of Kashmiri Muslims have been struggling for *Azadi* (sovereign freedom); we are not a part of the Hindu nation nor did we ever want to be. When Kashmir got the opportunity to be free of rule by a Hindu Sovereign these secular leaders opted for even tighter Hindu sovereignty. That was not merely a mistake or even a blunder; it was outright treachery. The Dogras ruled over a Muslim majority with a small army; they opted to be repressed by a bigger Army of a country in which the Muslims were a small minority (15 percent of the population). Compromising the objective of *Azadi* cannot be excused by preference for secularism. Because of their decisions Kashmiris are not free or sovereign by Sheikh Abdullah’s yardstick or any other.

The mischief by Kashmiri secularists did not end with welcoming occupation of Jammu and Kashmir by the Indian Army. After briefly protesting against loss of ‘special status’ the race by lesser leaders to curry favour with the occupiers to get ministerial jobs was disgraceful. The progeny of Sheikh Abdullah had no difficulty overlooking the dismissal of the patriarch of the family and resumed chanting praise of Indian Secularism and reviling Pakistani Obscurantism. The Muslims of Kashmir hold them responsible for closing the political option for *Azadi*. These secularists never cared for the aspirations of the Muslim majority. They went on to endorse the fraudulent ‘accession’ of Jammu and Kashmir to India by the Maharaja by a vote in

the Kashmir Assembly. They submitted to Kashmir being declared an integral part of India by signing their names and swearing loyalty to the Indian Constitution. (Even the Sikh representatives in the Indian Parliament refused to endorse and sign the Constitution for much less reason.) Since the parties representing Kashmiri Muslims boycott elections that require oath of allegiance to the Indian Constitution, these secularists take part in elections and unashamedly masquerade as 'elected' leaders of Kashmiri Muslims. Clearly, theirs is not politics of conviction; it is politics of collaboration.

### 4. Role of the UN

The Kashmir Dispute is the oldest outstanding item on the agenda of the UN. In its early days, the UN took its role under the UN Charter seriously. The main plank of the Charter is recognition of the principle of 'self determination' as the cornerstone of its role in preventing war and resolving issues that threaten war or emerge from war. It was India that took its dispute over Kashmir with Pakistan to the UN. It based its case on the 'instrument of accession' and Pakistan based its stand on 'self-determination'. The UN endorsed the view point of Pakistan (which is also the stand of APHC and all Kashmiris) because it was in line with its own Charter. A plan to resolve the dispute was negotiated that was accepted by India and Pakistan and was formally given legal authenticity when it was endorsed by the UN Security Council by a Resolution. The focal point of the Plan was that the people of Jammu and Kashmir would decide in a plebiscite, to be supervised by the UN, whether their state acceded to India or Pakistan. This was year 1949. Until 1953, the Prime Minister of India, Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, had reiterated on several occasions that the Kashmiris would decide their future in a plebiscite. In 1953 he renounced his agreement, unilaterally.

The world had not polarised yet into the Eastern (Communist) and Western blocs and India had little support for renegeing on its agreement. India got that opportunity in 1953 when Pakistan signed a mutual defence treaty with the US. India declared that it was no longer bound by its commitment to the UN to hold a plebiscite in Kashmir. It had found a way to wriggle out of its commitment. It could rely on Soviet veto to prevent any action or censure against India for its refusal to abide by its agreement. Ever since, the UN has been unable to act to resolve disputes. Its Security Council had been stymied because of super power rivalry and use of veto by them to support the agenda of their clients. India could rely on the Soviet veto and Israel on American veto to defy the UN and the world. The end of the Cold War brought us hope that the UN may at long last implement its Resolution. But we found that both India and Israel became strategic partners of the sole super power – the US. Pakistan became an ally of America and has remained its friend ever since. But this has been a one way friendship – the aspirations of Pakistanis (and Kashmiri Muslims) have always been sidelined while America jumps into action the moment India wants its support. Any hope that the UN or the US would come to the rescue of Kashmiris has disappeared.

In 1965, Pakistan tried to take the case of Kashmir out of the freezer of the Cold War by encouraging an insurrection in Kashmir that led quickly to war. Pakistan had an edge in that war but it showed lack of resolve and was unable to make any gain. In fact, it was India that made diplomatic gains when the ally of Pakistan – the United States of America – imposed sanctions on it, and the ally of India – the Soviet Union – stepped in to mediate that culminated in the ‘Tashkent Declaration’. Under the Declaration, the troops of both countries withdrew behind the border and behind the Cease Fire Line in Kashmir. India declared that the Kashmir Dispute had been ‘resolved’ because both countries had treated the Cease Fire Line as an international border. Since Pakistan had taken the initiative to unfreeze the *status quo*, there was disquiet in public that made the Government very unpopular. In consequence of widespread agitation, President Ayub Khan handed over power to General Yahya Khan under whose leadership Pakistan suffered a military defeat in 1971 that resulted in East Pakistan being separated and made Bangladesh.

In both wars, the UN could only restore cease fire by a resolution of the Security Council but it was unable, even unwilling, to handle its aftermath. In 1965, the aftermath was handled by the USSR but in 1971 America was indifferent and the Soviet Union hostile to Pakistan. They both endorsed the split of Pakistan in violation of the UN Charter and create Bangladesh but they could agree on nothing else. The aftermath of the War was handled bilaterally under Simla Agreement signed by Indira Gandhi for India and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto for Pakistan. Under this agreement, the Cease Fire Line was not treated as international border; a new Line of Control was established freezing the situation legitimising and accepting gains and losses of both sides. That was the lowest point of morale among the Muslims of Jammu and Kashmir.

## 5. Flirting with Political Solution

In the wake of the defeat of the Pakistan Army in 1971 War, the political parties in India held Kashmir that had refused to fight elections under the Indian Constitution were ready to do so. After having asked the supporters of Plebiscite to contest elections for decades, Delhi made every effort to stop them from testing and displaying their strength and support. India made sure that ‘*Azadi*’ platform was denied participation by administrative means (disqualification of candidates etc.) and rigged election results to deny them seats where it failed to stop them taking part. Whatever the reason of the *volte face*, the people of Jammu and Kashmir have boycotted elections ever since. Was it the precedence of East Pakistan that India had eulogised so much that un-nerved them? In East Pakistan, under Indian patronage, the party did not fight and win election on the agenda of secession; it adopted that agenda after it was victorious. In any case, it is clear to us that there will never be elections in Kashmir without the dice being loaded in favour of the ‘secularists’ using ‘oath of allegiance to the Constitution’ or any other excuse. It has become clear there was no way *Azadi* could be secured by electoral methods like the Muslims in British India had. Resistance, that had never really ended, slowly started to increase, as did repression by the Indian Army.

There is no doubt left in the minds of the Kashmiris that the UN, even after the end of the Cold War, is unable to enforce its own resolutions to solve the Kashmir disputes. The world community – because of the resolve India has shown and lack of resolve by Pakistan – is only lukewarm in its support to Kashmiri freedom struggle. With Pakistan so awed by America in the wake of 9/11 Kashmiris can only depend on moral support from the Government of Pakistan. But our cause enjoys widespread support among the people of Pakistan and that remains our principal source of strength. The Kashmiris have seen that people in Viet Nam and Afghanistan did secure their objectives by resistance without any help or hindrance from the UN. We resolved to follow their example. Our resistance did not start or end with 9/11. We are not a national entity. The government of Pakistan has many pressures that restrain its freedom of action. But *we have no constraints; we only have an objective – freedom.*

### 6. The Resistance Movement

With the political option closed and Pakistan clearly unable to help free Kashmir by war (in 1965 and 1971) the Kashmiris were left no option to secure *Azadi* except resort to resistance. Kashmiri fighters have been able to sustain resistance since 1989 for a remarkable fifteen years. More than 90,000 have embraced *Shahadat* since. India has resorted to the most diabolical tactics to crush the resistance that include dishonouring women, blowing up houses and taking young men from their homes and killing them in fake encounters. The countryside has been emptied of young men; our villages only have widows, orphans or the very old. Clearly, Indian soldiers are dying too. But I am unable to judge how they feel raiding homes and killing the unarmed and infirm obviously unable to defend or resist, even protest. I do believe that a day of reckoning will come. Kashmiris would not be the only people on this earth who would forever be denied *Azadi*. There are still some (not many) in Kashmir who would be content with just being alive. For the most of us *Azadi* is life; without it life has little meaning.

The success of a resistance movement does not depend on how many are killed on either side. It depends on how complete is its support among those it expects support from. By this yardstick, the resistance has done well over the last fifteen years. The ranks of collaborators are becoming thin and they are politically in retreat. Despite inducements and pressures, India has not been able to create serious splits among Kashmiris or to exploit them. There are discordant voices sometimes among Kashmiri leaders but resistance has solid support of the people. The fact that India and its friends have now started to look for collaborators in Azad Kashmir and Pakistan is a mark of success of the resistance. However, the age-old problem of opposition from secularists – whose base is Pakistan now - continues.

The secularists have changed their tack somewhat. Instead of decrying the objective of the resistance – *Azadi* – that is even better supported because of their opposition, they now decry violence as such. They call for end to violence and respect for

human rights in Kashmir. They attempt to shift the blame as casualties mount on both sides. There is hue and cry in India and by its secular allies in Kashmir that it is the resistance that invites retaliation and causes the death of innocent civilians. It is the very same argument that is used by Israelis against Palestinians and by American against Iraqis. The truth is that it is the 'occupation' that invites resistance. There would be no resistance or casualties if there were no occupation. As the Kashmiris well know from experience, occupation did not end when there were no resistance; it was perpetuated and got entrenched. Defeat is defined as loss of will to resist. Those who advise that resistance be stopped want that defeat be conceded. But resistance is not action; it is a last resort reaction. As long as occupation persists, resistance would exist.

If India is ready to negotiate with Pakistan it is because insurgency hurts it in lives, in money and the carefully constructed image of 'non-violence'. But it does not hurt as much as it could if Pakistan had a clear and consistent stand on Kashmir backed by resolute diplomacy. If Pakistan made Kashmir the cornerstone of its foreign policy, the splits and bickering among Kashmiris would end. India and its friends say that India would never agree to let Kashmir go. But Pakistan and its friends do not say that the Kashmiris would never agree to anything other than *Azadi* - free sovereign choice. Show of lack of resolve by Pakistan is the main reasons why India has been able to maintain its military occupation of Jammu and Kashmir for so long. India has seen that no amount of barbarity in Kashmir would draw a response from Pakistan. Daily coverage of Indian excesses in Kashmir on Pakistan's TV screens for fifteen years now draws only a yawn from the public. That has encouraged the secularists who failed to undermine Kashmiri resolve to carry on resistance, to work instead on Pakistan to frustrate our freedom movement. We in Kashmir are more afraid of Pakistan submitting to pressure than any other reverse in our struggle.

## 7. Role of Pakistan

Our freedom movement in Kashmir is a part of the Pakistan Movement. It is founded on the Two Nation Theory on the basis of which Pakistan came into existence. Kashmiri Muslims live in all parts of Pakistan and enjoy sovereign power to pursue objectives and face challenges as a part of the Muslim *Ummah*. In contrast, in India the Muslims are an oppressed minority without any protection or rights. Even though Muslims are a majority in Jammu and Kashmir with a Muslim Chief Minister and many other high officials but they are utterly powerless. If there was doubt among Muslims in Jammu and Kashmir if internal autonomy was a substitute of sovereignty, they have been disabused of such notions. Our state government is powerless to save the life or livelihood of Muslims or honour of their women from the marauding military. Instead, the ministers are obliged to join the Indian chorus condemning those killed and incarcerated whose women are dishonoured, *Masajid* desecrated and house blown up for supporting or engaging in 'terrorism'. The Kashmiris do know the difference between being sovereign and being subjects. The subjects have to be content, even grateful, for what they get. Sovereign people make an implement their own agenda.

The record of Pakistan in treating the Kashmiris as a part of their nation is uneven. On the one hand Pakistan has fought three wars with India with the objective of, directly or indirectly, securing the liberation of Jammu and Kashmir. But there is difference in the conduct of war the objective of which is liberation and one that is for conquest and occupation. Pakistan did not fight its war in a manner appropriate to liberating a part of ones own country. India, which is an occupying power, has shown tenacity in its resolve to hold on to Kashmir whereas Pakistan, who has the people on its side, has not shown the same degree of resolve to liberate Kashmir from occupation. Is Pakistan put off by Kashmiri secularists? It has not said so! Is it disheartened by the lack of international support? It has its own diplomacy to blame because the people everywhere know of and support our cause. Is it intimidated by the military preponderance of India? If that, it has to employ tactics that are suitable for such an adversary. The performance on the battlefield of Pakistan Army has always been exceptional but it strangely lacks political staying power. It gives up too early and pleads our case in a manner that is often more damaging than helpful.

It is painful for the Kashmiris to see that just by calling Kashmiri resistance 'cross-border terrorism' Pakistan is dumbfounded and is immediately on the defensive. It is no secret that the so-called 'war on terror' has been waged to liquidate resistance in Palestine and Kashmir. US occupied Iraq is the new front in the 'war on terror' but even the Americans do not say that resistance in Iraq is illegitimate. There is wide international support for five million Palestinians struggling for liberation. Why is support to seventeen million Kashmiri resisting Indian occupation for more than half a century not of the same level? It is because Pakistan does not stand by its stand; it vacillates under pressure, it does not make support to plebiscite in Kashmir the corner stone of its diplomacy. The majority in Taiwan would perhaps vote for independence and yet China makes support for its 'One China' policy as a condition for establishing even diplomatic relations. Why can't Pakistan take a leaf out of the China book? The campaign to isolate China has been the most sustained in history. Yet, it never abandoned its aspiration and efforts to consolidate all its territories.

In contrast, the Kashmiris have always wanted to join Pakistan. If there were a plebiscite today, every Muslim in Jammu and Kashmir (who are still 70 per cent of the population despite migration to elsewhere) would vote for joining Pakistan. An objective is not validated by size or power of a country; it is validated by the firmness in fervour for that objective. The Kashmiris have amply displayed their firmness and fervour for the objective of '*Azadi*' by their fifteen-year long resistance. We are pained to see ministers and officials of Pakistan proudly saying in front of TV cameras that Pakistan is a 'frontline state' in the war on terror? Does Pakistan see its role to be the defeat of resistance in Iraq, Palestine and Kashmir? By saying what it says, Pakistan tells its people that their hopes and aspirations count for nothing; assuaging the fears of the forces of occupation is all that it cares about.

We do understand that the Government of Pakistan is under pressure to resolve the Kashmir dispute quickly. But there is no pressure on India to respect its agreement

to hold a plebiscite. That is reason enough for Pakistan to deflect all foreign pressures. Pakistan must not take part in any negotiations with India on Kashmir until it conceded that a comprehensive bilateral agreement on the subject already exists. The APHC refuses to hold negotiation until India accepts that Kashmir is an 'international' dispute and not its 'internal' problem. I believe that India prefers to wait because it has its fifth column in several political parties and groups in Pakistan. India would wait until they are in power or in control of the present dispensation. The present time is clearly not opportune for Pakistan because its Administration is being successfully portrayed by India to be illegitimate and unpopular dictatorship. There is real fear in Kashmir that their right of self-determination may be compromised by Pakistan.

## 8. Confidence Building Measures

There are a number of countries that have started to take interest in 'resolving' the Kashmir imbroglio. None we know is even neutral let alone on our side – on the side of the victims. They talk about our human rights and are eager to promote a peace process perhaps on the lines of Palestine where it has served only to preclude help from Muslim countries and increase dependence on the friends of the occupying power. Such 'friends' only add a feeling of helplessness to our powerlessness. They use two strategies to maintain the *status quo* that is under threat from the resistance. The first is to shift focus from our objective – *Azadi* – to our human rights. Their ostensible purpose is to save our lives but the effect is to persuade us to abandon our struggle. The second is to sideline or discredit popular leadership and raise the profile of those who have sold out and are referred to as 'moderates' or 'liberal' or 'secular'. Fortunately, the moderate and secular liberals in Jammu and Kashmir stand exposed and discredited. The people do not trust any of them. Now they appear to be looking for the same category of people in Azad Kashmir and Pakistan. The Kashmiris are rightly worried.

It is a source of serious concern to Kashmiris that Pakistan is even discussing confidence-building measures (CBMs) with India. It constitutes acceptance of the Indian stand that Kashmiri resistance is an encumbrance that stands in the way of better things. It is indeed surprising that neither the press nor any of the politicians have understood the effect of this formulation – CBMs - and explained it to the public. CBMs are often used to sideline the 'core issue'. Sometimes, however, it is wise to make compromises on peripheral issues in order to secure an agreement on the core issue. What we see is that in response to flexibility by Pakistan on the core issue of Kashmir, the stand of India has hardened. On the other hand, the readiness, even haste, with which the peripheral issues are being dealt with create an impression of a 'peace process' that is helpful to the image of India. It is opening doors to them even in the Middle East to secure support for a permanent seat in the UN Security Council. It is India that needs to tell its people that it has to honour the agreement it made to allow the Kashmiris to decide their future in a plebiscite. But it is Pakistan that is shifting its stand. The Kashmiris are fearful that Pakistan may compromise their hope and aspiration for *Azadi*. The current round of CBMs is



building the confidence of India, create disillusion in Pakistan, and raise deep anxiety among the Muslims of Jammu and Kashmir.

In order to prevent our friends in Pakistan and Azad Kashmir being confused by proposals for CBMs, I want to share our experience with them. It is often said there is no military solution for Kashmir. The fact is that there is no political solution to the issue of Kashmir because India would just not accept any. India wants an internal solution in Kashmir. It has been talking to Kashmiri leaders for decades but with more seriousness and speed since 1989. Even the leaders of the APHC and *Mujahideen* groups have been approached with conciliatory gestures and offers of favours in exchange for stopping the resistance. The Indian emissaries are fully aware that political leaders have no control over the resistance but the farcical 'peace process' does help India in two ways. It gives the impression to the world that India has 'voluntarily' started a peace process in contrast with Israel that had to be brought to the negotiating table kicking and screaming. Secondly, it discredits those who do participate in parleys with India in the eyes of the public particularly the resistance. The overall effect of negotiations, however sterile, is to raise false hopes thus discouraging the resistance and reduces its standing and support with the public.

Those in the APHC who fell for the gestures do get invited to more seminars and meetings. But these are all a waste of time – means to distract attention from the reality that the military operations against the resistance have become more numerous and deadly behind its cover. *The 'peace process' is very much a part of the Indian tactics against the resistance.*

### **9. Pakistan as Target of Peace Process**

The latest target of the Indian 'peace process' is Pakistan itself. The entire focus of the 'process' is that Kashmir is sidelined. Since Pakistan's officials are easily flustered when accused of 'cross border terrorism' or having a 'unifocal approach', India is quite pleased with itself that it has Pakistan diplomatically in a corner. We in Kashmir fail to understand why does Pakistan so easily submit to pressure of words. What is wrong with a unifocal approach? Why is help to us from across the Line of Control stigmatising? We need it; we welcome it; it is the duty of Pakistan to provide it. What would India do more or less if Pakistan did not help us? We need an answer to these questions; so do the people of Pakistan.

It came as a great surprise to us in Kashmir that the President of Pakistan in person had briefed the journalist in Islamabad at an Iftar Party about his idea for resolving the Kashmir dispute. While urging India to be flexible he demonstrated extreme flexibility outlining as many as fifteen options in place of the Plebiscite. We know from our experience that show of flexibility is always seen in India as a show of weakness. He is seen to have accepted India's terms on Kashmir. What is on offer from India is to make the Line of Control a permanent border. India has taken that its offer is accepted; it can bargain for more - the entire State.

Pakistan needs to be careful because it is no position to make any compromise on Kashmir. The Kashmiris are the principal party to the dispute. The Kashmiris were content with Pakistan representing them because it had more power and diplomatic reach and access and because they agreed with the stand of Pakistan. If any compromise is to be made, the leaders in Indian held Kashmir would make it. It must be kept in mind that India has been seeking an internal solution in Kashmir i.e. give more autonomy. Since no amount of autonomy is a substitute of sovereignty, such efforts have been futile in the past. But India has higher hopes this time. It is confident it would get a better response to its proposals for internal settlement from the segments of the state under the control of Pakistan. India would have to reveal its hand on internal autonomy. That might create opportunities for Kashmiris. It is fortunate that India is unable to respond to flexibility by Pakistan because it hopes for better results from its efforts towards internal settlement. For this reasons and other I have given elsewhere, I advise against any bilateral negotiations between India and Pakistan on Kashmir at this time.

Pakistan would gain from multiplying its options in Kashmir. The perception that Pakistan would not court the risk of war with India whatever the provocation virtually eliminates Pakistan as a serious contender in Kashmir. India teases Pakistan with ever more serious provocations – the fence on the Line of Control, construction of dams in defiance of the Indus Basin Water Treaty that continue apace with CBMS. The intent is to show that Pakistan is not able to even protect its own interests and adhere firmly to its own stand. How can it help the Kashmiris secure their liberation? Foreclosing the option of war even to protect its assets and interests is a cause of concern not only among Muslims in Kashmir and India but all over the Muslim world. They believed that equipped with a nuclear deterrent Pakistan would pursue its policy boldly and protect its interests robustly. With people of Kashmir on its side, it is India that would be on the run in a serious confrontation of wills. However, if Pakistan is unwilling or unable to openly support the resistance in Kashmir, it must take a back seat and let the resistance negotiate with India. In the meantime, it must stick to its legal position that is underpinned by the UN Security Council Resolution.

## 10. Negotiating with India

Negotiating with India is not difficult. They appear to be tough negotiators but they are invariably pulled in two different directions by their long term and short-term interests. Before one negotiates seriously, one should determine which of the interests are upper-most in their mind at the time. The long-term aspiration of India is '*Akhand Bharat*'. The short-term interests vary from time to time. But India is always reluctant to discuss a point of principle. That is so because debate about principles is often public while India always seeks to get the upper hand by working on the personal weaknesses of the negotiators. It must have been observed in Pakistan how close was the press and public scrutiny of the person of President Musharraf when he went to India to attend the Agra Summit. He was welcomed as a 'son of the soil' even though he had been held to be the chief villain in the Kargil

episode until then. The question asked by every commentator was: can we trust him? Had there been an agreement, President Musharraf would have been hailed as a hero in India and reviled and discredited in Pakistan. It was fortunate that there was no deal.

Just as 'no deal' at Agra saved Pakistan from a poor deal, the damage done by the 'fifteen options' is limited because India has responded to the ideas from Pakistan predictably. It said: 1) the proposals are nothing new – Nawaz Sharif had come up with such proposals earlier, 2) welcome that Pakistan has finally accepted that plebiscite is not a practical option. What is totally baffling from the point of view of Kashmiris is President Musharraf continues to be hopeful of 'break-through' in Kashmir. That is not how we see it. We see that India's aim is to discredit Pakistan in the eyes of Kashmiris, make them lose hope and thus defeat the resistance. We fear India would refuse even to discuss the plebiscite option and insist that it has been discarded by Pakistan itself. That India rejected the 'options' immediately and scornfully leaves room for repairing the damage but there is no denying that Pakistan's flexibility has done damage; it has bought no benefit to the resistance or to Pakistan.

We in Kashmir found the reasons given by President Musharraf for revealing to the press what he had discussed with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in New York, startling. He said:

1. India would not accept humiliation and so wouldn't Pakistan. Therefore, the solution should be such that it is acceptable to the people of India, Pakistan and Jammu and Kashmir.
2. If a solution was agreed between the leaders of India and Pakistan, it could still be rejected by the people or the parliament. It was necessary that there should be public debate on possible solutions so that the leaders know from public reaction what might be acceptable to the people and the parliament.

The second reason is valid. We have seen in Palestine that the Israeli parliament has placed itself above the UN and international law. India acts in the same manner over Kashmir. Having written down in its Constitution that Jammu and Kashmir is part of India, its leaders and officials refuse to discuss the subject of Kashmir with foreign leaders on the grounds it would be a violation of India's Law. The USA accepts the defiance of the UN by Israel when its national parliament says, no. The American Presidents when asked a question about Kashmir invariably refer to Kashmir as that 'old' or 'intractable' problem and hope it would be resolved peacefully almost parroting the India stand. President Musharraf is right to worry that all the effort in 'secret negotiations' would turn out to be a waste of time and destabilise his government. But we already know what India is telling its people and the parliament. That suggests that negotiations would go nowhere; they will only underline Indian resolve and Pakistan's vacillation.

As for the first reason, Pakistan and India are sovereign equals - equal parties to an international agreement on Kashmir. India would not be humiliated by honouring its agreement and holding a plebiscite in Kashmir. On the contrary, India dishonours itself by reneging on its international agreement with Pakistan. America has not said that its exits from Iraq would be a humiliation; it has already transferred sovereignty to Iraqis and announced its intention to exit Iraq as soon as possible. Even the ever-defiant Israel has never said that it would not vacate the territories it occupied in 1967 War although some Jews believe in a biblical claim to all of Palestine. Why would Indian exit from Kashmir be its humiliation? Why should there be reward for India's aggression? Why should the end of the longest and the most diabolical occupation in recent history be anything other than a cause for jubilation and celebration?

### **10. Pakistan's Stand on Kashmir**

Pakistan needs to articulate its stand on Kashmir clearly and use every diplomatic avenue and platform to secure public support for its stand. Pakistan should never agree to talks with India until its stand is accepted in principle. Since the UN stands sidelined in its role to enforce its resolutions, Pakistan should underline that the 1949 UN Security Council Resolution was also a bilateral agreement. *'India and Pakistan already have an agreed solution to the Kashmir dispute; there is no point in negotiating another'*. However, Pakistan may agree to implement it in stages if the people of Jammu and Kashmir approve. There is another point that Kashmiris on both sides of the Line of Control must say repeatedly and fervently: *the Kashmiris are a part of the Pakistani nation and Pakistan has a duty to liberate Kashmir by the use of all available means including the use of its armed forces. Pakistan has more right and reason to operate in all corners of Jammu and Kashmir to defend its people than the Indian Army that is a force of occupation and oppression.*

I believe that a firm stand by Pakistan would electrify the people of Kashmir and secure worldwide diplomatic support for Pakistan, create excitement and underpin stability in Pakistan. I believe that the thoughts shared by the President of Pakistan with the press to encourage debate about Kashmir were well intentioned but the gesture has been misread in India particularly the Indian Press that is the core of the establishment in India. We can access the Indian Press through the international press – both have ignored the plight of the Kashmiris, the accomplishments of the resistance, and excesses of the Indian Army in Kashmir. We must denounce the international press for its apathy towards the people of Kashmir. The people of the State of Jammu and Kashmir were promised a 'plebiscite'. Why should they reconcile to India reneging on that promise? Simply because India has changed its mind? The Kashmiris would agree to nothing less than a plebiscite.

### **11. Conclusion**

The Muslims of Jammu and Kashmir are a part of the Pakistani nation. The people of Pakistan have not let their brethren in Kashmir down. Thousands of them died

fighting alongside us against Indian occupation. But the Government of Pakistan says it gives only moral, political and diplomatic support to the Kashmiri struggle for freedom. I ask, why not full support? Does the presence of Indian troops not menace our lives? Does the Pakistan Army not have a duty to fight and remove that menace? The Kashmiri resistance is formidable and getting stronger. The Indian Army is debilitated by its multiple counter insurgency operations. But it is Pakistan that is eager to talk. Why?

India is not ready to concede anything to Pakistan because it perceives its position to be weak and its resolve even weaker. But this will change. Indian forces would leave Kashmir when they would be needed elsewhere in response to a more dire situation. Since Pakistan is likely to be a factor or a beneficiary in both cases, the foreign friends of India propose CBMs. They hope to be able to dissuade Pakistan by accusing it of 'bad faith' if Pakistan was to exploit any weakness or difficulty in India to secure the exit of Indian forces from Kashmir.

The 'peace process', whatever other name is given to the advice and help being generously offered to Pakistan and the people of Kashmir, has the purpose of helping India only. Militarily, it provides a cover for the intensification of operation to repress Kashmiris; economically, it give a false impression of peace and tranquillity to attract foreign investment; diplomatically, it underlines an image of India as responsible and trustworthy big player that is menaced by an unstable military dictatorship in its neighbouring Muslim country.

I do not believe that India would withdraw its military forces from Kashmir in consequence of an agreement with Pakistan. Kashmir would be free in consequence of successful resistance most likely in tandem with or in consequence of events in more critical areas. India has been getting away with arrogant defiance of universal principles, betraying its people and renegeing on international agreements. *It must be held to account not appeased.*

Despite all the Indian propaganda, Pakistan is held in high esteem. That is entirely because it is on the right – its objectives are high and founded on principles. It is on the right in Kashmir; it must stick to its traditional stand.□

# Two Nation Theory Revisited

Brigadier (r) Usman Khalid

## 1. The Promise of Pakistan

Pakistan is a new country with a new name and a unique polity. Even though its polity is founded on Islam, it does not carry any baggage of the imperial era of Islam. It is truly a post imperial polity that emerged in response to the unusual political predicament of the Muslims of India who spoke many languages, were racially diverse and were in majority on the Eastern and Western periphery but thinly spread over the rest of British India. The non-Muslims were in majority but they were not a nation; the Muslims were a minority but they were a nation with a strong feeling of national solidarity underpinned by the religion and culture of Islam. Allama Iqbal described the situation in his address to the plenary session of the All India Muslim League at Allahabad in 1930 and said:

'It is no exaggeration to say that India is perhaps the only country in the world where Islam as a people building force, has worked at its best. In India, as elsewhere, the structure of Islam as society is almost entirely due to the working of Islam as a culture inspired by a specific ethical ideal.... The ideas set free by European political thinking, however, are now rapidly changing the outlook of the present generation of Muslims.... inspired by these ideas, (they) are anxious to see them as living forces in their own countries without any critical appreciation of the facts which have determined their evolution in Europe.... The protest of Luther was directed against the Church not against any polity because there was no polity associated with Christianity.... The upshot of intellectual movements initiated by such men as Rousseau and Luther was the break up of the one into mutually ill-adjusted many, the transformation of a human into national outlook... If you begin with the conception of religion as a complete other-worldliness, then what has happened to Christianity in Europe is perfectly natural.... *Islam does not bifurcate the unity of man into irreconcilable duality of spirit and matter. In Islam God and the universe, spirit and matter, Church and State, are organic to each other. Man is not the citizen of a profane world to be renounced in the interest of a world of spirit situated elsewhere. To Islam matter is spirit realising itself in time and space.*'<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Dr Sir Mohammed Iqbal, Presidential Address to Annual Session of All India Muslim League at Allahabad on 29<sup>th</sup> December 1930.

In his Allahabad Address, Allama Iqbal made several points of importance that have guided the evolution of political thought among the Muslims of India ever since. 1) Islam provides the foundation of a universal polity; 2) Islam is the chief factor in the evolution of the polity of Muslim India; 3) that secularism is the polity of Europe (and of non-Muslim India) is quite natural; 4) secularism and religion cannot both determine the structure of a polity; it has to be one or the other; 5) that the idea of 'nation' and 'nation state' are compatible with Islam is the unique contribution of the Muslims of India where Islam has been the chief factor in creating national cohesion and cultural homogeneity among them; 6) *The mission of Islam in India was not just to make Indian Muslims a nation but also to make India a Muslim nation.*

### 2. The Vision Vitiated

It is amazing that these ideas are absent from the political discourse in Pakistan. What was so very clear and endorsed by overwhelming majority of Muslims in South Asia has been put aside and ignored or made a subject of controversy. The explanation lies in the dichotomy that helped the British to rule over their Indian subjects for so long and in peace. The dichotomy is that rulers in India were invariably foreign. Before Islam, there were invasions and extensive immigration who imposed their culture and customs on the local people. The Muslims introduced new values and system and also embraced the local culture. The British kept their interaction with the natives to bare minimum. Perhaps they had observed the more foreign they remained the more acceptable they were as rulers. But it was not because of their foreign-ness that made them acceptable; it was their willingness and ability to keep the local oppressors – Brahmins and feudals - off the back of the people. It was because of their superior system of justice and administration that the Muslim as well the British rulers were able to secure peace and obtain stability in their realm. But they created a class of local allies among the landed gentry and other notables who flourished by providing the Empire with loyal soldiers and playing the role of representatives of the public in the court.

The class of notables created under the British rule has dominated the politics of Pakistan because they had 'secure constituencies'. Every political party had to court them in order to underpin its political base. The feudal politicians had very brief experience of high office and that also at the provincial level. All the senior executives in the Colonial Government of India had been British or from the Indian Civil Service. The feudals, Pirs, waderas, Maliks and tribal Sardars had maintained and expanded their power and privileges by being cronies of the British officialdom. They were neither inclined nor able to face the challenge of 'self-rule' because they were the product of 'imperial presence'. When the British left in 1947 almost in panic, their feudal system survived because a replacement had not even been conceived. The incestuous relationship between the feudal politicians and the bureaucracy continued. Since the politicians had played no role in formulating policies, they looked towards senior civil servants and soldiers to run the country. Pakistan uncritically accepted the British system of government and the colonial

system of administration. The people had been led to believe there would be change; none came. They were disappointed; they still are.

The national leadership of the Muslims as well as the Hindus did not emerge from the feudal class but it grew out of the small but influential class of lawyers who had an understanding of the British law and constitution and were familiar with the revolutionary ideas – Socialism and Communism – as well as the contemporary constitutional arguments raging in Europe. The freedom struggle in India was characterised by a debate in which everything important figured prominently; history, law, aspirations, obligations were all keenly debated. The Muslims were fortunate in having Allama Iqbal articulating a vision for their future and Jinnah leading their fight for freedom. The non-Muslims did not have leaders of the same calibre or their impeccable integrity and dignity. But Allama Iqbal died in 1938 and Jinnah in 1949 soon after Pakistan came into being. Neither had a real successor. Pakistan has been in the hands of the very same feudal politicians who had been sidelined during the freedom movement. The lawyers among politicians quickly started doing what they were good at doing – arguing endlessly about law and constitution. In the absence of a commanding voice, they ended up making settled issues controversial. Then the ‘politicians with secure constituencies’ came to the fore and they ruled with the help of a professionally competent civil service closely interfaced with the armed forces.

That was a good working arrangement under the circumstances but the politicians that came to the fore were not the most alert or bright. Senior civil servants and soldiers began to consider putting themselves in their place. The USA (that had stepped into the shoes of the UK in the wake of the Second World War) also preferred to deal with the ‘real rulers’ of Pakistan. With Prime Ministers being changed without cause or reason ever so often, the politicians discredited themselves. The lowest point was reached when Mohammed Ali Bogra – Pakistan’s Ambassador to the US – was appointed the Prime Minister and he proudly rode a motorbike leading the motorcade of Governor General Ghulam Mohammed. The ease with which Pakistan allowed American interference in every walk of life has been the cause of every debacle ever since. Because some of those with secure constituencies had been in the Congress Party and had opposed Pakistan, India easily restored contacts with its friends of pre-partition days. With the legitimate government so eager to accept American interference, it was only a small step further to invite Indian intervention. Treachery came to be accepted as ‘clever politics’.

When Sheikh Mujib was put on trial for Agartala Conspiracy, he was hailed as a hero, not condemned as a traitor. Little has changed since. It often appears that only those with foreign contact can rise to hold high office in Pakistan. The subversion so successfully employed by India to secure the secession of East Pakistan was aided actively by the UK and USA where Pakistan sent its brightest students on scholarship for teaching posts in the universities. The decision to subvert the ideological foundation of Pakistan could not have been made by the Western



Governments because Pakistan had become the most 'allied ally' of the US in the Cold War. It is most probable that the line to take in subverting Pakistan was decided by the real ruler of the West - the Zionists. They knew that Pakistan had the manpower, the military skills and the education to match any Western country. All they had to do was to undermine education and control the military to not only frustrate its potential but also to harness it in their service.

The ignorance and ineptitude of the politicians created the opportunity and India used that to infiltrate and undermine the political system. This explains why the people of Pakistan are nervous and ever suspicious of their government. The soldiers and the civil servants – the real rulers during the early decades - have been the jokers in the pack. Ostensibly to save Pakistan from the inept or corrupt politicians, they have brought Pakistan into ever-tighter embrace of dubious friends who mean to harm the country. Soldier kings were the norm in the old world. The soldiers in Pakistan have achieved much but they have not been able to transform public adulation into popular support. This is particularly sad because this is easier than ever before in the media age of today. The stability of Pakistan has been underpinned by the mainstream Muslims who have continued to hold fast and remain loyal to the legacy of Iqbal and Jinnah. Their ideas have continued to operate and have enjoyed wide allegiance so much so that East Pakistan, even after separation from West Pakistan, still subscribes to the same polity.

In 1972, in the wake of the defeat of the Pakistan Army and the secession of East Pakistan, an implosion appeared imminent. But the country emerged stronger and more vibrant even though it is still not well led. Much of the credit goes to late Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto who led Pakistan from 1972 to 1977 and helped resurrect the self-confidence of the nation. Even more important, it was the sterling polity of the country that asserted itself. Pakistan has dithered in the face of well-focussed attack by India and is still consumed by sterile controversies. It has still not focussed on its role and purpose. It continues to agonise over the laws and form of government and has yet to learn that it is not the form that drives nations; it is their purpose that does. The civil and military bureaucracy, the politicians as well as the *ulema* ignored (or were unable to respond) the forces of subversion working against the Two Nation theory foundations of Pakistan. Then something unexpected happened. In 1979, the Soviet Union decided to send its troops into Afghanistan and the Afghans decided to resist Soviet occupation. For two years it was Pakistan's military government alone that helped them. Then America decided to join. Pakistan had an objective that was in line with its 'purpose'. Pakistan got an opportunity to assert itself and triumph. Politics and politicians were eclipsed. Everything changed.

### 3. The Two-Nation Theory

In the wake of the defeat in East Pakistan in 1971, India crowed: 'the Two Nation Theory was dead'. It rang true because Islam had failed to keep the two wings of the country together. But the people were pained by the 'certificate of death' issued by India but they did not quite believe it. They saw that it were the secular opponents of

Pakistan who were joyous; the majority in Pakistan was sad. What the trauma of 1971 proved was that soldiers cannot defend that the intelligentsia is unprepared to uphold and guard. The intelligentsia had lost the battle in East Pakistan first. The politicians followed them. The soldiers were the last to be beaten but they did put up a fight; the scholars and politicians surrendered without much of a fight.

In 1979, the reversal began when Pakistan declared its support to Jihad in Afghanistan. Pakistan did that in the face of stiff opposition from all except the religious political parties. This revealed how out of touch was much of the political apparatus with the purpose and the people of Pakistan. No new political party or personality emerged. Even the religious parties made the role of the armed forces in politics an issue as if Pakistan was not a Muslim country but was a Western nation. The intelligentsia has yet to play its role; it is still dominated by subversive from the right or the left. Despite that, the Two Nation Theory stood the test of time. It is primarily because of two factors: 1) revival of Jihad, 2) political role of the military. A quarter century after the revival began, Pakistan is able to assert that its polity is universal in its validity and is suitable for every Muslim country. Pakistan's experience has shown that its polity is viable not only for the post imperial Muslim nations but also for every people struggling to assert their right of national self-determination.

Since India has failed to find a viable 'imperial purpose', its many peoples have come to realise that they have to discover or crystallise their own separate national identity and their unique national purpose. What is this Two Nation Theory that now claims universal validity? It is a composite theory that is applicable to any country of the world, which is multi-ethnic. It has three components or pillars:

- (1) **Belief versus Birth.** Common faith is stronger and just as viable as basis for national solidarity as bonds of ethnicity. The principle of national solidarity of the people of Pakistan is their religion - Islam. The Muslims (of South Asia) identify themselves by their belief whereas the other peoples (in India) define themselves by their birth (caste). What is unique about Pakistan is that its polity is *sans* sectarian in that it sees members of all the sects within the pail of Islam to be equal and one. It also means that minorities are identified by their faith (not language) and are given protection of law and the state in accordance with the teachings of Islam.
- (2) **View of History.** The Muslims (of British India) were a nation apart not only because they identified themselves by their 'belief' but also because their view of history is the exact opposite of those who identified themselves with the 'Hindu'. The heroes of the Muslims are villains in their eyes; the golden period of Muslim rule is their dark age; what Islam considers sinful and abhorrent (Untouchability, *Sati* etc) they hold as articles of faith. There is no convergence, no room for compromise, and no accommodation. Inter-marriage is forbidden; inter-dining is not permitted.

It is hard to imagine peoples so utterly opposite in their view of history, in their hopes and aspirations and in ability to formulate common goals.

- (3) **Sovereign Purpose.** Pakistan's polity does recognise tribal and linguistic diversity in the nation as factors that influence culture that defines a comfort zone. But the culture and customs do not determine what is good or bad; in its extreme, ethnic nationalism can only make a people xenophobic. The Muslims (of South Asia) subscribe to the value system of Islam that informs them of 'a higher culture' that makes judgement on what is good or bad. This 'high culture' of Islam invariably evolves a unique 'high purpose' in a Muslim society that requires and provides underpinning for much wider solidarity. *A high purpose that cannot be achieved without being sovereign is a 'sovereign purpose'*; such purpose is the most profound 'principle of national solidarity', which is the hallmark of countries with visionary goals and high aspirations. It follows, therefore, that a people who have a unique 'sovereign purpose' are a separate nation deserving unquestionably of a right of self-determination. By the same token, peoples with a shared 'sovereign purpose' are one nation who would benefit if they consolidated territorially to become one country as a federation or a Union of States.

#### 4. Modern Definition of a 'Nation'

A consensus is emerging that every people with a separate language, culture, race or religion is not a nation. *A people become a nation when they have their unique view of history that gives rise to objectives and purpose that cannot be achieved without sovereignty.* Race, language, culture and religion crystallise different identities but not always different views of history. Peoples of many races speaking several different languages develop a common view of history when they pursue common goals from a common platform for a fair length of time. Large and powerful nations emerge when several ethnic identities fuse into a single nation, make new history together, and develop strong bonds far more profound than that of the past.

The definition of a nation as 'People with a Shared View of History' is modern, universal and flexible. It caters for fusion as well as atrophy of identities. It applies to Muslims as well as non-Muslims. The World of Islam now comprises 56 sovereign countries and almost every country of the world has a Muslim community. Islam binds them all in a fraternal bond irrespective of race and language. The value system of Islam is the basis of a culture that transcends history and geography. The Muslim holy book, the Quran, is in Arabic and Arabic is the mother of the languages of all the Muslim peoples. The rituals of Islam - *Salat*, *Siyam* and *Hajj* - are universal. But the most powerful source of Muslim solidarity is the institution of *Tauheed*, the operating principles of which are Freedom, Equality and Solidarity – almost the same as the objectives of the French Revolution (Liberty, Equality and Fraternity). It is because freedom and equality is the common quest of

monotheistic faiths (Islam and Christianity) that has given rise to two powerful ideas of the post-imperial era: 1) democracy and, 2) right of national self-determination. However, it is the third operating principle – that of Islamic Solidarity – that transcends national identities that makes Islam unique. It has consolidated the Muslim into an *Ummah* – a universal fraternity that is global in its nature and scope.

There are many nations in the world of Islam but none has ever flourished without discovering a sovereign purpose that advanced 'Islamic Solidarity'. The decline and fall of Muslim empires based in India and in Turkey came about when they ceased to have a sovereign purpose that advanced Islamic Solidarity. The secular nation states that emerged in the world of Islam after the First World War – Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan – did not find a sovereign purpose and withered. Only those Muslim states flourished that had a sovereign purpose that advanced Islamic Solidarity. Having observed that, the Muslims in India were in a difficult situation. They were torn between their Indian and Muslim identity. Were they Indian first or Muslim first? What defined them as a people – their ethnicity or their faith? Should they be content with constitutional safeguards or assert their separateness as a nation. They opted for a separate and sovereign homeland when they realised that they had a separate and unique 'sovereign purpose'.

The polarisation of purposes of the two main religions in India was starkly displayed during the Khilafat Movement. The Muslims wanted to go to Turkey and fight to save the *Khilafa*; the Hindu leadership hoped that the British Indian Government would see it as a Muslim rebellion and crush it ruthlessly. Also that the Muslims who left India, they hoped, would never come back thus creating gaps and opportunities to be exploited by the Hindus and tilting the demographic balance further in their favour. It became evident that there could not be a state where Hindus and Muslims could have a common sovereign purpose. That is when the separate national identity of Muslims crystallised; they became a nation by every criterion.

The redefinition of a nation and the urge for sovereignty occurs in response to the need for separation or consolidation by the atrophy or emergence of 'sovereign purpose'. The role of religion in the Muslim as well as Christian societies is likely to become more important and that would have social and political impact that is hard to predict. The Soviet Union, which had imposed atheism on Christian and Muslim peoples, has since collapsed. The Russian Orthodox Church has come back to life. Islam came to matter more to Muslims as they saw the people of their faith being massacred in Bosnia, Kosovo and other Balkan states even though they had not practised their Muslim faith for decades. The brutal manner in which Russia is suppressing Chechen Muslims while the West looks away, has given a message to Muslims all over the world. The rising influence and extremism of Christian Evangelists has also been taken note of. They know that religious identity matters more to the West than it admits. The Muslims can hold their head high through the carnage that is occurring in consequence of those changes because they are fighting back even when the odds are stacked against them. As Christian Zionism is rooting

itself in the US, the Muslims persist in their resolve not to make their struggle for national self-determination a religious crusade.

### 5. Pakistan's Role & Sovereign Purpose

Pakistan started with high purpose but it is hard to ignore its institutional collapse. It is now widely acknowledged that '*if the size of the black economy is bigger than the legitimate economy, the country would be stable only under military or mafia rule*'. No wonder military rule has underpinned political stability in Pakistan. But true stability is provided by loyalty to the sovereign purpose of Pakistan. The dynamism and patriotism of the people of Pakistan is still undimmed but the political apparatus is unwilling to tap into it. It is perhaps because the task of leading Pakistan is very daunting. Pakistan is not just another nation state; it is a 'post-imperial Muslim nation state'. It unthinkingly adopted the institutions of an empire (British) while it needed to evolve new institutions for its new role and purpose. To partake in such evolution is to experience excitement and ecstasy of discovering a new continent. The most excitement is experienced on landing on its shores; the most benefits accrue on exploring the hinterland. Pakistan was certainly the first country in the World of Islam to have been based on *sans* imperial polity. It has to accept the challenge to design and develop institutions for its role as the driving force of a polity suited to the 'post imperial era'.

The polity of Pakistan did not emerge in a hurry; it took over two centuries of living under British colonial rule and taking part in two world wars. It is only the Muslims in Central Asia whose experience is similar to that of Pakistan. They were ruled by Imperial Russia before being forced into accepting Communism as their polity. The final liberation of the Central Asian Republics would prove to be another watershed in Islamic history of even more far-reaching consequence than the creation of Pakistan. The challenge before the seven states is to make a rosary out of the beads of their individual experience. The culture of Islam is the basis of a common view of history that all seven states share. But the Central Asian states have yet to discover their sovereign purpose. It is by joint efforts to avoid returning to the embrace of Imperial Russia and to preclude being engulfed by internal conflict that wrecked Afghanistan that would help them crystallise that purpose.

When Russia conquered much of Central Asia and Muslim rule in India was replaced by British rule, Afghanistan was the only country that survived as an independent state. The courage of the Afghans was much admired by the Muslims in Central as well as South Asia. The people of Pakistan were shocked when Afghanistan opposed the admission of Pakistan as a member of the United Nations in 1947. It took Pakistan a long time to understand that Afghanistan did not see itself as a Muslim state but as the sole surviving imperial power in the region. Pakistan did its duty as *Dar ul Islam* in hosting millions of Afghan refugees when it was occupied by the Soviet forces. But it was deeply disappointed the second time when Pakistani volunteers, instead of being treated as POWs, were massacred. After the Taliban were bombed mercilessly by the US into being scattered, the Pakistanis

found by the Northern Alliance forces on Afghan soil were massacred. Clearly, Afghanistan is no model of Islamic polity.

Afghanistan had been able to get away with conduct so unacceptable of a Muslim country because the frontiers of the Cold War touched its frontiers. The King of Afghanistan benefited from allying himself with the Soviet Union and avoided public opposition to his despotic rule. He was able to get money from the USSR as well as India for being hostile to Pakistan. Even after fighting on the same side for a decade and Pakistan having provided refuge to millions of Afghans, the culture of rule in Afghanistan has not changed. After the withdrawal of Soviet troops, the new Afghan rulers had no difficulty in making friends with India. They were even more hostile to Pakistan than King Zahir Shah. Pakistan expected gratitude; it got kicked in the teeth. Pakistan despaired. But it was not a Pakistani problem; it was Afghanistan that was finding it so hard to find a new sovereign purpose for its new situation. In the past, it had lived on favours from one for hostility against the other. Afghan rulers had been getting money in the past from the USSR and India; now they get it from the USA and India. The reward in both cases was for remaining hostile to Pakistan.

The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (under Taliban rule) was the first ever Administration in that country to have found a sovereign purpose that was in accord with Islamic solidarity. It boldly recognised the independence of Chechnya and proudly supported Jihad in Kashmir. Suddenly, this war-ravaged country that was among the poorest and least developed countries in the world became the world focus. But it fell victim to the vicissitudes of time; America that had helped liberate Afghanistan from Soviet occupation invaded its former friend and ally. Afghanistan has an unpopular government; this one is propped up by America, not the Soviet Union. Pakistan is in a vice once again. But as long as Pakistan is loyal to its sovereign purpose and conducts itself with honour and dignity, it will come out triumphant. Islamic solidarity' must remain the touchstone of its policy. That alone would secure internal harmony and international respect for Pakistan.

Securing the right of self-determination for the people of Jammu and Kashmir is the 'prime sovereign purpose of Pakistan' at this time. This is also a part of the civilizational mission of Islam in South Asia. It is a purpose that depends for its success on Islamic Solidarity. The Kashmiris are a Muslim people. They are a part of the Muslim *Umma* and a part of the Pakistani nation. Their resistance movement is Pakistan's War and the *Umma's* Jihad. The cruelty and excesses borne by the people of Kashmir has made the cause of their liberation bigger than any state or organisation. The cause does not depend on the UN for success. But the UN can regain credibility and authority by implementing its own resolution to hold the plebiscite it promised in Jammu and Kashmir. The cause does not depend on US support for its success. But the USA can regain its stature by standing up to the big bully India. So far, whenever USA and India came eyeball to eyeball, it is the US that blinked. That is why India has been able to defy the authority of the UN, terrorises its neighbours; even imposes its protégés as leaders and rulers on them.

The liberation of Jammu & Kashmir does not depend on a change of heart in India. It is India that needs to change its objectives, its policy and its methods to save itself from disintegration. The liberation of Kashmir does not even depend on Pakistan; it is Pakistan that needs to commit itself to the liberation of Kashmiris to confirm its loyalty to its sovereign purpose and its *raison d'être*. The cause does not need the support of any leader of Pakistan for its success. But no ruler in Pakistan could enjoy even a shred of legitimacy without demonstrating his commitment to Pakistan's primary sovereign purpose. Elections do not confer legitimacy or underpin popularity of the leader of Pakistan; the leader gains the trust and affection of the people and respect of the world by pursuing the cause of Kashmiri self-determination with alacrity and wisdom.

The Afghans won a great victory against the Soviet Union, which resulted in five Muslim Republics in Central Asia securing sovereign independence. The success of Jihad in Afghanistan has been a source of inspiration for the Mujahideen in Kashmir. Jihad is successful and has far reaching impact when the entire Muslim *Umma* supports its goals. With Afghans participating in Jihad in Kashmir, the bonds of common faith and of history were underlined once again. Despite the presence of foreign troops in Afghanistan, the country faces no external danger and its people are free. Their security and self-confidence is underpinned by their success in their fight against Soviet occupation. This security places a duty on Afghanistan because its neighbours face huge external threats- Pakistan from India, Iran from America and the Central Asian Republics from Russia. Afghanistan has yet to determine its new role. It could join Pakistan in pursuing civilizational mission of Islam in South Asia or it may return to its old ways and be used against its Muslim neighbours in exchange for financial favours.

It is not possible for Afghanistan at present to conduct itself like a sovereign nation. But it could still help its Muslim neighbours in their security against threats from India, America and Russia, which is the compulsion of Islamic solidarity. This is the path of honour that would help it regain its past stature as a country that defeated every army that ever occupied its lands. The five newly independent Muslim States of Central Asia that are the neighbours of Afghanistan in the North are land locked and live in fear of Russia while Pakistan is in a similar situation *vis a vis* India. Without Afghanistan acting as a bridge, the security problems of both and the economic consequences of Central Asian remoteness are very daunting. A Union of these Muslim countries as sovereign states on the lines of the European Union is a project whose time has come. Such a union must be the long-term objective of Pakistan, Afghanistan and Central Asia, which is the most profound common purpose that must be the 'sovereign purpose' of each one these seven nations.

### **6. Leadership Crisis in Pakistan**

As Pakistan is on threshold of new vistas, it has become the target of forces of subversion hostile to sovereign freedom of Muslims of the region. Much of the

effort of subversive forces is focussed on a contest between the secular and the religious. With America and India having become the champions of Secularism, the secularists must be viewed as the 'fifth column'. The secularists also espouse ethnic nationalism. Even though the institution of clergy is foreign to Islam, the targets of the secularists are 'obscurantist mullahs' who are actually less obscurantist than the secularists. The secularists advance no argument; their weapon is scare mongering. They would like the Muslims to fear the *Taliban*, the Iranian Mullahs and the laws of *Sharia*. But the *Sharia* was the law of all of South Asia for a thousand years until the British conquest of India. The *Sharia* was the law and the polity of the Muslim Empires in India that provided the underpinning for the longest period of peace and prosperity that equalled or surpassed its contemporaries. Even at the height of the Moghul Empire, the Muslims were only 7 per cent of the population. It was clearly demonstrated that *Islam is not for the Muslims alone; it is the basis of a world order for peace; Islam is for all mankind*

It is still not clear to most in Pakistan why did the country fail to realise its potential. It is obvious that the nation was not led astray, only the leadership was. Many of Pakistan's leaders were not above acting as foreign agents (even of the enemy) often for money and political support. Several political parties have emerged that openly oppose the polity of Pakistan promoting secularism and ethnocentric politics. America has infiltrated every state institution to influence every walk of life. It influences every decision sometimes merely because it can. In such conditions even friendly countries cannot trust Pakistan because America has a veto power over the country. Its leaders have stopped to think. They come up with absurd ideas and arguments for their inaction or foolhardy decisions. First, the defence of East Pakistan lay in the West. Then the defence of West Pakistan lay in (an alliance with) the USA. No wonder India talked to America to get a 'go ahead' to invade East Pakistan in 1971. When America decided East Pakistan should secede, it did.

Fortunately, there were times when the leaders did know where they wanted to go. Three leaders in Pakistan – two military (Ayub Khan and Zia ul Haq) and one civilian (Zulfikar Ali Bhutto) did have an agenda and they did enthuse the people and made major leaps to advance the mission of Pakistan. But even they were unable to change the political culture of Pakistan to maintain continuity. Policy continuity depends on political parties that voice the hopes and aspirations of major constituencies and articulate popular agenda. All three did a lot right but failed to organise a proper party that should continue their work after they left office. In contrast, India has had political parties with a clear agenda and solid constituency base but their agenda is imperialist. Every 'national' political party in India is characterised by an ideology often so vile that it dares not reveal all of it. Every administration in India had a covert agenda that it implements by betraying some of its people. It sees Pakistan as principal impediment in its way; the new crop of leaders in Pakistan have no idea how the Indian rulers think and operate, let alone know how to deal with them.



## 7. Objectives of the Pakistan Movement

The leaders of the Pakistan Movement, particularly Quaid e Azam Mohammed Ali Jinnah, understood the Hindus very well. He made no effort to match them in cunning; the hallmark of his political conduct was courage, dignity and steadfast integrity. The Two Nation Theory was clearly understood because the national personality of the Muslims of (British) India was always separate and distinct being founded on the culture of Islam, and their view of history. But the concept of 'sovereign purpose' was unclear. However, in articulating their demands and enthusing their constituency, the Muslim leaders underlined the need and value of Islamic solidarity. The objectives of the Pakistan Movement need to be listed again for two reasons: 1) to discover and underline that those objectives could not be achieved without a 'sovereign state', and 2) to understand the line of attack by hostile forces at that time and ever since.

The Pakistan Movement had three objectives:

- (1) To set up a sovereign state for the Muslims of British India in areas where they were in majority.
- (2) To protect the Muslims who remain behind in India.
- (3) To be a model of post imperial polity - a nation state where Islam is the principle of national solidarity.

Pakistan failed to secure the right of self-determination for the people of Jammu and Kashmir, which leaves a Muslim majority state under occupation of India. Its first objective is yet to be fully realised. In 1971, Pakistan was split into two by a combination of subversion, invasion and diplomacy and Pakistan was visibly unable to protect itself let alone protect the Muslims in India. It was noticeably lacking in ability to accomplish its second objective. The ruling classes have been unmindful of the objective of structuring Pakistan that it should be a model in any sense let alone of a polity. It is indeed pathetic to see a Muslim League administration revising syllabi and books to purge them of the message of Allama Iqbal and the mission of Islam. Even though the country appears rudderless, it is strangely confident of the future. It does not seem to need stalwarts as leaders. Like the rest of the world of Islam, the people get their direction from the message of the Creator and appear to have no need for earthly directions. Islam has come of age, even in South Asia.

It is indeed ironical that the revival of self-confidence of Pakistan began after its defeat in 1971 War; it accelerated in 1979 upon the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. However, unlike the period when the people were struggling for Pakistan and Muslim revival was driven by clear objectives and leaders of high calibre, the present revival is driven by the people at large. Its objectives are confused and there is considerable danger that the momentum may peter out as

turned out to be the case with the Taleban. The enemy is hopeful it can subvert Pakistan, as it was able to in East Pakistan. At that time also, the enemy checked the government's freedom of action by international pressures and used secularists and regionalists to propagate their subversive themes. Already, the very same themes of subversion are being promoted in the media – Indian, Pakistani (English language) and Western. The efforts to place constraints on the freedom of action of Pakistan are coordinated internationally. But the people have to fight subversion without any help. The principle propaganda themes of the enemy are explained hereunder.

## **8. Themes of Subversion**

The Muslims in South Asia were exposed fully to Western ideas and knowledge under British rule. The language of knowledge and scholarship was English. All the officers and academics had to be proficient in the English language. This had helped the leaders of the Pakistan Movement to engage in a political dialogue with the Hindu leaders and the British and win the argument. But the very same language became a conduit for subversion of the leaders and academics of Pakistan. The main themes of subversion used against Pakistan are broadly three. 1) Quaid e Azam wanted a secular Pakistan. 2) The 1940 Resolution passed by the Muslim League is the basis of Pakistan and it envisioned every province of Pakistan to be a sovereign state. 3) Pakistan is a nation state; it cannot be an Islamic Republic as Islam and Nationalism are incompatible. All these arguments have been debated and defeated many times over the years but they continue to be the themes of anti-Pakistan propaganda inside Pakistan as well as by India. It is necessary to slay the demons once again.

The 11 August 1947 Speech by Quaid-eAzam, which is quoted in support of him wanting a secular Pakistan, does no such thing. In that speech he underlined the difference between a country and a nation. A nation is defined by a 'principle of national solidarity', which in the case of Pakistan is Islam. That the 'Muslims (of British India) are a Nation', accurately defines the nation called Pakistan. But as a country Pakistan demands and expects loyalty from all its citizens – whatever their religion – and it has a duty to treat them as equal before law. In asserting the latter in his speech, he is underlining for the benefit of one and all that non-Muslims would not be lesser citizens or discriminated against in any way. What he said is in accord with Islam; it is also a universal principle, a legal doctrine and common practice. That all the controversies are raised and sustained by those who have spent their lifetime trying to discredit Pakistan and the founder of Pakistan clearly shows that it is done with intent to subvert. Why are those who consider him evil anyway, interested in what he wanted or not?

As for the Resolution of 1940, it is called the Pakistan Resolution but it does not mention the word Pakistan. The wording of the resolution is as follows:

“ Resolved that no constitutional plan would be acceptable in this country or acceptable to the Muslims unless geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted with such territorial adjustments as may

be necessary in which Muslims are numerically in majority, as in the north-western and the north-eastern zones to constitute independent states in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign.”<sup>98</sup>

What is unique in this resolution is that it was perhaps the first time that the Muslims had asked for independence for Muslim majority provinces in North East as well as in the North West of British India. However, it did not constitute a full and final demand of the Muslims; it was a ‘tactical’ resolution to respond to the prevailing political situation. Under the 1935 India Act, elected provincial governments had been set up in 1937. With the start of the Second World War, the provincial governments were dismissed but the British promised they would give ‘dominion status’ to India in the same way as they had to Canada and Australia. It appeared that the King was to remain the sovereign in British India. However, the British were ready to separate warring communities and concede the Muslim aspirations who had joined the British Indian armed forces in large numbers.

It is quite clear from the resolution that the demand was being made on behalf of Muslims not on behalf of ‘provinces’ as not even the Muslim majority provinces had returned Muslim League Governments in 1937. The British were ready to reconstitute the map of India to separate religions to give the Muslims, Sikhs and Untouchable a state of their own. There were two ideas that were being discussed at the time. One was to demarcate Muslim majority regions separately and give all regions sovereignty. The other was to give the provinces more autonomy in existing boundaries. The Muslim League, by this Resolution, expressed a preference for the former but it did not lose sight of the fact that it would have been territorially advantageous for the Muslims if autonomous provinces were to be the forerunner of sovereign independence. It meant that Bengal, Assam and the Punjab would not have been partitioned but first made autonomous and later sovereign. In that event, Pakistan would have been territorially much larger. The 1940 Resolution is clearly tactical resolution underlining readiness for both situations.

It is indeed a travesty to claim that the Pakistan Movement was a movement of the provinces. The ‘natives’ had been given participation in power at the provincial level in 1937 while the first elected central government of All India came about in 1946. No wonder the focus of electoral politics was the province. But neither the Muslims nor the Non-Muslims were content with ‘provincial autonomy’. Every proposal the Muslims made for post-imperial India was founded on the Muslims being a separate nation. As early as 1930, Allama Iqbal was demanding a separate homeland for the Muslims. He said:

“ I would like to see the Punjab, North West Frontier Province, Sindh and Baluchistan amalgamated into a single state. Self government within the British Empire or without the British Empire, the formation of a consolidated North West

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<sup>98</sup> *Dr Sir Mohammed Iqbal*, Presidential Address to Annual Session of All India Muslim League at Allahabad on 29<sup>th</sup> December 1930.

Indian Muslim State appears to me to be the final destiny of the Muslims, at least of the North-West India.”<sup>99</sup>

His proposal was confined to West Pakistan. There was a realisation that Muslim majority areas in the East and the West were not contiguous. They were often visualised to be two separate Muslim states by the leaders of the time. It were the Muslims in Bengal where the Hindus owned most of the land and the Muslims were not merely economically behind but socially oppressed by the more affluent Hindus, who wanted and needed a single Muslim state. That is still the case. However, those who argue that 1940 Resolution meant that the British demarcated provinces were the basis of national identity of Muslims, falsify the entire history of the Muslim freedom movement. Unlike the provinces of Pakistan, their territory was geographically separate and yet the Bengali Muslims wanted (and still want) to be one country with Pakistan. In this book, East Pakistan – through Dr Mu'min Chowdhury - reclaims the ownership of the Pakistan Movement to spit in the face of those who say that the secession of East Pakistan invalidates the founding principles of Pakistan.

The idea and the name Pakistan, however, was not given by the Muslim League or any of its leaders; it was proposed by Chaudhary Rahmat Ali, a student at Cambridge University in a pamphlet titled 'Now or Never' in 1935. He was a true visionary who was thinking of the role and place of the Muslims of India in the context of the Muslim World as a whole and not just in South Asia. He visualised the consolidation of the entire region that had been ruled as well as populated by Muslims for a thousand years. He also visualised East Pakistan to be separate Muslim country on the grounds of geography and demography. In Rahmat Ali 's Pakistan, every letter stood for a territorial entity: **P** - for the Punjab, **A** - for Afghania (the present day province of NWFP), **K** - for Kashmir, **I** for Iran, **S** - for Sindh, **T** - for Tukharistan (Central Asian Republics), **A** - for Afghanistan, and **N** - the last letter of Baluchistan

His proposal advocated the consolidation of the region with common roots in religion, race, language and history where the Turkmens were the torchbearers of Islam. That is still a dream that is dear to the people of the entire region. Pakistan is pulled in three directions because it lies at the confluence of South Asia, Central Asia and the Middle East. Can Pakistan discover a destiny that accommodates all the three pulls? It surely can and it will. History did not stop in 1940 or any other time thereafter. The issue is not the use of plural or the singular in the 1940 Resolution; what is important is that it demanded a separate homeland for a nation that was separate because of their faith and was not willing to be heaped into an ethnic pile or caged into a province whatever the pretext.

The controversy over Nationalism and Islam being mutually exclusive is disingenuous. The principal achievement of the Pakistan Movement is to resolve the

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<sup>99</sup> *Dr Sir Mohammed Iqbal*, Presidential Address to Annual Session of All India Muslim League at Allahabad on 29<sup>th</sup> December 1930.

dichotomy created by an absurd claim of some *Ulema* that nationalism was un-Islamic. Pakistan proudly declared that it was a nation that identified itself by its faith; the dichotomy was resolved. Islam does consider ethnic nationalism to be anti-human because it is a primitive basis of solidarity that can draw battle lines but cannot define a high or humane purpose. In fact the dichotomy was the hangover of the era of empires that ruled over many nations. In the case of the Ottoman Empire in the fold of which many countries had majority of Christians, the dichotomy was resolved by using the word *Millat* (meaning nation) to describe followers of a particular religion and the word '*Vilayet*' (meaning region) to describe the province or country inhabited by a particular ethnic group or tribes of common heritage. A comprehensive identity is always a composite identity – defined by language spoken and religion followed. Most of the nations of the world define themselves by race and language. That is perfectly natural for them. But that is not enough for Muslims. The fact is that races mix and languages change and neither is inherently good or bad. Religion, in contrast, deals with good and bad and informs on how to make judgement. That is why the Muslims have always considered the followers of a particular faith a nation. Islam does allow a country to have many nations and a nation to have many states. The statecraft of Islam is flexible enough to deal with all situations.

### 9. Islamic Statecraft

A Muslim majority state does not have to be an Islamic state. Conversely, an Islamic state does not need to have Muslim majority. The Islamic statecraft imposes a duty of loyalty on all citizens to the State and obedience to its ruler. It imposes a duty on a Muslim ruler (or leader) to protect all the citizens and to respond to a call for help from any segment of the Muslim *Ummah* (or *Millat* in Turkish and Urdu). The duty of loyalty and obedience depends on the extent to which it provides protection. *Darussalam* (house of protection) is a state where the Muslims enjoy political and cultural sovereignty; *Darulaman* (house of peace) is a state where the Muslims enjoy cultural freedom but are not politically sovereign; *Darulharb* (house of war) is a state where the Muslims enjoy neither. It is the duty of *Darussalam* to provide help (including military help) and protection (by accepting refugees) to Muslims of *Darulharb* in their efforts to transform their country into *Darulaman*.

Until the abolition of Ottoman Caliphate in the wake of the Turkish defeat in the Second World war, the territories ruled by or owing allegiance to the Ottoman Sultan were all '*Darussalam*' and every other place was *Darulharb*. There was no practical distinction between *Darulaman* and *Darussalam* and the latter term had ceased to be current owing to disuse. The protection of all the Muslims was the principal responsibility of the Khalifa (Caliph of Islam). When the life, honour and livelihood of Muslims were imperilled in any country, the Khalifa called for *Jihad* against that state and marched in with his armies. The essential element of the Khilafat System was the duty of the Khalifa to protect all the Muslims and the duty of every Muslim to respond to the call for *Jihad*. With the abolition of the Caliphate, Muslim statecraft needs to adjust to the new conditions. The Muslims

enjoy political sovereignty in all the fifty-six members countries of the OIC, which constitute *Darussalam*. Since there is no equivalent of a Khalifa today, the decision to call for *Jihad* is now in the hands of the *Umma* and the *Ulema*. In that they are guided by *Sharia* and precedence of history.

In the post-imperial world no country can wage a war on another under international law unless it is authorised by the UN Security Council. War is legal only in self-defence. *Jihad*, which is war for a purpose sanctioned by *Sharia*, constitutes an additional constraint. There is no reason, therefore, to fear *Jihad* more than war. The cause of anxiety in the West is that the invasions of Muslim countries by America have been in violation of international law, which removes constraints on help to victims of invasion and occupation. Moreover, the countries that are *Darussalam* have a 'duty' to help a country where Muslim lives and liberty are threatened or violated. But individual states do not have to make that decision how and who to help. This decision is made by the *ulema* through a *fatwa*. This is an important change for the better that conforms to the requirement of post imperial multi-state Muslim world. The nature of the *fatwa* is that of a 'judgement' under Islamic Law (*Sharia*) whereas the decisions of rulers are influenced by the dynamics of power, politics and pressures. The *fatwa* is not an order to an Army but a judgement given to the people. *Jihad* has thus been freed from the need of a *Khilafa* or of setting up an Islamic state, or to have properly organised armed forces. *Jihad* becomes obligatory for Muslims as individuals as well as states that are *Darussalam* when the life and honour of a Muslim community is under peril any where in the world.

It is indeed remarkable that the Muslim leaders of British India understood their responsibility as members of the Muslim *Ummah* living in a *Darulaman*. Quaid e Azam did not take any interest in the *Khalifat Movement* when he looked upon himself as Indian nationalist and British India as *Darulaman*. But when the decision had been taken to become a separate and sovereign people, the annual session of the All India Muslim League in its 1940 Session in Lahore acted as leaders of '*Darussalam*' and devoted more time discussing the situation in Palestine than to the Lahore Resolution. Pakistan has since displayed and proven by its role and conduct during the Cold War and over Palestine, Afghanistan and Iraq that it needed to be 'sovereign' because India was invariably in the opposite camp on every important international issue. What is even more significant is that Pakistan has been instrumental in securing recognition that Muslim solidarity does not require the underpinning of *Khilafa* system in the post- imperial era. The Muslims no longer need a Caliph to live by Islam. They have the *Quran* – unaltered in its integrity – and *Sharia* as their guide. What they need are new institutions to respond to the calling of 'solidarity'.

### 10. Impact of History on Evolution of Islamic polity

Islam is not based on blind faith or miracles; its foundation is reason and history. In the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Europe reached the very same conclusions as Islam by the application of reason and the study of history. Professor Toynbee in his famous work 'The Study of History' concluded that the whole question of the rise and fall of civilizations revolved around 'challenge and response'. A society responds to a challenge by marshalling its physical and intellectual energies. As bigger challenges come up, the people mobilize more effort and build institutions, improve organizations, evolve concepts and methods and thus build a civilization. At this point they can make do with almost any calibre of leadership. Then a really big challenge emerges that needs exceptional leadership. When no one comes to the fore to adequately respond to the challenge, the people avoid confronting it. But the challenge keeps reappearing and a feeling of defeat sets in. Decline and disintegration is the inevitable consequence of trying to avoid battle. The civilization goes past the zenith and begins to decline; history completes a cycle. In such situations, there are two courses for history to follow. Either a peripheral segment of the civilization becomes the flag-bearer of the ideals of the civilization; or a resurgent civilization elsewhere in the world conquers it and marks the end of the life cycle of that civilization.

According to Professor Toynbee, historical evolution is cyclic but a civilization may have several cycles of life, with the nucleus shifting from one geographical area to another within the civilization in each new cycle. Toynbee was of the view that the West has had a rebirth of its civilisation in consequence of the Second World War that marked the end of the colonial era but ushered a new era with the centre of the civilisation shifting across the Atlantic to America. He believed that the centre could shift yet again to Europe – perhaps to Central Europe who were not players in the colonial era. His theory is valid for the Islamic civilisation as well. An eminent Turkish scholar, Zia Gokalp, who was the contemporary of Mustapha Kamal Pasha - Ataturk - also expressed similar thoughts about the cyclic evolution of civilizations. He was, however, more precise in identifying the motive forces of history. He said that the evolution of states has followed a definite pattern. At the zenith of the cycle is the 'civilization state', and at the nadir of the cycle is the 'ethnic state'.

He defined the Civilization State as a union of ethnically diverse peoples with a nucleus people and peripheral peoples. The populace of the nucleus, he said, is militant and outward looking and subscribes to a 'view of history', which is inclusive and makes the peripheral peoples identify themselves fully with the ideals and accomplishments of the nucleus. When the militancy erodes or the concept of history is diluted, the Civilization State disintegrates into ethnic units and a large number of states emerge in its place. He concluded that although the nation state is at the nadir of the cycle of historical evolution, it is inherently stronger in terms of political cohesion. But the inescapable corollary is that nation states are in perpetual threat from avaricious neighbours or the rising power of Civilization States. If one examines Islamic History in the light of these two theories, one finds that Islamic

civilization has had two distinct cycles - one with an Arab nucleus and the other with Turks at the nucleus. Within each cycle, there were several sub-cycles and each sub-cycle had a different nucleus. The first political centre of Islam was at Makkah and Medina. The Umayyads took it to Damascus and extended their rule as far away as Spain. When the Umayyads became confined to Spain only, Baghdad under Abbasid rule became the new nucleus. Then the peripheral Turks became the nucleus, first the Mamluks, then the Seljuks, and finally the Ottomans.

Just as the structure of an atom is identical to the structure of the solar system - the tiniest part of the system resembles the whole of the system - historical evolution seems to obey the same laws of nature. One finds that the nucleus of a civilization state resembles the whole state; it is invariably ethnically diverse. When the Arabs ruled the Islamic world, their society and their lands became a melting pot of races and cultures bringing into their fold the Semitic and the Aryan races as well as the native peoples of India and Africa. When the Turks became the nucleus, their land also became a host to a variety of races, languages and cultures. Now that Turkey has renounced its role as the nucleus of the Islamic Civilization State, the question arises, has the Islamic civilization had its last cycle and is now ready to be absorbed by a more powerful civilization or will a new nucleus emerge? When the Newsweek describes Pakistan – which is already multi-ethnic - as the place most friendly to refugees (with three million Afghans, half a million each of Indian and Bangladeshi Muslims), this country is well on its way to become the new nucleus of the Muslim World that is destined to lead the revival of the Muslim *Ummah*.

Pakistan is multi-racial and multi-lingual and its people have shown themselves to be willing to submit to military discipline. Despite the erosion of the morale of the intelligentsia the bulk of the population of Pakistan does not feel defeated and is ready to take on new challenges. Pakistan subscribes to the unity of Islamic History and derives inspiration from it but leadership worthy of a great people is still lacking. The result is that its national solidarity is under attack from within and without and the forces of subversion have been able to run riot in Pakistan. The political culture of Pakistan is divisive whereas the culture of Islam yields unity and solidarity. It has turned out to be fortuitous that religious political parties have been willing to accept the discipline of politics and submit themselves to public scrutiny and to accept the voters' verdict. This has helped them evolve; they have ceased to be dismissive of public opinion and are eager to be popular. They had been divided into sects and schools unable to agree among themselves. Under public pressure all the sects and schools of thought have united on a single platform. But it was really the *Jihad* in Afghanistan that brought them on a single platform. They are still far from being united or universally popular. But they are able to formulate the national agenda; it is their agenda that drives politics in Pakistan.

It was indeed ironical that the polity of Pakistan is Islam but the majority of the *Ulema* were opposed to Pakistan. It is by accepting the discipline of politics that the Islamic parties have come to secure mass popularity. Until recently, they were referred to as 'obscurantist' because they often produced such interpretation of



Islamic law and obscure precedents in history that were neither rational nor convincing. They hindered the crystallization of profound and popular objectives. The leadership of Indian Muslims was in the hands of the Western educated because they were more aware of the compulsions of history and yet sensitive to the calling of Islam. The *Ulema* ignored the former but that is no longer the case. The Islamic parties have since embraced the Two Nation Theory and those with a secular mindset have reduced themselves to ethnic lobbies. Many of them still have 'secure constituencies' but they have lost their ability to dominate the political agenda of Pakistan. The secular lobbies focus on the discipline of Islam being harsh but their real anxiety is that it constitutes a threat to their life style or privileged position in society. But the Western model is now tarnished; it is also hostile. The West is still admired, even imitated, but it is feared and hated more.

### 11. Challenge of Modernity to Muslims

Until the Renaissance in Europe, it was the world of Islam that was a model to Europe in the same way as the West has been for the Muslims in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Europe felt challenged by Islam and responded by Reformation (of religion) and the Renaissance (embracing science and reason). In the era of empires the Muslims were not too dissimilar to Europeans in their politics and statecraft. The Muslim emperors had to conform to the *Sharia* to secure public endorsement of their objectives, policies and conduct. They had to appear more pious and were often more fair and just than their contemporaries. This turned out to be a weakness. The defeat of Muslims in Spain was followed by a pogrom that eliminated them from that country altogether. The first wave of European empire builders – Spain and Portugal – was driven by their desire to spread Christianity and they were really brutal in their methods. Their targets were in South and Central America and the Muslim world was not affected but Christianity was spread with blatant use of force in that part of the world. The second wave of colonial expansion was led by Britain and France and they were driven primarily by their economic objectives. The Ottomans, Safavids and Moghuls in Asia were the contemporaries of the British and French Empires and competed with them. But the Western Empires put their economic goals alongside their civilizational mission while the Muslim Empires had already lost sight of their civilizational mission and had no other goals of global importance.

It was the French Revolution (1789) that marked the beginning of a new era of 'national wars'. This was attended by dramatic changes in weapons, strategy and the scale of war that involved the mobilisation of the entire nation for war. That era lasted more than a hundred years until the end of the First World War. It resulted in two nations – Germany and Italy – who had been split into several princely states being consolidated into nation states. Continental Europe remained engaged in perpetual war while Britain largely stayed away; that gave it a free hand in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century to build a truly global empire. The West made the rules, the Muslims had to work by those rules. The death of the Muslim empires was the result of a thousand cuts that precluded an effective remedy or response and there was no prospect of

rebirth. That is how it looked in 1918 when the Ottomans were defeated in the First World War and their empire dismembered.

There were lessons to be learnt. When war became an end in itself, it gave rise to fascism and totalitarianism. Those who pursued war as a last resort when all else had failed to achieve a specific and limited objective usually succeeded. Perpetual war in Europe gave rise to Fascism (in Germany, Italy and Spain) and the national war became really total and acquired an ideological dimension. The World of Islam had already been overwhelmed by the industrial power of Europe and the wisdom and stratagem of Britain and France. All the Muslim empires had disintegrated well before the fall of the Ottomans. Much of the damage from the rise of fascism was, therefore, suffered by Europe. It was European fascism that caused the Second World War and brought the era of imperialism to an end. The irony is that it gave rise to another totalitarian cult – Communism.

The West sought the help of Soviet Communism to defeat Nazi Fascism in the Second World War; this permitted the Soviet Union to impose Communism on East Europe. It took forty years of Cold War to bring down the Iron Curtain during which the ideology of the West was 'Capitalism' or 'anti-Communism'. The West had travelled a long way from Reformation to Colonial Imperialism, from war against Fascism to a Cold War against Communism. It had made war on a global scale to dominate the globe. It succeeded when it fused its economic purpose with its military objectives and did not make war merely because victory was easy. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the American leadership of the West decided that the triumph of 'Democracy and Secularism' was a purpose that would permit its war objectives to be reinforced by its peace objectives to maintain global primacy. But this objective has since been transformed into a quest for global hegemony in a uni-polar world. America did not follow the example of Britain in giving priority to its economic goals and maintenance of peace through balance of power.

The decline and fall of both the totalitarian systems – Fascism and Communism - should have returned the era of nation states as promised in the UN Charter. But it did not. America has started to conduct itself as an imperial power. It seeks to impose its polity - Secularism and Democracy – on the whole world. But this is just as untenable as a rationale for intervention as 'white man's burden' during the British *Raj*. The West is rich and America is powerful but as a civilisation, it is still wanting. A civilisation is judged by its high objectives not its military power. Secularism underlines lack of purpose – ethical, moral or human. Democracy gives the people the right to choose between the leaders of the main political parties to make decision totally capriciously until he is removed in another election. It is better than a system based on the hereditary principle but it is still devoid of checks on wanton use of power to hurt and harm within and without. It is time that the Muslims responded to the challenges of modernity and reformulated their polity to present it as an alternative to the Western model.

## 12. Ideology of Pakistan

The Muslims of South Asia, during the last century, did indeed accept the intellectual challenge of the British *Raj* and they may well have to accept a similar challenge from the American *Raj*. The Muslims in the sub-continent are 'firm believers' in Islam but they are largely unfamiliar with the arguments raging around them. They have a strong faith and are resolute. More important, they are willing to die resisting oppression or occupation. They constitute the strength of Islam not only because they are more numerous but also because they are prepared to make sacrifices. But being ignorant, they cannot provide leadership from within their ranks. They have been mired in confusion but they increasingly follow the leadership of religious political parties. But the polity of Pakistan is underpinned by history, not theology.

The ideology of Pakistan (the Two Nation Theory) is as old as the founding of the State of Medina upon *Hijra* (migration) from Makkah. The people of Makkah, who migrated to Medina with Prophet Mohammed (PBUH), joined them to become one nation of 'believers' and the non-believers of Makkah, with whom they had ties of blood, became a separate nation and the enemy. Islam, thus, founded a universal fraternity of believers with bonds stronger than that of blood or birth. The polity of Pakistan, therefore, is not a new polity but the rediscovery of Islamic polity that had been ignored in the imperial era of Islam. It is the cumulative responses of Muslims – their sages and scholars - over a long period of time.

The process of rediscovery, it is generally agreed, started with Abdul Wahab of Nejd (Saudi Arabia). He said that Muslim decline was the result of their disregard for '*Tauheed*' (Unity of God), which is the basis of Muslim unity as well as militancy (*Jihad*). He started a campaign to restore '*Tauheed*' to a central position in Islam. In post-Moghul India, Shah Waliullah was the principal exponent of the teachings of Abdul Wahab. He infused new vigour among the Muslims of India by his efforts to revive the spirit and institution of *Jihad*. Even when the Western colonial powers had become militarily unbeatable, the Muslims continued to develop a response to the new challenges. Jamal-ud-Din Afghani underlined Islamic unity and solidarity, and the need to revive *Jihad* as an instrument of response. Finally, it was Allama Iqbal who gave the 'Post Imperial Polity of Islam' a formal shape by synthesizing the Muslim heritage and history with modern trends and thought.

His message in his ten lectures published as a book titled 'The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam' can be summarised as: "the historical heritage of our forefathers was that of despotism and the democratic ideals of Islam could not be institutionalised by them. Under the impact of the worldwide movement of democracy, the present generation is infinitely more capable of achieving the ideals of Islam than all the generations that preceded ours". He noted: "since the cumulative knowledge and experience of the human race is increasing, the level of accomplishment of each successive generation, as a result, is higher than that of the preceding generation". This 'post imperial' view of Islam is not merely for

explaining or understanding and analysis; it is a call to beckon peoples to formulate goals and strive for excellence with their eyes fixed on the zenith of the next cycle in pursuit of the Mission of the Civilization. This view defines and underpins the 'ideology of Pakistan' and provides a basis in history for its validity. It needs to be elaborated for it to be understood properly.

In describing the 'Civilisation State' Zia Gokalp explained that 'a civilization state has a 'base' and an area of influence. The base comprises the nucleus (or the core) and the peripheral peoples who identify themselves with the nucleus by a shared view of history. The area of influence is the area where the 'base' holds sway without a shared view of history with the core. The manageable area of influence depends on the size of the base. The contest between contemporary powers is a competition in the extension of influence. History tells us that military conflicts lead only to marginal adjustments in the area of influence but acceptance of a new faith or ideology that result in radical change in the view of history cause huge losses to one side and massive gains for the other.

The example of the Ottoman Empire is very apt. The Balkan states were the areas of Ottoman influence and their base comprised Asia Minor, the whole of the Middle East and North Africa. The Turks dominated this small area of the Balkans for centuries even against resurgent Russia and Europe as long as the Arabs as well as the Turks subscribed to the same view of history. When the Turks abandoned Islam as their polity and embraced Turkish nationalism, the base shrank to Asia Minor only; the Middle East as well as North Africa became the area of influence. In comparison with the base, the area of influence became too large and the Turks lost in twenty years what they had been able to defend for centuries. A 'shared view of history' transforms multi-ethnicity into a source of strength for nation states and an asset for empires that Zia Gokalp called 'Civilization State'.

The ideology that underpins Pakistan's polity, therefore, has several elements. 1) Post imperial view of history that eulogises and accepts only those precedents and innovations that were not specifically designed to support imperial rule, 2) acceptance of the idea of nation state as compatible with Islamic polity, 3) underlining the quest for high purpose and need for ever larger circles of solidarity, 4) rejection of secularism as a component of an Islamic polity as it is the negation of ethics and theology on which the culture of Islam is founded, 5) acceptance of democracy as preferable to the hereditary principle, 6) requiring that rules and rulers to be subject to the discipline of *Sharia*, 7) recognition that Islam is for all mankind, not for Muslims alone.

### **13. The Mission of Pakistan**

While the polity or the ideology provides the foundation and guidelines for the structure of the state and the society, the hallmark of great nations is the mission they chose in response to the challenges they face. It is the destiny of Pakistan to be on the frontline in the civilizational conflict between Islam and the only surviving

fortress of *Kufr* – Brahmin ruled India. The challenge before Pakistan is the same as in the thirties and the forties of the last century. The objectives and the arguments of India are the same. After a quarter century of despair and defeat (that ended in 1972), Pakistan has a few successes to its credit. East Pakistan was not annexed by India; it came back into the Muslim fold. Pakistan played a role in securing the exit of the Soviet forces from Afghanistan. The *Jihad* in Afghanistan inspired the people of Kashmir that they could also win freedom from Indian occupation. The resistance movement in Kashmir that started in 1989 could have succeeded if the USA had not been opposed to the well-demonstrated aspirations of Kashmiris for freedom from India.

Pakistan is under considerable pressure to opt out of the civilizational conflict with India and accept its hegemony. Every Prime Minister of Pakistan after Zulfikar Ali Bhutto had been ready to compromise the aspirations and dreams of the people of Pakistan. No wonder they have all been consigned to the dustbin of history. If India had not shed so much blood to suppress its many freedom movements, it could have evolved a national polity or succeeded in undoing Pakistan. Now, it is in the grip of the Soviet Syndrome. Even the worst enemies of the Soviet Union never wanted or wished such a thorough break up of the Czarist Empire built over many centuries. But it happened because the dynamics of its long history of diabolical repression. Russia had to disgorge the many peoples it held in its belly for it to transform itself into a nation state.

The same is bound to be the fate of India. It does not have a basis for imperial solidarity or national solidarity. It has tried ‘secular pluralism’ (under Congress rule), ‘secular socialism’ (under Communist rule) and *Hindutva* (under BJP rule) but the political atrophy of India has not been arrested. India faces no foreign threat. Yet it would not find peace without recognising the national identity of its many peoples and giving them their right of self-determination. Pakistan’s history is characterised by dithering in living up to its role and mission. India’s conduct has been characterised by betrayal of the promises it made to its peoples. The time of reckoning has arrived; Pakistan can dither no more, India cannot betray any longer.

The socio-political scene of the world is likely to be dominated in this century by the idea that triumphed in the last century. Secularism and Democracy are trumpeted as universal values but these are universal to the extent that they support the idea of the Nation-State. It is the idea of Nation State that dominated the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and the struggle for national self-determination will characterise and prevail in the 21<sup>st</sup>. Without total commitment to national self-determination, commitment to democracy is hollow and farcical. Religion as determinant of national polity, a genie kept in the bottle for much of the last century, leapt out with a vengeance towards its end in Ireland, the Balkans and the Caucasus. In consequence of the return of religion as a factor that builds and defines nations, the role and place of the Nation-State has had to be revised. This is an area where Pakistan has a lot of experience having been ruled by an imperial power (British) and imperilled all its life by a ‘want-to-be’

imperial power. The Mission of Pakistan is to help the peoples of South Asia secure their right of self-determination.

#### 14. New Challenges

The transformation of Imperial Europe into Europe of nation states did not come about peacefully. The 'ill-adjusted many' of Europe got the world into the Second World War that caused an unprecedented scale of death and destruction. The national wars turned out to be even bloodier than imperial wars. The victors of the War finally accepted that mere balance of power was not enough to deter war and that there was a need for a legal and moral foundation for a world at peace. They created the United Nations by a treaty that was joined by every country of the world. The victors – the USA, UK, China, France and the Soviet Union - became the Five Permanent Members of the UN Security Council and took responsibility for maintaining peace in the world. After a good start, in which it dealt effectively with the Kashmir and Palestinian Disputes, and North Korean invasion of South Korea in 1951, the UN role as a peacemaker was circumscribed by an ideological conflict between the Communist (East) and the Capitalist (West). What followed was an uneasy peace that was waged like a war - a cold war.

America emerged as the leader of the West in the wake of the Second World War and Soviet Russia emerged as its main challenger. The Cold War between them ended in a decisive American victory when the USSR broke up in 1991. This was a unique victory in the sense that it was achieved without firing a shot. The Soviet Union simply imploded under the weight of economic failure that made its political promise and international ambitions unsustainable. The impact of that collapse has been far reaching. The political map of Europe has been redrawn reversing the territorial gains made by Imperial Russia over many centuries. It shook the entire world as the movements of national liberation that the Soviet Union had supported were suddenly robbed of their chief helper. More important, it marked the end of the brief era of ideological contests.<sup>100</sup>

The decisiveness of the cold war was not just unprecedented in its nature, scope and impact; the victory of the West was very surprising. America had been able to secure only a stalemate (not victory) in its war with Communism in Korea and it was decisively defeated in Viet Nam. Communism continued to make gains all over the world – in Latin America, Africa, South East Asia and India – after the American defeat in Viet Nam. Then suddenly the downfall of the Soviet Empire began as it sent troops into Afghanistan in 1979. Why? For the first time America 'supported' a war of liberation rather than wage a war itself. Until then, it was always the Soviet Union or China who supported the wars of liberation and they succeeded as they never sent their troops overseas. The second reason was the 'resolve' of Muslim

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<sup>100</sup> The history of the last two hundred years has been written by those also made that history. This narration of events is the bystanders' view of that history, which is important because some of the bystanders are now making history and their view of history is shaping their reactions.

peoples against what they see as occupation by 'infidels'. Before being beaten in Afghanistan, Communists were beaten in Malaysia and Indonesia – both Muslim countries. The Americans refuse to accept either of those reasons and that is why they blundered into Iraq and are on the wrong side of history in Palestine.

In Afghanistan, the Muslims and the Americans fought on the same side but they were not fighting the same war. It was an ideological war for the Americans but it was a war against occupation – Jihad - for the Muslims. No wonder they reached different conclusions. The Muslims had not engaged in Jihad for nearly two hundred years. The last time a Muslim ruler had come to the rescue of Muslims under occupation was in the period from 1758 to 1769 when the ruler of Afghanistan, Ahmed Shah Durrani (also known as Abdali), fought and defeated the Marathas in response to a call by the Muslims of the Punjab<sup>101</sup>. In 1979, two centuries later, it was Afghanistan under occupation and the Muslims of the Punjab (Pakistan) returned the favour. This also marked the resurrection of Jihad as a centrepiece of Islam as a polity. Until then, Jihad had been viewed as inter-state war but with an objective sanctioned by *Sharia*. Afghanistan removed the first constraint on Jihad; it did not have to be declared by the state. Jihad today is more likely to be the decision of the people. The concept of Jihad stands transformed into a 'peoples war' for a purpose sanctioned by the *Sharia*. A war of aggression for conquest would not be Jihad. With Afghanistan, Jihad has firmly come to mean a 'peoples war' against occupation - a war for the liberation of lands and peoples.

The United States of America reached a very different conclusion. They saw it as a success of America's 'soft power'<sup>102</sup>. The Soviet Union and America both resorted to subversion, disinformation and propaganda but the Soviet system was totalitarian and was ill equipped to validate its promise by performance. America also had the power of international financial institutions behind her in influencing the fate of nations to deliver socio-economic success just as decisive as military victories. But America has failed completely in combining its soft power with military power, as (for example) India had been able to do. Even Israel struggles to maintain its occupation over territories it occupied in 1967. India, in comparison, has held on to Jammu and Kashmir since 1948 and went on to inflict another defeat on Pakistan in 1971 when it invaded East Pakistan. It has kept the new country it created (Bangladesh) disarmed thus keeping it in a tight grip while avoiding the responsibility and odium of occupation. India has annexed Sikkim and kept Nepal, Bhutan and Sri Lanka disarmed and under its thumb.

The conclusion the American drew from the defeat of Pakistan in 1971 in East Pakistan was that 'soft power' works just as well against Muslim countries as it does against the Communists. But Israel and America are stymied in Muslim majority territories they have captured – Palestine, Iraq and Afghanistan. India is eager to

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<sup>101</sup> *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1981 Edition, Volume 1, p154

<sup>102</sup> Joseph S. Nye Jr., former Assistant Secretary of Defence in the US coined the phrase in his book *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*.

give them a few tips and get help from them to advance its own agenda. There appears to be a great deal of subliminal 'respect' for India in America that helps India get away with so much unreason and aggression and still be viewed and valued as a 'natural ally'.

## 15. Clash of Civilisations

In the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union, after a perfunctory search for a new global enemy, the West quickly decided that Islam would be a suitable new enemy. It saw Islam as an ideology like Communism. After Israel defeated the Arabs convincingly in 1967, occupied all of Palestine and piled one humiliation after another on the Arabs, America was sure it was backing a winner. The ease with which it was able to influence and infiltrate Arab institutions and intimidate entire peoples buttressed their confidence. However, the impotence of the governments of Muslim countries to get tiny Israel to vacate Palestinian territory radicalised public opinion in the entire world of Islam. The euphoria over declaring Islam as the new enemy made formal by Samuel Huntington in his article on 'Clash of Civilisations'<sup>103</sup> had not died down when it was apparent that radical Islam – more popularly called 'militant Islam' – was not a good target for the 'soft power' of America. The reason was two fold: 1) *Jihad* adjusted to the environment of asymmetry in war, 2) the soft power of America has proved to be counter-productive against Muslims because it stirs more hate than fear in them.

By 1981, when America decided to support Jihad in Afghanistan, all the state sponsors of Palestinian resistance had been made to abandon them. None of them had ever called for Jihad in Palestine. It was in the wake of the victory of Jihad in Afghanistan (1987) that some Palestinian *ulema* made a call for Jihad; the Palestinian struggle for liberation has been completely transformed in consequence. The secular PLO (Palestine Liberation Organisation) began to be seen as moderate, recognised by the UN and accepted as representative of Palestinians. In the wake of the Gulf War of 1991, President Bush Sr. held the Madrid Conference that was followed by the Oslo Accord and a blueprint for vacation of territories occupied by Israel in 1967 was agreed. But the change in American policy marked by American support to Afghan resistance has since been reversed in every area of the world. With the rise of Neo-Conservatives in America, that country sees the world through Sharon coloured lenses. But this phase would also pass. It is evident that there are no irreconcilable differences between America and the Muslim World; the conflict between them is the result of American policy, not American interests. When America and the Muslim world were on the same side, their common enemy – the Soviet Union – was forced to pull out of Afghanistan. It was the first time that America was able to combine its soft power with military power but the military power was that of Islam and Afghans.

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<sup>103</sup> The article was followed by a book by Samuel P. Huntington titled '*The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*' published by Simon and Schuster Inc. wherein a clash between Islam and the West is predicted and explained.



Was the break up of the Soviet Union the result of its defeat in Afghanistan or the success of American 'soft power'? Whatever the case, the Muslims were encouraged by the American support to *Jihad* in Afghanistan and many saw that to herald a new era of close co-operation between the West and the Muslim World. In fact, the belated but determined US support to sovereignty, integrity and independence of Bosnia-Herzegovina and later the bombing of Serbia to force it to withdraw from Kosovo were seen by Muslims to herald such an era that could have marked the end of the age old conflict between the Crescent and the Cross. But the invasion of Iraq in 1991 shook the Muslims out of their euphoria. The not so hidden hostility of President Clinton to the Arabs and Muslims put further distance between them. The rise of Neo-conservatives to power riding on the shoulders of President Bush Jr. and the attack on twin towers in New York on 9/11, 2001 changed every thing.

When Huntingdon wrote about the clash of civilisations, he did not say it was inevitable or welcome. He said it was something to avoid. But it has turned out to be a self-fulfilling prophecy. If the leaders in America and Europe do not take stern measures to stop this clash, it is likely to become more bloody and destructive because of the momentum it has gained in consequence of the American invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 and of Iraq in 2003. If more Muslim countries become targets the entire world would suffer the fall out. But the prime responsibility falls on the shoulders of the potential targets of America to respond. If they stay calm and resist invasion and occupation with fortitude, early victories could turn later into defeats. It is not the interest or the intent of the Muslims to challenge the West or America. But this is not because of weakness or a sign of readiness to surrender. It is an effort to restore order and bring the control back into the hands of states. The present American policy is transferring control into the hands of non-state players (like *Al-Qaeda*) or rogue states like India and Israel.

Militant Islam, which had been left with no state sponsor, is likely to get several if the present policies of the US continue. The rulers of Muslim countries as well as that of America are in a quandary. They wonder if they should promote democracy that would bring militant Islam to power or they should continue to support often-unpopular rulers who are friends of America. The policy that the US has followed is haphazard. Since the states as well as non-state players see America as hostile, American policy has been a recipe for anarchy and breakdown - not for stability. Soon rather than late, the Muslim states may end up reconciling that to be conquered by the US is better than to surrender to 'militant Islam'. America may then have too many Iraqs on its hands. All such 'surrenders' may not be the result of US invasion; America could succeed in imposing a Karzai in every Muslim country without invasion or war. Unpopular rulers depending on America to protect them from a hostile population are just as costly as those imposed by invasion. Democracy is not always a panacea; it can also be a problem 'When the United States becomes so unpopular that being pro-American becomes a kiss of death in other countries'

domestic politics, foreign political leaders are unlikely to make helpful concessions.<sup>104</sup>

It is not possible to turn the clock back. But America needs to see that it is in a hole and it is wise to stop digging. It is vital to understand the real nature of the 'clash of civilisations' that conventional wisdom declares to be inevitable. The Muslims are the target in this clash but who are the beneficiaries? It is certainly not the US. The Muslims need to express their viewpoint with clarity and conviction. Islam has been engaged in a conflict with the West twice before in history. During the Crusades, religion was the cause of war; Europe lost. The drive for colonial expansion by Britain and France was economic benefit - markets and terms of trade; Europe won. The Muslim world is not eager for another round of war. It lives in cheek by jowl proximity of Europe and neither would gain from renewed conflict in the era of asymmetrical wars. The Christians and Muslim live in peace and harmony in the Middle East and fight on the same side resisting Israeli occupation. What more proof is required for the chapter of the Crusades to be finally closed? But the Zionists do want the Crusades to be fought again and promise a different result. That is unlikely. Like in the earlier Crusades, the bloodletting would be considerable but the result would not be different.

## 16. China and the Muslim World

There are four civilizational entities of a billion plus each in the world today. These are: 1) the West, 2) the Muslim World, 3) China and 4) India. Pakistan has a clear view of each of these civilisations. Since Christianity and Islam are proselytising faiths, their spread has been haphazard and encompasses almost all the races and languages of the world. There are fifty six countries where Muslims are in majority and many more where Christians are in majority. But China and India, in contrast, are one of a kind. The political perceptions of Muslims and Christians are coloured by their experience of war and conflict over a thousand years. But the Chinese have largely remained agnostic and are unique in having been the oldest nation state. They have been the objects of envy and aggression; but they rarely felt tempted to invade other nations. Besides, the foundation of Chinese political culture is 'habitual obedience of the wisdom of the patriarch'. They have often had a large army but its role has been to maintain order. The Chinese are secular but their secularism is subordinate to their nationalism. Many Chinese accepted Buddhism or converted to Islam and Christianity and the entire country embraced a Western dogma (Communism) but the Chinese always remained first and foremost Chinese.

China has fifty million Muslims who are Han Chinese and fully integrated into the Chinese life. China continues to be an enigma that much of the world finds puzzling. The Chinese are not only the oldest civilization; their country is populated largely by people of the same ethnic complexion. China has had no need to redefine itself. It

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<sup>104</sup> Joseph S. Nye Jr. 'The Decline of America's Soft Power'. Foreign Affairs May-June 2004, p17

has been a secular nation state that has evolved a system of government derived from its own history and heritage that it does not wish to sell or impose on any one else. But China rejects 'Western Democracy' and sees it as an instrument of subversion to destabilise China. The Muslim World sees 'Western Secularism' as an instrument of subversion. China and the Muslim World are united by suspicion of America. Both want to evolve democratic institutions and culture based on their own history and heritage. They both see Western Democracy as 'wayward'. They believe that a society devoid of moorings of some eternal principles, some ethical and moral do's and don'ts, some objectives, some purpose, cannot escape slipping eventually into crime and sin, anarchy and decline.

As long as the contest was between totalitarianism and democracy, the latter turned out to be more resilient and powerful. But if the contest was between a 'high purpose' and 'no purpose' the Muslims believe the former would triumph. Secularism is the foundation of the ambition of the West to build a world in its way. The West insists that religion imposes unnecessary constraints over free human spirit. A world without such constraints is indeed much more fun but it is neither more peaceful nor moral. The Americans do not only not accept the constraint of theology or ethics but they have now spurned the constraint of international law. American secularism and democracy are becoming ever more threatening. Nuclear deterrence has prevented war at the scale of the two world wars in the last century. But a world in which WMDs are the monopoly of the rich and powerful is a methodology for enslavement, not freedom. Again, the answer to such a potential monopoly is to be found in the institution of long war (of China) or of Jihad (of Islam). China and the Muslim World have more in common than the source of their fears and anxieties.

### 17. Indian Secularism

India is the largest democracy and its constitution is indeed secular. The imperial strain of Indian polity translates into an ambition for *Akhand Bharat* - bringing the area from the Hindu Kush (mountain range in Afghanistan) to the Mekong Delta under Hindu rule. The *maya* (wealth) worshipping strain of Indian polity is fearful of war and likes to concentrate on becoming rich and prosperous. The West is unsure which India it likes - the India ready to invade and expand apparently eager to take on Islam as well as China, or the India of Bollywood that is in love with the 'fun West'. The West thinks that Westernised India would willingly serve its interests in the region. But India has its own aspirations and objectives. The military and the economic power of India would be used for India's own imperial ambitions and not in the service of the West. While India invests a lot of effort in maintaining a façade of secular democracy as cover for its imperial ambitions, it is actually uncomfortable with Secularism, with Democracy and with the idea of Nation-State.

Under BJP rule, India had rejected Secularism and pursued *Hinduvta*. Democracy continues to be practised, but it is not providing a stable government with a coherent focus. The present Indian Government is a coalition of 24 political parties. If India

accepted the idea of Nation-State, it would break up into at least 15 or perhaps even 500 states each with a distinct national personality. If India were to organize itself on the basis of a sovereign purpose, it would still create at least five sovereign states. The Hinduisation of every aspect of life and literature that has been carried out under the agenda of *Hindutva*, has transformed India. Secularism in India is not separation of the church from the state; it is the primacy of the state that permits it to interfere with the faith of every one. One finds the Hindus asserting patronisingly, "Since the purpose of religion is to reach God; one can worship any god to reach God". The followers of most religions would find that hard to accept. Secularism surely does not mean that followers of all faiths should accept that all religions are the same – just different ways to the same goal. In fact, the difference between the Muslims and the Hindus is sometimes expressed very starkly: "The Hindus worship the cow; the Muslims eat it". By forcing people not to eat beef as expression of 'secular tolerance', is ultimate intolerance.

Some Christian Churches, particularly in South India, have accepted the caste system and have built separate churches for high and low caste Christians. Many churches have taken to having the Cross and the statue of Jesus inside and cows on the lawn. All religions have been coerced into varying measure of Hinduisation. This is in addition to the pressure of 'patriotism' that does not permit 'conscientious objection' to fighting against people of one's own faith. This aspect of Indian Secularism landed thousands of Sikh soldiers in prison in 1984 who are still incarcerated without the protection of law. What is worse, there is no public outcry or protest from the society. Many Sikh soldiers who deserted rather than assault their holiest shrine – the Golden Temple – were shot after summary trials. India is an oppressive place. The low castes have to continually declare that they are happy to submit to poverty and apartheid to atone for their sins in previous life. It gives no joy to an educated person, even of high caste, to see fellow human beings so brutally and visibly maltreated. The usual form of rebellion to caste oppression is a life in crime. No wonder Mafiosi have flourished in the cities and dacoits in rural areas.

Hindu fascist groups are the new Mafiosi whose leaders take a dominant part in politics. Speaking of India as a Democracy is a travesty. Democracy in India is an instrument of appeasing criminal elements with power and money so that they spare the rich and powerful, oppress Dalits, rob and kill the hapless religious minorities. As long as India was winning military victories against neighbours, its excesses were subdued. Now that victories are becoming rare, its frustration is mounting. The response has been to announce ever more grandiose and ambitious projects. India wants to have a Blue Water Navy to dominate the Indian Ocean. It wants to compete with China in military and economic power. It wants a share in the oil wealth of the Middle East and wants to establish a land link with Russia over Pakistan, Afghanistan and the Central Asian Republics. It is the misfortune of Pakistan to be the neighbour of a scourge. It wants to look away and concentrate on the problems of fellow Muslims in Central Asia and the Middle East. But confronting India remains its destiny in the foreseeable future.

## 18. Towards a Multi-Polar World

America is the sole super power in the world to day that makes the world Uni-polar. On the issue of Iraq in 2003, three permanent members of the UN Security Council - China, Russia and France – opposed the invasion, USA and UK supported. France started to talk of multi-polar world in order to check American aggression. But the Americans came down heavily against it. With the UK and many new members of the EU from East Europe supporting the US, the idea got nowhere. However, the emergence of a multi-polar world does not require a formal agreement or the endorsement of the US. It would emerge in response to a need. The need has arisen because of two reasons: 1) the US does not accept the authority of the UN in matters of war and peace; 2) the US has adopted the doctrine of 'strategic pre-emption' thus asserting that it can invade any country that it sees as a threat to itself and is not obliged to justify it to any one or secure approval from any one. The USA has effectively declared that it does not recognise or respect the sovereignty of any country.

The response to US unilateralism can only be a world order based on a structure of balance with three or more legs. The battle lines have been drawn in Europe because the decision whether the idea of multi-polar world is promoted or frustrated lies with Europe. The decision may crystallise in consequence of economic rather than political imperatives but it could also emerge in consequence of America invading yet another country. Either way, when Europe splits with America multi-polar world would emerge quickly. China is a very large nation and a big country. This gives China an exceptional advantage in security and stability. If Europe was to defy America, the West would become bi-polar and China emerges as the third pole of a three-legged structure of balance. That would still not ensure peace because none of the three would commit their armed forces in defence of a Muslim country that is invaded or threatened. But the Muslim World is not altogether without levers of power. For one, its location is strategic, for another it sits atop the largest oil reserves. And in asymmetrical war, it is not so powerless. If it could develop clear objectives and a strategy, the Muslim World could emerge as the fourth pole of a stable structure of world in balance.

The general acceptance of the idea of 'nation state' is quite recent; the post-imperial form of which has emerged only after the Second World War. Already the limitations of the idea have become apparent. Europe has formed a Union in which national sovereignty is pooled. The power of Europe is comparable to that of USA if the pooled sovereignty operated in cohesion. There is a single market in North America but the preponderance of the USA gives it the appearance of an American Empire rather than pooled sovereignty. The definition of a nation in ethnic terms is proving to be too restrictive. If Turkey became a member of the EU it might be impossible define it as a Christian Club. The Muslims also need to underline the areas of common interest between Christianity and Islam. Both are proselytising faiths and their civilizational identity is elastic - capable of going through several cycles of rise and fall, of atrophy and consolidation. Their power is based on being

able to absorb peoples of many races speaking many languages. The Muslim World can also form a union on the lines of the European Union. A concerted move in that direction would accelerate the emergence of a multi-polar world and promote global peace.

Europe and the World of Islam have accepted the idea of Nation-State. National self-determination is a sound principle that can be the foundation of a stable structure of a world order for peace. India is alone in being the only empire that denies and defies the principle of 'national self determination'. India should have been under the spotlight for being the cause of crisis and instability but it is the Muslims who are. Why? It is because the world is Uni-polar and America is on the side of Israel and India – two countries who have defied the UN most persistently and the longest. It is only the Muslims peoples – in Palestine, Kashmir, Chechnya and now Iraq - who languish under occupation and denied their right of self-determination. This injustice is radicalising the Muslims and the inaction of Muslim rulers de-legitimises their rule in the eyes of their people. A stable world order can only be based on a fair principle honestly applied otherwise the US led movement towards wanton use of power in defiance of every law and principle would continue to menace peace in the world.

### **19. India the only Enemy**

It was stated earlier that India has been able to digest gains made by war whereas even America and Israel have failed to do so. It is because of the ruling class of Pakistan. They are 'parasites' who feed on the people and are ever seeking patrons abroad who should protect them from the people and perpetuate them in power. No wonder they are afraid to use the 'e' word and call India an 'enemy' that it really is. India is aggressive towards all its neighbours but it is Pakistan that is always the target of its demonisation campaign. India never spares an opportunity to decry Pakistan and Islam and present it as a 'failure' that is bound to return to the embrace of 'mother India'. India portrays Pakistanis as 'extremists', 'communalists' and 'rogues'. By keeping silent and obsequiousness in dealing with India, the leadership in Pakistan gives credibility to Indian propaganda and is robbed of any prospect of enjoying popular support and public respect. Late Mr Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was the only leader after Quaid e Azam Mohammed Ali Jinnah who enjoyed public adulation in the whole country because he dealt with the Hindu with resolute dignity expected of a Muslim leader.

India blames Pakistan for everything under the sun and Pakistan is always on the defensive, ever eager to please. Pakistan ignores the plight of Muslims in India who are reviled, humiliated and even killed with impunity. The pliant manner of Pakistan in its dealing with India damages the standing of Pakistan in several ways. Much of the world supports India rather than Pakistan on Kashmir because if Kashmir did matter to them, they would be raising their voice on every international forum against the War Crime of the Indian forces in Kashmir and refusing to discuss anything until India delivered on its agreement on Kashmir that it made in 1949.

The balance of power in the subcontinent is in favour of India over Pakistan by a ratio of three to one. Yet, it is India that protests and declares that it sees Pakistan as its enemy number one while Pakistan says little when India buys modern weapons from Israel, America and Russia to further tilt the balance against Pakistan. The leaders of Pakistan ignore or forget that India is seen as a menace to world peace in much of the world. Pakistan is important to that part of the world and to the neighbours that India bullies constantly if they stand up to India. If it does not, Pakistan has no importance in the world despite its nuclear deterrent and one of the finest armed forces in the world. If Pakistan is forever appeasing India, the capabilities of Pakistan are as good as non-existent because they would only be used to threaten Pakistan's friends not its enemies. No wonder the Muslim World, once proud of Pakistan, holds it in disdain.

India threatens the life and destiny of nearly half of the world population of Muslims who live in India and the states on its periphery. India enslaves even a larger number of indigenous peoples who it seeks to assimilate into the Hindu fold. And yet, fifty years after the death of Mahatma Gandhi, an ascetic Brahmin, former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, recycled his themes and went to Dhaka and Lahore to preach polytheism in Bangladesh and Pakistan. He offered them the status of vassal states on the basis of 'ties of blood'. The effort was too obtuse to be clearly understood but he was surely acting like a Hindu god preaching polytheism. Since Hinduism is a non-proselytising faith, he was not trying to convert Muslims to Hinduism; he was informing them of the merits of Hinduism whose polytheism makes it tolerant and accommodating - ever ready to embrace more gods and the Muslim back to the bosom of mother India<sup>105</sup>. After all the bloodshed of 1947 and three Indo-Pakistan Wars, the Brahmin continues to harbour ambition to bring the Muslims of Pakistan and Bangladesh under his imperial rule. This is entirely because of the obsequious conduct of the leaders of Pakistan and Bangladesh in relation to India.

India survives because it does not subscribe to any system of universal ethics or have a view of the world. It is so unthreatening. Much of the world does not know how to view it. It is flexible in its morals but rigid and arrogant in its conduct. The Muslims - particularly of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh - who are its principal targets and victims, have to raise their voice and expose the truth about India - a vicious and unscrupulous operator, a snake in the grass, an force of anti-humanity that suppresses the weak and is obsequious before the strong, a survivor that has lived so long as to be lifeless; dead but a poison nevertheless. The ball is in the court of Pakistan. It has a duty to help liberate all the captive peoples of India particularly those in Jammu and Kashmir. It is matter of life and death as the daily death toll of Kashmiris reveals so starkly. The Kashmiris are a part of the Pakistani nation. Their

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<sup>105</sup> What is attributed here to Mr Vajpayee is not his personal policy but the policy of the RSS to which he belongs. What had been articulated over many years was implemented under BJP rule.

life and death is the life and death of Pakistan. The die has been cast - the intensity and the duration of the Kashmiri war of liberation is in India's hands, the outcome in Pakistan's.

## 20. *Bahujan* are Friends of Muslims

It would be quite wrong to see the role of India entirely through the eyes of the Brahmin or high caste Hindus. The reality on the ground is that the native peoples – Untouchable *Bahujan* - are the majority in many states of India. Together with tribal peoples, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians, they outnumber the caste Hindus by more than five to one. The strategy to bring *Bahujan* castes into the Hindu fold by the old and well-worn process of accepting their gods as Hindu gods is not working. It is because it does not make the Untouchables less untouchable. The same is the case with the Muslims and Christians who are also social outcasts and Untouchables even though they have other ways to escape apartheid. As fellow Untouchables the *Bahujan* are the natural friends and allies of the Muslims. The Muslim leadership of before 1947 was aware of the potential of an alliance between the *Bahujan* and the Muslims. In fact, it is believed by Dalit leadership in India that the Congress Party agreed to Partition because it was afraid of such an alliance. That would have indeed confined the Brahmins and other high castes to the periphery of power forever.

India is unable to form a single party government at the centre; all the recent governments have been a coalition of twenty to thirty parties. Does that matter? Not at this time because most regional or caste based parties do not have a national agenda. They allow the three national parties – the Congress, the BJP and the Communists - to formulate the national agenda. The generation of politicians that have held high office are old hands who have been able to appease the regional and caste aspirations by promising more autonomy to provinces while they seek to liquidate the power of religious minorities. Unlike the Congress and the Communist Parties whose objective is the same, the BJP is driven less by politics and more by passions. It embarked on a course of political polarisation and confrontation that threatens the unity of India. The victory of the Congress Party in the April 2004 Elections has bought India some more time but the BJP is bound to return to the fore to accelerate the break up of India. Contrary to popular belief, as the children of oppressed castes and minority faiths get education and experience of wealth and power, they would become less tolerant of the discrimination and apartheid their parents were ready to put up with.

The super power ambitions of India notwithstanding, the civilizational role of Islam in South Asia would continue. India and Pakistan would remain in a state of neither war nor peace but the interaction between the peoples is likely to be more cordial. The Muslims of India could play an important role in developing a focus in relations between the two countries. Thus far, India has been eager to absorb Muslims and eventually Pakistan and Bangladesh in an *Akhand Bharat*. It is now realised that such a union would have caste Hindus as a small minority and the Muslims demographically significant. The objective of 'union' may henceforth be more



vigorously pursued by the *Bahujan* in alliance with Muslims. As the relationship between the Muslims and their enemies in South Asia takes the form of a civilizational tussle, the moral credentials of the contestants would count for more. Clarity of doctrines and principles, strength of beliefs, social egalitarianism and underpinning of history of the two civilizational entities - *Bahujan* and Brahmin - would determine who wins.

## 21. Pakistan & its Global Friends

Pakistan is now aware that South Asia is its quagmire; all its opportunities are in the Middle East and Central Asia. A view of the world is crystallizing in Pakistan that equips it to perform an entirely positive role in the world. Pakistan recognises that China is its natural friend and ally. It must strive to bring China closer to the Muslim World. Neither China nor the Muslim World wants a conflict with the West. If America seeks to wage further war on the Muslims or makes brazen attempts to encircle China, it would split the West. Europe would defy America and would prefer to engage rather than invade its neighbours in Eurasia in its own interest. Wars yield no benefits, only costs. But in South Asia the civilizational conflict between Islam and Hinduism is yet unresolved. It need not have been so if India, like Pakistan, had evolved a post imperial national polity. But India is driven entirely by an imperial agenda. All her neighbours live in terror of India. Low castes and religious minorities suffer exploitation and oppression; and struggles for national liberation in Kashmir, Punjab and Assam have been brutally suppressed while the rest of the world turns a blind eye.

Pakistan is comfortable with a world order of nation states where nations are based on a shared view of history. In this post imperial era, states do not invade, subvert or seek to dominate other nations without risking the ire of the world community. Such a world order is entirely in accord with Islam. Stymied in the Middle East, the West is tempted to let (even encourage) India to engage Islam in military as well as non-military conflicts in areas that India wishes to have influence over. India has been encouraged to establish itself in Central Asia and Afghanistan. It is getting sophisticated military hardware from Russia and Israel. It has been helped and encouraged to become the dominant sea power in the Indian Ocean and thus have control over the sea-lanes of Middle East oil shipped to China and the Far East. India is thus being equipped to play the role of a troublemaker in threatening to intercept Chinese shipping and oil. While India would be cordial in diplomacy and friendly in commercial relations with China, its capability and posture would be threatening and hard to ignore. Merely by building up India as a dominant sea power in the Indian Ocean, America would make China fear America. China could develop a different counter strategy but there is no better strategy for peace in the region than the break up of India.

The West in general and the US in particular support India against Pakistan over Kashmir in the hope that they can formulate common objectives and strategies for South Asia, the Middle East and Central Asia. The warming relations between the

West and India have yet to develop clear and common objectives. India would like to be the dominant sea power in the Indian Ocean but it may not be willing to be used to threaten China. It values its alliance with Russia and depends on it more than on America. The future of 450 million Muslims living in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh would depend on the nature of the Indo-American co-operation and how the Chinese view the aims and ambitions of India. The Viet Nam Syndrome has disappeared and America has regained its appetite for war as evidenced by public approval of the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq without UN approval. But India is in a sombre mood because of the rising number and cost of the 'freedom movements' its armed forces have had to fight. Its appetite for war is waning but its appetite for 'war games' is increasing. India wants to be a super-power. It sees Islam to be standing in its way and Pakistan as its first hurdle. Pakistan, clearly, has no option but to face the challenge. The nuclear deterrent of Pakistan is effective. India wants the West to help but it is not yet willing to fight wars as an overt ally of America and Israel.

## 22. Conclusion

The rejection of the BJP in the April 2004 Elections by the people of India and the growing trust between the Untouchables and the Muslims in India have given rise to hope for peace and amity in the region. The rest of the world is neither aware nor minded to oppose this development. At this time, the main concern of the US is the rise of China as a super power. The Americans would like to 'engage' China but would like China's neighbours to shun it and even confront it. The Americans see Buddhist Tibet and Muslim Xinkiang as provinces where rebellion can be fomented to destabilise China. While India makes a lot of noise about the threat it faces from China, the reality is that it does not fear an attack by China but is apprehensive about the reaction of China to the support it gives to the Dalai Lama of Tibet. Pakistan has steadfastly refused to help Muslim rebellion in Xinkiang and has used its influence to make Xinkiang a bridge between China and the Muslim world. It must already be clear to the USA that its efforts to make a ring around China would not succeed.

China wants good relations with all its neighbours and with the USA. It does not threaten any country and merely wants to consolidate its people into One China including Taiwan. China is wary of US intentions and wants Russia to be its friend as a countervailing force. But Russia cannot perform that role. Russia has re-started its war in Chechnya after having agreed to give it autonomy. India has long seen itself as a front line state against Islam. That has brought India and Russia even closer together. Eurasia is the centre of gravity of the planet where three fifths of the human race lives. It has its own structure of balance and stability. There are two firm poles of power - China and the European Union - and there are two regions (the Middle East and South Asia) that need peace and protection. Since the Muslims face a threat to their security from the same source as China (the United States) they are natural allies. Since Europe is reluctant to take sides, it offers protection to no one. India and Russia would stay outside the structure of balance - at times with China,

often with Europe, but mostly on the side of America. The Muslims would have to fight their battles themselves.

It was observed during the break up of the Soviet Union that the transformation of autonomous entities into independent states need not be attended by violence; it can be smooth and painless. Having decided to focus on the liquidation of 'troublesome' religious minorities, like Kashmiri Muslims, Christians and Sikhs, the die has been cast. The longer India wastes itself in suppressing religious minorities, the more likely it makes a fracture at its regional seams. This process has a dynamics of its own and there is nothing that an outsider can do to influence the situation. The USA and UK would like to see India stay as a single country and may want to give it a permanent seat in the UN Security Council to help it avoid a break up. But Hindu India is one of a kind – it is a misfit everywhere. Any organisation it joins becomes useless. The Non Aligned Movement in which India was a leader has since been liquidated without any accomplishment to its credit. It has already made SAARC a useless organisation by wanting to use it as an instrument of its imperial ambitions. Now India is to join ASEAN and is bound to destroy the harmony that has characterised its conduct and brought it success. If India did become a permanent member of the UN Security Council, it would be the death knell of that organisation.

The Muslim Republics of Central Asia are faced with small but popular movements to return to their Islamic roots. The aspirations of the Muslims of Central Asia are legitimate and genuine. If the new republics had even rudimentary democracy, there would have been no difficulty in accommodating those aspirations. It is really farcical to see Russia, China and four CARs sombrely discussing ways and means of combating Fundamentalism. It should be apparent that China and the world of Islam are natural allies. Islam that has been around for fourteen hundred years is undergoing political resurgence and re-orientation. Kings or clerics cannot wield the authority of Islam; it must be wielded by the Muslim communities. The *Sharia* is not merely a law; it is a guide for the individual as well as the state. It enjoins them to set up sovereign Muslim communities (*Darussalam*) where decisions are made in accordance with *Sharia* based on precedents from Muslim history. This is nothing revolutionary; every free society does exactly that.

Pakistan has a role to play in showing by its example that Islamic laws and the precedence of Islamic history can again create dynamic and egalitarian societies, and prosperous countries. Pakistan does possess the vitality and the humility to lead the way. Pakistan is destined to fulfil the role of a new nucleus for Islamic Civilisation. Palestine was occupied once before in history - by Christian crusaders. They ruled it for 86 years while the Abbasid Caliph sat smugly on his throne in Baghdad. It was a Kurdish General Salah-ud-Din Ayubi leading Turkish soldiers who liberated Palestine. Then history sounded its verdict; Halaku Khan ransacked Baghdad and the caliphate passed over to the descendants of Salah-ud-Din and to the Turks.

It was not a freak development of history that when the Caliphate at Istanbul was fighting for its survival in the First World War, only the Muslims of India and

Afghanistan moved to save it. While the Muslims nations of the Middle East were readily yielding to Western diktat over their polity and policy in the wake of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the Muslims of India were on the threshold of creating the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. In the last few centuries, whether it was the *Wahabi* Movement of Arabia, or the clarion calls for Jihad by Jamal-ud-Din Afghani, it was the Muslims of India who responded and few else. While the intellectual outlook all over the world of Islam was being secularised, Allama Iqbal was laying the foundation for the revival of Muslim power in South Asia. The burden of history is squarely on the shoulders of Pakistan. Allama Iqbal said, “*I am not despaired of Islam as a living force in freeing the outlook of man from its geographical limitations. I believe that religion is a power of utmost importance in the life of individuals as well as states. And finally, I believe that Islam is itself a destiny and will not suffer a destiny*”.□

# The Creation of Bangladesh

*Dr Abdul Mu'min Chowdhury*

## 1. Why Bangladesh?

The creation and the break-up of Pakistan are both unique in modern history. Unlike other post-colonial states, Pakistan had no pre-colonial or colonial existence, nor a pre-destined emergence. The Muslims of the subcontinent carved it out against the wishes of their colonial masters and the high (twice born) Hindu pretenders. In the liberation of Muslim India the Muslims of Bengal had played a decisive part. Without their energetic zeal there may not have been a Pakistan. Yet within 25 years it was broken up in the name of liberating the same East Pakistani Muslims who were its bulwark. Given Muslim Bengal's strivings for a wider Muslim reassertion throughout the better part of the nineteenth century and their leading role in the creation of the All-India Muslim League and Pakistan itself, the secession of East Pakistan appears out of character. Moreover, the fact that Pakistan is the only post-colonial state to suffer such a fate makes its break-up all the more remarkable.

After turning East Pakistan into Bangladesh, the Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi called it 'the second liberation of India' and a proof of the 'mistake' committed in the name of religion in dividing the subcontinent.<sup>106</sup> In Bangladesh, the author of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's political credo not only denounced Pakistan as 'a medieval, unscientific and barbarian state created by the British imperialism and the extreme fanaticism of Jinnahism', but also portrayed Islam as 'a much too familiar curse propagated by armed foreigners' and went on to claim that the rise of Bangladesh is 'the culmination of Bengalis' struggle to get rid of the curse of Islam.'<sup>107</sup> Alongside such fierce repudiation of Islam and Pakistan, the commanding thesis was that the new state was the outcome of the failure of federative arrangements within Pakistani politics and an ideological and mental transformation

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<sup>106</sup> Speech at Lucknow, 8 January 1972, reported by ENA and UNI and published next day in major Indian newspapers.

<sup>107</sup> K. Ilyas, *Mujibad* (Mujibism), Dhaka, 1972: 217, 319-22

in East Pakistan caused by West Pakistani colonial exploitation and the denial of East Pakistan's democratic rights.<sup>108</sup>

The new state's flag adorned with sun which was the regal deity of Bengal's pre-Muslim Brahmanical kings, its national anthem harping obeisance to the united Bengal of pre-1905, and its credo of secularism, Bengali nationalism, socialism and democracy as well as the governmental drive towards divesting all public institutions of any hints of association with Islam and Pakistan appeared to give weight to the thesis. However, public mood and political developments began to cast doubt on the validity of such assertions soon afterwards. Recognizing the overblown nature of the averred ideological and mental transformation, some later writers sought a historical genesis of Bangladesh in the rise and realization of 'Bengali Muslim' nationalism and a corrective culmination of the 'betrayal' of the Lahore resolution.<sup>109</sup> Although these scholars were trying to give Bangladesh a historically authentic and logically sound foundation,<sup>110</sup> in looking for a historical continuity they have ignored the fact that the political campaign as well as the utterances and actions of the separatists could not be accommodated within the historical process of Muslim Bengal's search for a Muslim political destiny.

The view that the creation of Bangladesh represents a fulfilment of the Lahore resolution is drawn from a false claim that the resolution envisaged two separate independent states and had set out the extent of provincial autonomy within them. After referring to previous League resolutions, restating their rejection of 'the scheme federation embodied in the Government of India Act', 1935 and demanding a reconsideration of the whole constitutional plan *de novo*, the authors of the Lahore resolution of 1940 had declared that:

'no constitutional plan would be workable in this country or acceptable to the Muslims unless it is designed on the following basic principles, viz., that geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted, with such territorial adjustments as may be necessary, that the areas in which Muslims are numerically in a majority, as in the North-Western and the Eastern zones of India should be grouped to constitute Independent States in which the constituent units would be autonomous and sovereign.'<sup>111</sup>

A plain reading of the resolution would suggest four points. First, 'this country' referred to in the resolution was the then British India, not the future Pakistan.

<sup>108</sup> M. Ahmad in B. Chatterjee, *Inside Bangladesh Today – An Eye Witness Account*, New Delhi, 1973: 37-39; Anisuzzaman in S.K. Chatterji, *Profile of Bangladesh*, Madras, 1972: 13-19; S. Chatterjee, *Bangladesh: The Birth of A Nation*, Kalikata, 1972: vii-xi

<sup>109</sup> A. M. Ahmad, *End of a Betrayal and Restoration of Lahore Resolution*, Dhaka, 1975; D. Wright, *Bangladesh: Origins and Indian Ocean Relations (1971-1975)*, Dhaka, 1988; H. Zaheer, *The Separation of East Pakistan: The Rise and Realization of Bengali Muslim Nationalism*, Dhaka, Oxford, 1994

<sup>110</sup> Anon, *Second Thought on Bangladesh*, (ed. M. Rahman) London, 1979: 87

<sup>111</sup> I.A. Malik, *Muslim League Session of 1940 and the Lahore Resolution*, Islamabad, 1990: 298-99

Indeed, nowhere in the resolution the word Pakistan appeared. Secondly, it proposed a three-tier federation to replace the unacceptable federation scheme of the 1935 Act. Thirdly, it insisted that while the unit-states within a zone would remain 'autonomous and sovereign', the zones would be deemed as 'independent states'. Fourthly, the League would accept 'no constitutional plan' for a united India unless the above 'basic principles' were adhered to. When it was passed in 1940 no one had any misgivings about the first two or the implication of the last point. The silence about the consequence of non-acceptance was a tactical way of saying what was said during its deliberation: that in that case the Muslims would assert their national rights and seek the division of British India. Indeed, that was the purpose and message of the resolution and the chief target of that message, the British and the Congress, as every available records of the time show, received that message clearly. As regards the third point, which is the main plank of the latter-day fabricators, there were a few raised eyebrows. These critics included the Dalit leader Dr B.R. Ambedkar, who after his ill-judged Poona Pact with M.K. Gandhi had tied the Dalit fortune to the Congress mast. To Ambedkar, 'the use of the word sovereign as an attribute of the units is out of place. Federation of units and sovereignty of units are contradictions.'<sup>112</sup>

Such criticism was ill informed. The League's stand rested on the premises of the original British drive towards creating a self-ruled federated state in British India, which consisted, at the time of its conception, of three discrete presidencies embracing many historical regions and erstwhile independent or semi-independent states, and the Congress's founding commitment in this respect, unequivocally expressed in its 1886 resolution. Nor was the critical attribution without precedents. The same outlook and approach was to be found, in addition to the US constitution, in the coeval British drive which resulted in the creation of the Canadian and the Australian federation. Indeed, the said Congress resolution had specifically mentioned the Canadian and the Australian examples as its aspired models, in which discrete settlers' colonies had formed the federation by investing some of their sovereign powers to a central government without giving away either their entire sovereign status or their right to complete independence.<sup>113</sup> It is because of such retained sovereign status the French Canadian in Quebec were able, in our times, to exercise their right to independence in more than one referendums. In this light, the real puzzle was not the League's stand, but the Congress shift from their original commitment.

It was this shift that led the League to conclude that the 'twice born' high Hindu leaders of the Congress had wriggled out of its founding premises of a federated state of discreet regions and nationalities on the Canadian and Australian model and wished to make Muslim India an integral part of a single Brahmanical nation state with the aim of eventually reducing them to something akin to the Dalits. Therefore,

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<sup>112</sup> B.R. Ambedkar #

<sup>113</sup> *Proceedings of the First Indian National Congress held at Calcutta ... 1886*, Kalikata, 1887: 99; M.K. Gandhi, *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, 1968-83x, New Delhi 11

the League concluded that the Muslims ought to have Pakistan.<sup>114</sup> It was the implicit disclosure of the League's readiness to seek Pakistan, in many respects a daring act, that had alarmed the Congress leaders and the high Hindu press on the one hand, and enchanted the Muslims on the other, and gave the Lahore resolution its popular renown as 'the Pakistan Resolution'.<sup>115</sup>

Space does not allow a detailed consideration of how the above misreading came about, except to mention that the claim was first made in 1950 by the pro-Communist Grand National Convention, held at Dhaka,<sup>116</sup> which had behind the scene inspiration of the Congress leaders.<sup>117</sup> They did it, by misusing its popular renown as the Pakistan Resolution and misreading its proposition that a federal constitution for an undivided India would not be acceptable unless 'the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority as in the North-Western and Eastern zones of India should be grouped to constitute Independent states in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign' in order to challenge the proposed Basic Principles of Pakistan's Constitution and justify their proposal to create a Pakistan of 'Sovereign Socialist Republics' on the model of the Soviet Union.

Those wisecracks who later helped give this falsehood wider currency not only committed the error that the early baffled had made, but also compounded it further by their intentional ignorance of the League's indubitable public stand regarding the shape of Pakistan. Beginning with his very first public comment on the shape of Pakistan in November 1940,<sup>118</sup> through his open campaign for Pakistan from 1944,<sup>119</sup> to the elections of 1945-46, which the League had fought on the platform of Pakistan,<sup>120</sup> Mohammad Ali Jinnah had always spoken about one Pakistan. Both the British and the Congress understood it in the same vein as well.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> Jinnah came to this conclusion definitively in March 1939 [M.Y.Khan, *Naama 'Aamal*, Lahore, 1970: 725-26] and later in the year told the viceroy 'the escape from the impasse ... lay in the adoption of partition' [Note of meeting between Jinnah and Linlithgow, 5 October 1939, *Linlithgow Papers*, Mss Eur F/125, IOL] and in February 1940 the League Working Committee 'decided to claim the division' [Liaquat Ali Khan to Sikandar Hayat Khan, 13 March 1940, *Muslim League Papers*, Karachi University, File No. 207; C. Khaliquzzaman, *Pathway to Pakistan*, Lahore, 1961: 223-24]

<sup>115</sup> Jinnah's speech at Delhi on 25 December 1940 in S.S. Pirzada in *A History of the Freedom Movement*, vol. IV Part I-II, Karachi 1970: 101

<sup>116</sup> K. Ahmad, *Constitution of Pakistan: Basic Principles as Adopted in Grand National Convention*, Dacca, Dhaka, 1953

<sup>117</sup> A and A. Dil, *Bengali Language Movement to Bangladesh*, Lahore, 2000: 168-69

<sup>118</sup> Interview with the Associated Press of America in A.B. Rajput, *Muslim League, Yesterday and Today*, Lahore, 1948: 75-77; also Shah Nawaz Khan's confidential policy paper 'What is Pakistan?', *National Archives of Pakistan*, F/1099

<sup>119</sup> J.U. Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah*, Lahore, 1964-68i: 582-86

<sup>120</sup> J.U. Ahmad, 1964-68ii: 230-33

<sup>121</sup> Rajagopalachari to Jinnah, 8 April 1944 and Rajagopalachari to Sapru, 23 December 1944 in B.N. Pandey, *Indian Nationalist Movement, 1885-1947: Selected documents*, London, 1979: 144-45



The scholars projecting Bangladesh as the outcome of the rise and realization of Bengali Muslim nationalism have also ignored the question of Indian involvement, implicitly accepting the official Indian position, which insisted that India had played no part until sucked in by the burden of refugees and the revulsion against undemocratic 'tyranny' and 'genocide' in East Pakistan.<sup>122</sup> Yet as early as March 1972, the wife of Lieutenant Commander Moazzam Hossain, one of the principal accused in the Agartala conspiracy case, disclosed her late husband's conspiratorial link with India, including clandestine visits to Agartala.<sup>123</sup> Not long after, the eminent Indian journalist Kuldip Nayar also reported:

'As far as our role in East Bengal is concerned, my impression is ... India decided to encourage East Bengalis to ask for independence. We started exploiting the differences between the Bengalis and Punjabis in East Bengal. The fact the former were not well off and that most of the foreign exchange was spent in the west wing prepared the right ground for us and we started exploiting it. You will recall Agartala Conspiracy Case. Of course nothing came out of it, but there is no doubt that Sheikh Mujib did come to India before that... When New Delhi discovered his presence in India, he was told immediately to go back and fight his battle there, because it was too embarrassing for us. The Agartala Case ... did not give them a bad name. In fact it made them heroes, so they were not afraid to get the help of India. Tajuddin Ahmed told me, 'that was the time when we thought that East Pakistan could become an independent Bangladesh'.<sup>124</sup>

No one in India or Bangladesh, including Mujib and Tajuddin, contradicted Nayar. Nor did Nayar's remain the only one to make such claims. 'Correcting the betrayal of the Lahore Resolution' and acting on Indian inspiration for its 'second liberation' are too odd a combination for both the claims to be true. In this connection it is also worth recalling Jinnah's warning to East Pakistanis in 1948 about the dangers in particular from Indian sponsored fifth columnists.<sup>125</sup> The long and premeditated Indian involvement in the movement of secession, if true, makes the thesis of Pakistani political failure in sustaining its unity simplistic, even perfunctory and misleading.

## 2. Accusations Against Pakistan

To reappraise the creation of Bangladesh one may begin by examining the separatists' accusations against Pakistan. Mujib's public campaign was for the 'autonomy' of East Pakistan, not its separation from Pakistan. It rested on charges of economic exploitation, cultural suppression and political deprivation of East Pakistan by West Pakistan. He also claimed that his corrective programme, the Six

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<sup>122</sup> Indira Gandhi in O. Fallaci, *Interview with History*, Boston 1976

<sup>123</sup> *Purbadesh* (daily), Dhaka, 26 March 1972. Moazzam himself had privately admitted the same before. [M.H. Rahman, *Gangariddhi Theke Bangladesh* (From Gangariddhi to Bangladesh), Dhaka, 1985: 88]

<sup>124</sup> K. Nayar in *Himmat*, New Delhi, 17 November 1972

<sup>125</sup> Public speech at Dhaka on 21 March 1948 in J.U. Ahmad 1964-68ii: 487-90

Points, had its justification in the same Lahore Resolution, which was later invoked to justify the creation of Bangladesh.<sup>126</sup>

The desirability of provinces having autonomy was never a contentious issue in Pakistan. Beginning with his November 1940 interview with the Associated Press of America, Jinnah had consistently maintained that Pakistan would be a federal state like the USA, Canada and Australia. In Pakistan, a consensus on constitutional issues, including the question of provincial autonomy was achieved in the 1956 constitution. In spite of his political waywardness before and after the creation of Pakistan, A.K. Fazlul Haq, the mover of the Lahore resolution, warmly approved it and served as the governor of East Pakistan under it. Mujib's mentor H.S. Suhrawardy, the architect of 'one unit' in West Pakistan and the parity formula - equal distribution of representation and resources between East and West Pakistan -<sup>127</sup> had asserted that East Pakistan had got 98 percent of its desired autonomy.<sup>128</sup> Ayub Khan and the constitution that he introduced in 1962 extended the provincial remit. The disliking of Ayub and his constitution by a broad section of the political elite was certainly not on the question of provincial autonomy. A cross-section of politicians under the banner of the National Democratic Front led by Suhrawardy wanted to restore the parliamentary system of government in order to give them a wider say in the running of the country rather than a hugely powerful president, elected by an easily owned electoral college of union councillors, and the military elite behind him. After Suhrawardy's death in 1963, the leaders of the NDF stayed on that course, except Suhrawardy's protégé, Mujib.

Even if one accepts the false and absurd premise that the Lahore resolution (not the 1956 Constitution) represents the consensus on foundational principles of Pakistan's constitution, Mujib's Six Points, which in a nutshell stipulated the winding up of the central government leaving it with only foreign affairs and defence and that too financed by grants from provinces,<sup>129</sup> bear no relation to the autonomy stipulated in the Lahore Resolution or to be found in any federal state any where in the world. Judging on its merits as a constitutional scheme, it is difficult to see the Six Points as an agenda for Pakistan to thrive and flourish and not for its collapse.

At the outbreak of the armed conflict in East Pakistan in 1971, the separatists gave several additional reasons for taking up arms against their own state. They said the mutual hatred between two peoples who shared only religion whilst divided by geography, language, food habits, culture and ethnicity, were at the heart of the conflict. This hatred, they said, was exacerbated by two events. First, West Pakistan's refusal to express sympathy and the central government's reluctance to provide relief for the East Pakistani victims of the November 1970 cyclone. Second,

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<sup>126</sup> Mujib's statement, 23 March 1966 in A and A. Dil 2000: 681-705; Awami League's Election Manifesto in G.P. Bhattacharjee, *Renaissance and Freedom Movement in Bangladesh*, Kalikata, 1973: 316-44

<sup>127</sup> S. S. Ikramullah, *Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy – A Biography*, Karachi, 1991: 81-83

<sup>128</sup> M.R.A. Mukul, *Ami Vijoy Dekechi* (I Have Seen Victory), Dhaka, 1984: 343

<sup>129</sup> R.P. Kapur in *Eminent Indians, Thoughts on East Pakistan*, Karachi, 1971

while the general election gave the Awami League absolute control of the Pakistan National Assembly, it also left Mujib with little margin to compromise with Z.A. Bhutto in the face of ultra nationalist students. The military crackdown, prepared whilst a subterfuge of negotiations seeking a solution was played out, had finally roused the Bengalis.<sup>130</sup> To make sense of Mujib's break with his mentor's position and, above all, his political campaign one may begin by considering his and his associates' accusations.

### 3. The Myth of Economic Exploitation

When the British and the Congress agreed to concede Pakistan on the condition that both Bengal and the Punjab should also be divided, Bengal's Chief Minister Suhrawardy and his colleagues were fearful about the economic viability of East Bengal. Not to speak of other deficits, the shortage of food alone, they thought, would make it unsustainable. To avoid the haunting prospect they even tried to keep Bengal undivided at the cost of staying out of Pakistan.<sup>131</sup> The rationale behind their extreme anxiety was overwhelming. Lord Mountbatten described East Bengal as 'the most useless part, a rural slum' and even pitied Jinnah for taking its 'burden'.<sup>132</sup> Even before Mountbatten, Bengal's Governor R.G. Casey had thought of using this fear to persuade Bengal's Muslim leaders to break with the drive for Pakistan and support a united India.<sup>133</sup>

At birth, East Pakistan's infrastructure was not only 'too inadequate to foster economic development',<sup>134</sup> there was hardly any capacity for capital formation, very little education and no managerial or technical skills. There was not much industry: not a single jute mill or even a hydraulic jute pressing facility, only five cotton and four sugar mills, all of which were owned and run by Hindus.<sup>135</sup> The main source of East Bengal's income, worth about Rs.90 million a year, was raw jute. But the jute trade was entirely in the hands of the Hindu Marwaris, who sent all their profits to India. The fact that the jute mills of Kalikata were the main buyers of raw jute and export to the world market was also through the port of Kalikata made East Bengal's income from jute extremely vulnerable to India's whims. The leader of India's trade negotiations bluntly reminded his Pakistani opposite number: 'What can you do with your jute except sell it to us? Burn it? Throw it into the Bay of Bengal.'<sup>136</sup> The

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<sup>130</sup> *The New York Times*, 28 March 1971

<sup>131</sup> Suhrawardy to Liaquat Ali Khan, 5 and 21 May 1947, *Shamsul Hassan Collection*, Archives of Pakistan, Islamabad, vol. lii F/33

<sup>132</sup> Viceroy's Ninth Miscellaneous Meeting, 1 May 1947, *Mountbatten Papers*, File No. 196

<sup>133</sup> R.G. Casey to Viscount Wavell, 17 December 1944 in N. Mansergh *et. al*, *Transfer of Power*, London, 1970-82v: 308. It is worth noting that while sharing Casey's concern to keep India united Wavell thought it politically imprudent for the British to openly denounce Pakistan until they had something attractive to offer in its place. [Viscount Wavell to R.G. Casey, 1 January 1945 in N. Mansergh *et. al* 1970-82v: 345]

<sup>134</sup> G.P. Bhattacharjee 1973: 145

<sup>135</sup> S. Mujibullah in *Natun Safar*, Dhaka, April 1996.

<sup>136</sup> C.M. Ali, *The Emergence of Pakistan*, New York, 1967: 354

province had only a five-kilowatt radio station, but not a single daily newspaper. There was no publishing industry, no modern printing plant and no block making facility. When daily papers were brought out, they had to get blocks made in Karachi and air freighted.<sup>137</sup> The province generated only 10,700 kilowatts of electricity.<sup>138</sup> High Hindus owned more than 85 percent of the town properties and nearly 80 percent of the province's wealth.

Education was almost entirely in the hands of the Hindus: 95 percent of 1920 high schools and 47 colleges were privately organized, financed and managed by them.<sup>139</sup> The number of Muslims in or with higher education was 'appalling'.<sup>140</sup> Dhaka University was set up in the early 1920s to help the Muslims of East Bengal obtain higher education. Until 1947 it had a small proportion of Muslims among its students and even fewer Muslim teachers.<sup>141</sup> Rajshahi College, the next most important centre of higher learning in the province was not any better, either.<sup>142</sup> The extent of high Hindu domination was such that up to the mid-1950s in schools controlled by them neither a picture of Pakistan's founder nor the national flag could be found. Some of these schools even went on registering their students for examination with Kalikata University.<sup>143</sup>

The province had almost nothing to build upon in the way of administrative experience or local leadership.<sup>144</sup> There was not a single East Pakistani in the Indian Civil Service. There were no more than 20-25 deputy magistrates and sub-deputy magistrates. The number of police officers and constables stood at no more than one-fifth of the numbers required. In important public utilities such as railways the number of East Pakistanis available were hugely insufficient. In defence, the situation was far worse with no immediate possibility of creating even a nominal little army.<sup>145</sup> Not only was a self-standing East Bengal outside Pakistan a non-starter,<sup>146</sup> even as a province East Pakistan could have hardly afforded to stand on its feet without non-Bengali administrative expertise and the supply of rice from West Pakistan. How vulnerable the province was in terms of food could be seen from the fact that within days of its coming into being acute food shortage appeared in Chittagong. The governor of Sindh had to open an Appeal Fund in West Pakistan

<sup>137</sup> H.M. Abbasi, *Over a Cup of Tea*, Karachi 1974: 462

<sup>138</sup> M. Rahman and N. Hasan, *Iron Bars of Freedom*, London, 1980: 71

<sup>139</sup> Dr Shyama Prasad Mookerjee cited in B. Modhak, *Portrait of a Martyr*, Mumbai, 1969

<sup>140</sup> G.P. Bhattacharjee 1973: 122

<sup>141</sup> M.T. Hussain, *Bangladesh: Victim of Black Propaganda, Intrigue and Indian Hegemony*, London, 1996: 20

<sup>142</sup> A.M.K. Maswani, *Subversion of East Pakistan*, Lahore, 1979: 85-86

<sup>143</sup> P.A. Nazir, *Sritir Patha Tekhe* (From the Leaves of Memory), Dhaka, 1993: 12-15

<sup>144</sup> L.F. Rushbrook-Williams, *The East Pakistan Tragedy*, London, 1972: 17

<sup>145</sup> M.A. Mohaimen, *Itihaser Alokey Deshbhag and Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah* (The Partition and Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah in the Light of History), Dhaka, 1994: vi-vii

<sup>146</sup> 'In 1946 the decision he [Jinnah] took to create a united Pakistan was for the interest of preserving the very existence of the East Pakistanis. It was not taken for the benefit of the West Pakistanis.' [M.A. Mohaimen 1994: viii]

and with public donations bought rice for the relief of the starving in Chittagong.<sup>147</sup> Yet, despite such dire circumstances, its government started with hope in hastily requisitioned premises belonging to a college, adding bamboo sheds for additional accommodation. Another college building housed its legislative assembly.

Although at the top of the administrative structure Muslims from outside East Pakistan were brought in, the vast majority of government servants were disgruntled high Hindus.<sup>148</sup> They 'wept in their heart of hearts', recorded prominent Congress leaders, because it was 'not the freedom they fought for'.<sup>149</sup> To them not being able to call themselves Indians was not only 'a great blow to their self-image',<sup>150</sup> but all the more intolerable because of the 'dishonour of becoming a Pakistani' and the situational compulsion to keep 'an artificial smiling face'.<sup>151</sup> The government started, to paraphrase Jinnah, like a fugitive in its own home,<sup>152</sup> not a confident master.

Yet in 1971 Rushbrook-Williams could write:

My own observations led me to conclude that East Pakistan has made more progress in the economic field in the quarter of a century since Pakistan emerged as an independent State than at any other period in her long history. Leaving aside such great and successful enterprises as the Kaptai Dam, the emergence of Chittagong as a major port, the Chandragona Paper Mills, the Fenugange [sic] Fertilizer complex, and the first Steel Mill to be built anywhere in Pakistan - all the result of the Central Government's initiative - there has been a notable increase in small private industry.<sup>153</sup>

By 1967-68 East Pakistan had 927 large manufacturing industries accounting for 6 per cent of GDP.<sup>154</sup> By 1971 there was further progress. This included 79 jute mills, 42 cotton mills, 30 match factories, 20 sugar mills, two fertilizer factories, one paper mill, one newsprint mill, two paper-board mills, one steel mill, one machine tool factory, one petroleum refinery, two rayon mills, one cement factory and many leather tanning factories. It had nearly 3,000 miles of tarmac road, 1,800 miles of railway lines and its power capacity exceeded 100,000 kilowatts.<sup>155</sup> The *zamindari* system was abolished in 1950 and the masses of Muslim tenants were given title to the land against opposition from high Hindu legislators.<sup>156</sup> A stagnant agricultural sector was stimulated. There had been no instance of famine since 1956. The province had attained near self-sufficiency in food by the late 1960s.

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<sup>147</sup> *Morning News*, 26 August 1947

<sup>148</sup> M.G. Kabir, *Minority Politics in Bangladesh*, New Delhi, 1980: 2-3

<sup>149</sup> P.C. Lahiry, *India Partitioned and Minorities in Pakistan*, Kalikata, 1964: 1-9

<sup>150</sup> S. Guha, *Non-Muslims Behind the Curtain of East Pakistan*, Kalikata, 1950: 37

<sup>151</sup> P.C. Lahiry, *Pak-Bharater Rup Rekha* (A Sketch of India and Pakistan), vol. I, Nadia, 1968: 36-37

<sup>152</sup> Public Speech at Dhaka on 21 March 1948 in J.U. Ahmad 1964-68ii: 481

<sup>153</sup> L.F. Rushbrook-Williams 1972: 22

<sup>154</sup> *CMI report 1967-68*, Islamabad, 1969

<sup>155</sup> A.M.K. Maswani 1979: 13-14; M. Rahman and N. Hasan 1980: 71

<sup>156</sup> *Proceedings of the East Bengal Legislative Assembly 1948-50*

Whereas in 1947 there was:

'one university, one engineering school and half a dozen degree colleges only, [by 1971] in addition to five universities (three general, one engineering and one agricultural), it had three colleges and six schools of engineering, eight polytechnics, five colleges and several schools of medicine and more than 200 degree colleges for arts and science.<sup>157</sup>

The literacy rate, when adjusted against the departing educated high Hindus, more than doubled to about 19 percent in East Pakistan compared to 17 percent in West Pakistan.<sup>158</sup> The decade preceding 1970 saw a 162 percent rise in college enrolment.<sup>159</sup> Above average students in graduate and post-graduate studies were supported by a generous scheme of scholarships.

The Pakistan Public Service Commission held its first competitive examination in 1948.-The government ordered that all 40 or so East Pakistani candidates who had passed the written test were appointed in different branches of central services.<sup>160</sup> Since 1949-50, 20 percent of recruitment to the central superior services had been strictly on merit with the remaining 80 percent equally distributed between East and West Pakistan.<sup>161</sup> Although certain knowledgeable East Pakistanis privately advised against it,<sup>162</sup> from the mid-1960s all members of the Central Superior Service of Pakistan (CSP) were posted in their respective province, except during the first three years of their service. As early as 1955 the proportion of East Pakistanis in the CSP had reached 35 percent<sup>163</sup> and in 1971 it was almost on a par with West Pakistanis, with a number of them at the highest level as Secretaries in Central Government. Whereas in 1947 there were 4-5 king's commissioned officers, 50-60 junior commissioned officers and about 200 soldiers,<sup>164</sup> by 1971 their number stood at about 40,000.<sup>165</sup>

Living standards and per capita income, though still below those prevailing in certain - but by no means all - parts of Pakistan are steadily if slowly rising. Dacca has grown into a capital city so impressive that any country might be proud of it; with the development of Khulna into a great river port, communications by water have been facilitated. Road and rail networks have been greatly extended, internal air services ... have revolutionized travel between different centres in East Pakistan. The airbus services, with their cheap fares, have done much to make the population air-minded.<sup>166</sup>

<sup>157</sup> M. Rahman and N. Hasan 1980: 71

<sup>158</sup> M.T. Hussain 1996: 26

<sup>159</sup> R. Session and L.E. Rose, *War and Secession: Pakistan, India and the Creation of Bangladesh*, Karachi, 1990: 53

<sup>160</sup> C.M. Ali 1967: 363

<sup>161</sup> R. Symonds, *The British and Their Successors*, London, 1966: 88-90

<sup>162</sup> Q.U. Shahab, *Shahab Nama (Autobiography of Shahab)* Lahore, 1987: 853]

<sup>163</sup> *Constituent Assembly of Pakistan: Debates*, 17 January, 1956, vol. 1: 1844

<sup>164</sup> M.A. Mohaimen 1994: vi. In fact, the total number of soldier was even less – 155 in all [H. A. Rizvi, *The Military and Politics in Pakistan: 1947-1986*, Lahore, 1987: 137]

<sup>165</sup> M.T. Hussein 1996: 15; H.A. Rizvi 1987: 181-82

<sup>166</sup> L.F. Rushbrook-Williams 1972:22

Owing to the absence of competition from the Hindus, the Muslims found ample scope of expansion in business and professional services. Education also spread among the Muslims by leaps and bounds. Socially and economically they gained a new status and thus they could easily get rid of the inferiority complex which they felt earlier in relation to the Hindus.<sup>167</sup>

Not surprisingly, the Hindus found it intolerable from the very beginning.

On the first flush of independence, the Muslims in general in Pakistan began to think that they were a superior class – a ruling race (no longer a community) and the Hindus were their subjects. Even a hackney-carriage driver had the audacity or goodness to tell a 'Hindu of position' that he should not worry and run away out of fear, now that the Muslims have become rulers, it is their duty to protect their subjects i.e. the Hindus! Such was the mental metamorphosis of the Muslims.<sup>168</sup>

Clearly, Pakistan had opened doors to social and economic as well as psychological liberation that enabled the people of East Pakistan to make all-round progress even though the disparity with which it had started had not yet been fully removed.

#### 4. Efforts to Remove Inter-Wing Disparity

The disparity between East and West Pakistan, however undesirable, was not unnatural. West Pakistan fell under British imperial rule almost a century later and did not suffer the kind of depredation that Bengal endured at the hand of the East India Company's predator entrepreneurs and their Hindu bania abettors. Nor were its rural masses pauperised by the high Hindu zamindars and/or moneylenders or its literati left behind in modern education and professions. Moreover, because of the areas strategic importance it did not suffer administrative neglect and benefited from irrigation works, better communications and other infrastructure facilities. It was, indeed, in every respect better equipped for rapid economic growth.<sup>169</sup>

During his visit to East Pakistan in March 1948, Jinnah had pointedly referred to the undesirability of the prevailing inherited disparity between the two wings of Pakistan. While asking for patience and cooperation, he assured East Pakistanis that all efforts would be made to remove the disparity as soon as possible.<sup>170</sup> The makers of the successive constitutions of the country turned the assurance given to East Pakistan by the founder of their state into an obligation. Under both the 1956 and 1962 constitutions the central government was required to work towards the rapid removal of disparity between the two wings of the country and to report every year to the national assembly.

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<sup>167</sup> G.P. Bhattacharjee 1973: 119-20

<sup>168</sup> P.C. Lahiry 1964: 8-9

<sup>169</sup> G.P. Bhattacharjee 1973: 145

<sup>170</sup> Speeches at Dhaka and Chittagong between 20 and 29 March 1948 in J.U. Ahmad 1964-68ii: 478-516

When General Muhammad Ayub Khan was made General Officer Commanding East Pakistan in January 1948, there was hardly an army: only two infantry battalions with five companies between them. 'At headquarters there was no table, no chair, no stationary – we had virtually nothing at all; not even any maps of East Pakistan.'<sup>171</sup> During his visit to East Pakistan two months later Jinnah personally took the initiative for drawing in more East Pakistanis into the armed forces and assigned an East Pakistani, Major Abdul Ghani, the task of raising the East Bengal Regiment. Later, a naval base was set up in Chittagong with docking facilities, a permanent depot for personnel recruited in East Pakistan, a chain of recruiting centres and a Boy's Training Establishment.<sup>172</sup> Under the supervision of another East Pakistani, Col. Abdul Qayyum Choudhury, cadet colleges were also set up in East Pakistan to prepare youngsters for an officer's career in the armed forces. Between 1969 and 1971, no fewer than four exclusively East Pakistani regiments were raised. Moreover, the Punjab, the Baluch and the Frontier regiments were reorganised to include 25 percent recruits from East Pakistan. The speed of expansion was such that the East Bengal regimental centre at Dhaka expressed concern at the possibility of falling standards.<sup>173</sup>

During the early years of Ayub's rule it was found that in the race for economic development East Pakistan was falling more behind West Pakistan. In spite of an increase in East Pakistan's per capita income, the faster growth rate in West Pakistan, thanks mainly to its initial advantages,<sup>174</sup> meant that the disparity in average income between the two wings was widening. From 18 percent in 1951-52, the disparity in average income rose to 30 percent in 1957-58 and 29 percent in 1959-60.<sup>175</sup> A group of East Pakistani economists within the central government's planning commission and the ministry of finance argued that this increasing per capita income differential was due to a higher rate of investment in, and inter-wing transfer of resources from East Pakistan to West Pakistan. In support of their view they also produced various statistics and estimates.<sup>176</sup> Their West Pakistani colleagues disputed some of their evidence. They pointed out that taking into account the contribution for the maintenance of the central government and defence expenditure, the surplus on inter-wing trade, and the net supply of services such as banking and insurance, there had been a net transfer of resources from West to East Pakistan.<sup>177</sup> The difference of opinion was not about the existence of disparities, but on the analysis of their causes. Significantly the debate itself was, in part, the outcome of the anti-disparity drive, for the East Pakistani economists' voices were

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<sup>171</sup> M.A. Khan, *Friends Not Masters: A Political Autobiography*, London, 1967: 22

<sup>172</sup> A. Siddiqi, *Pakistan Seeks Security*, Dhaka, 1966: 57

<sup>173</sup> S.U. Khan, *East Pakistan to Bangladesh*, Lahore, 1975: 13-14

<sup>174</sup> M. Haq, *The Strategy of Economic Planning*, Oxford, 1963

<sup>175</sup> *Report of the Panel of Economists on the Second Five Year Plan (1960-65)*, 1960: 14

<sup>176</sup> *Report of the Finance Commission*, 1962

<sup>177</sup> *Economic Relations Between East and West Pakistan*, 1961



heard in the wake of a growing East Pakistani representation in the central services.<sup>178</sup>

While this tussle among the government's senior economic advisers continued, some teachers of economics at Dhaka University began spreading the allegation of West Pakistan's colonial exploitation. One of them proposed that the two wings of Pakistan needed to be organized and managed as two separate economies.<sup>179</sup>

Ayub recognized the need to address the issue.

In the first half of 1962, the three central statutory bodies responsible for industries, railways and water and power, which together accounted for a major portion of central government development expenditure, were bifurcated and placed under the two provincial governments; these were the Pakistan Industrial Development Corporation, the Pakistan Railway Board, and the Water and Power Development Authority. The provincial governments were also delegated enhanced powers for sanctioning development schemes...54 percent of the divisible pool [of central tax revenues], consisting of 70 percent of sales tax...and the total amount of other taxes and duties, was allocated to East Pakistan.<sup>180</sup>

Moreover, East Pakistan's share in public sector development expenditure was increased to 50 percent in 1963-64.<sup>181</sup> Yet the Awami League politicians<sup>182</sup> and the left-leaning students<sup>183</sup> continued their accusation of neglect and the economist accusers of Pakistan came out with a new line of argument: larger allocation was not enough, it had to be on a per capita basis.<sup>184</sup> It was also said that because the courts of law could not enforce it the constitutional obligation for the removal of disparity was meaningless.<sup>185</sup> Nevertheless, the government's tilt towards East Pakistan continued.

In 1958-59 the amount of development loans provided by the Central Government was 19.66 crores for East Pakistan and 25.09 crores for West Pakistan. In 1966-67 the amount was increased to Rs. 95.40 crores for East Wing and Rs. 36.33 crores for the West Wing. Under Ayub the Central Budgets also showed a tendency to allocate a greater amount to East Pakistan. The Raisman Award regarding the Centre-State financial relations was also revised and the new arrangement sought to increase the financial resources of the Provincial Governments. The Rural Works Programme was started in East Pakistan in 1962-63. In West Pakistan this programme was launched one year later. Under this programme the East Wing was allocated a larger

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<sup>178</sup> K.A. Haque, *Under Three Flags: Reminiscences of a Public Servant*, Dhaka, 1986: 490; D. Wright 1988: 90-91

<sup>179</sup> R. Sobhan in *Asian Survey*, vol. 2, No. 5, July 1962: 31-37

<sup>180</sup> H. Zaheer 1994: 92-93

<sup>181</sup> H. Zaheer 1994: 93

<sup>182</sup> *National Assembly of Pakistan, Debates*, vol. III, 13 August 1964: 772-73

<sup>183</sup> *Purba Bangla*, London, January 1965: 8-9

<sup>184</sup> Dr Mosharraf Hossain in *Sangbad*, Dhaka, 16 November 1966

<sup>185</sup> *Ittefaq*, Dhaka, 11 June 1966

amount than the West Wing. The total expenditure of the Third Plan was estimated at Rs.5200 crores – the allocation for East Pakistan was Rs.2700 crores and for West Pakistan Rs.2500 crores. To quicken the pace of industrial development a system of tax holiday was introduced – East Pakistan enjoyed this holiday for a period between 4 and 6 years and West Pakistan for 2 and 4 years... (it was) expected that if these measures were continued the economic disparity between the two wings of Pakistan would be removed by 1985.<sup>186</sup>

In 1968-69 East Pakistan's share of development loans was Rs. 1,060m as against West Pakistan's Rs. 780m. In 1969-70 development loans for East Pakistan reached the figure of Rs. 1,290m; for West Pakistan these were Rs. 910m. The same story is told by the details of export credits; between 1965-66 and 1969-70, to take the latest figures, East Pakistan received \$210m, as against West Pakistan's \$192m.<sup>187</sup>

While during all these years East Pakistan's contribution to central taxes increased from 26.1 to 26.3 percent of the total, the province received as revenue assignment 50 percent of the total.<sup>188</sup> Apart from providing it a higher share both in revenue assignments and development loans, other forms of support were also extended. Whereas West Pakistanis were made to pay 12.5 percent, East Pakistanis were asked to pay 7.5 percent import duties on machinery and spare parts. In addition, certain vital imports such as cement from West to East Pakistan were liberally subsidized.<sup>189</sup> Furthermore, a number of East Pakistani exports to West Pakistan were allowed to be sold at a much higher price than their international market value would have required. East Pakistan's tea, for instance, had seven times its international market price in its captive West Pakistani market.<sup>190</sup> Taking the total development programme, both public and private, between 1960-61 and 1970-71 investment in East Pakistan increased three times. By 1967 the trend of a widening gap in the per capita income had been arrested.<sup>191</sup> East Pakistan was expected to have an annual compound growth rate of 7.5 percent as against West Pakistan's 5.5 percent under the Fourth Five Year Plan (1970-75).<sup>192</sup>

Indeed, even during the civil war the chairman of the Indian Institute of Public Affairs acknowledged:

It would be grossly unfair and over-simplification of issues to seek to explain happenings in Bangladesh in terms of exploitation of East Pakistan by West Pakistan or more so by the Punjabi elements in West Pakistan.<sup>193</sup>

<sup>186</sup> G.P. Bhattacharjee 1973: 152-53

<sup>187</sup> L.F. Rushbrook-Williams 1972: 108-09

<sup>188</sup> *East Pakistan's Share in Central Revenue and Expenditure*, 1971

<sup>189</sup> H. Zaheer 1994: 92-93

<sup>190</sup> *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, Kalikata, 24 May, 1974

<sup>191</sup> *Report on Inter-Regional and Intra-Regional Disparities*, 1967

<sup>192</sup> *Economic Development in East Pakistan: Role of the Central Government*, 1971

<sup>193</sup> R.P. Kapur 1971

## 5. The Myth Makers Knew the Economic Cost of Separation

During the civil war the Statesman of Kalikata editorially questioned the economic benefit of a separate Bangladesh, predicting that it would not be an economically viable proposition.<sup>194</sup> Nor could the otherwise hostile Indian economists deny Pakistan's contribution in lifting East Pakistan's economy to a healthy level. Just months before its birth B. Chattopadhyay, a senior economist from West Bengal, warned Bangladesh that it should not expect to regain its pre-1971 economic status within the foreseeable future and advised its people to be prepared to absorb all future shocks and setbacks.<sup>195</sup> As every Bangladeshi was to learn, the predicted economic shocks and setbacks were not slow in coming.<sup>196</sup>

During the civil war, Bangladesh suffered damage worth \$1 billion and in the first year of its separate existence received foreign aid worth \$2 billion, leaving a net gain of \$1 billion.<sup>197</sup> This is not all. In the 23 years of separate existence Bangladesh received \$30 billion in aid, that is four times what united Pakistan received during a comparable period before 1971.<sup>198</sup> Moreover, the alleged exploitation by, and transfer of resources to West Pakistan was not taking place. Yet the expected leap forward, not to speak of Mujib's promised *Sonar Bangla*, has remained elusive. After studying the development administration of Bangladesh in 1975, William W. Boyer, Messick Professor of Public Administration at the University of Delaware, concluded that economically Bengalis were better off in Pakistan.<sup>199</sup> Even in the late 1980s a former US ambassador noted that Bangladesh's industrial production could not have been more than 86 per cent of East Pakistan's industrial production of the 1960s.<sup>200</sup>

It was not that the separatists could not foresee such a downturn. Only days before the outbreak of the armed conflict, an East Pakistani secessionist diplomat Anwarul Karim Choudhury confided to US diplomats in Kalikata that with the falling world demand for jute, Bangladesh would have little upon which to build its economy. It was bound to be weak and possibly unstable.<sup>201</sup> This was, of course, no revelation to the Americans for their own assessment was the same: 'It is difficult to see how the state (of Bangladesh) can in the long run meet its basic needs, let alone improve its

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<sup>194</sup> Anon, 1979: 65

<sup>195</sup> B. Chattopadhyaya in V.K.R.V. Rao ed., *Bangladesh Economy: Problems and Perspectives*, Delhi, 1972: 146-50

<sup>196</sup> O. Abdullah, *Sonar Bangla shoshan keno?* (Why Golden Bengal a graveyard?), London, 1974; Z. Abedin, *Raw and Bangladesh*, Dhaka, 1995; M. Rahman and N. Hasan 1980: 69-104  
<sup>197</sup> *Ganakantha*, Dhaka, 22 February 1973

<sup>198</sup> M.T. Hussain 1996: 28

<sup>199</sup> *Evening Journal*, Delaware, 13 May 1975

<sup>200</sup> C. Baxter and S. Rahman, *Historical Dictionary of Bangladesh*, 1989: 60-61

<sup>201</sup> R. Khan, *The American Papers – Secret and Confidential India, Pakistan, Bangladesh Documents 1965-1973*, Karachi, 1999: 519

economy, even with sizeable external aid.<sup>202</sup> From an economic point of view, then, Pakistan had something to be recommended.

## 6. The Spell-Bounds

Unsurprisingly, even in the thickness of the separatist euphoria an eminent Kalikata physician pointed to a leading secessionist:

I have visited Dhaka on a number of occasions. There the standard of living I found the Muslim middle classes enjoying made me envious. I was astonished to see many professors, doctors, engineers, journalists, writers, artists and officers owning new houses and cars. Listening to the stories of their frequent foreign trips also made me jealous. Could you tell me why you, the Bengali Muslims, have become involved in the liberation war despite such a prosperous and affluent living?

The explanation offered was:

Compared to West Bengal in India, we the middle classes of East Bengal have a far more prosperous and luxurious life within Pakistan. This we came to realize once we returned to Mujibnagar [Kalikata] after 24 years. Your middle classes are declining whereas ours is on the way to blossoming. The great men of Karachi, Lahore and Islamabad did not allow us to visit Kalikata out of fear of exposing us to the cultural influence of West Bengal, or for that matter India. Because of this we could not compare our condition with that of West Bengal. Instead they have regularly taken our teachers, doctors, engineers, students, politicians, and officers to tour West Pakistan in the name of strengthening Pakistan's solidarity. By comparing ourselves with the middle classes of Karachi, Lahore and Pindi we have considered ourselves ignored and deprived. Yet, we are 56% of Pakistan's population. This is what moved many of us to join in the liberation war.<sup>203</sup>

A leading Awami League M.P and a personal friend of Mujib had a similar view:

After crossing the border we, the middle classes of East Pakistan, first came to realise how much our economy and living standards had improved and how comfortable and prosperous we were, compared to the middle classes of West Bengal. Even at that time most middle class families of Bangladesh had a TV and fridge, whereas 80 percent middle classes on the other side of the border were without a fridge and TV.<sup>204</sup>

It is not true that East Pakistanis could not visit West Bengal and vice versa except during the emergency period of 1965 war. The fact that the Kalikata physician had frequently visited East Pakistan shows its falsity. The accusation as well as the explanation illustrate how inclined the separatists were to blaming anyone, except themselves. However, going by the substantive point it is clear that had there been a cause for secession on economic ground, it should have surfaced in West Bengal,<sup>205</sup> not in East Pakistan. The opposite happened, because a section of the East Pakistani

<sup>202</sup> R. Khan 1999: 507-08

<sup>203</sup> M.R.A. Mukul, 1984: 168-69

<sup>204</sup> M.A. Mohaimen, *Dui Dashaker Smriti* (Memories of Two Decades), Dhaka, 1986: 109

<sup>205</sup> R. Roy, *The Agony of West Bengal*, Kalikata, 1973

## The Creation of Bangladesh

middle classes had reacted out of excessive expectation and envy,<sup>206</sup> rather than because of economic misery. Bangladesh under Mujib paid a heavy price for the avarice of its voracious middle classes who provided the Awami League its organizational force.<sup>207</sup>

### 7. The Engineers

After Pakistan, the universities in East Pakistan became the hot bed of intrigues and party politics. From the outset, the dominance of high Hindu teachers put constraints on the revision of syllabi and books. To that was added the language controversy promoted by some academics. But the most diabolical role was performed by certain economists who stirred these avaricious middle classes and made them believe in West Pakistani exploitation. Most of these economists were disciples of Prof. Abdur Razzak. He was an active supporter of Pakistan until his unsuccessful bid for a doctorate in London. He returned home in 1950 a confirmed opponent of Islam and Pakistan.<sup>208</sup> While in London, he had established connections, through his academic supervisor Harold Laski, with a circle of Harvard economists who were involved in Pakistan's economic planning. With their help he was able to place his disciples in the Planning Commission of Pakistan and create the slanted 'economic disparity' debate. He was an advocate of secession from 1954,<sup>209</sup> and was behind-the-scenes adviser of the Awami League on constitutional matters.<sup>210</sup> After Bangladesh, Mujib honoured him with the national professorship and Delhi University gave him an honorary doctorate for his contribution to the creation of Bangladesh. Significantly, in Bangladesh some of the very same disciples became converts to 'one non-competitive economy' between India and Bangladesh<sup>211</sup> prescribed by the Indian rulers.<sup>212</sup>

### 8. Accusation of Cultural Suppression

The accusation of cultural suppression appeared before the accusation of economic exploitation. It was started around the issue of an official language. The founding fathers of Pakistan had mooted Urdu as the *lingua franca* of the new state providing various linguistic groups and provinces with a common medium of communication. This was not a post-Pakistan afterthought. The Muslim League's 1937 Lucknow session in its Resolution No 11 had stress the unifying potential of Urdu and appealed to the Muslims to safeguard and foster it. Where it was not the

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<sup>206</sup> M.H. Rahman 1985: 84

<sup>207</sup> R. Sobhan in A.G. Choudhury ed. *Sheikh Mujib*, London, 1977

<sup>208</sup> S.S. Husain, *The Wastes of Time – Reflections on the Decline and Fall of East Pakistan*, Dhaka, 1995: 37-38

<sup>209</sup> A. Campbell, *The Heart of India*, London, 1958: 258-68

<sup>210</sup> In their report to the state department on the Awami League in 1971 US the political officer had mentioned Razzak as one of its 'experts' and described him as 'teacher of teachers'. [R. Khan 1999: 462]

<sup>211</sup> Dr Nurul Islam and Dr Mosharraf Husain's press conference, *Holiday*, 2 December 1973 and Rehman Sobhan's speech in a Delhi seminar, *Inqilab*, Dhaka, 3 February 1995

<sup>212</sup> Assertion made during their official visits to Dhaka by India's successive commerce ministers D.P. Chattopadhyaya [*Holiday*, 24 December 1974] and Pranab Mukherjee [*The Daily Star*, *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Financial Express*, Dhaka, 28 December 1993]

predominant language, adequate arrangements should be made for its teaching. The government was asked to use it in all its offices, courts, legislatures, railways and postal departments.<sup>213</sup> This is what Fazlul Haq, who attended the Lucknow session and soon after formally joined the Muslim League, had told the All-India Muslim Conference held at Kalikata in December 1939:

‘The importance of Urdu language and script cannot be emphasized too much. Urdu is the brightest and most powerful cultural monument of our past Muslim history in India. A little time ago, Bengal was the cradle of Urdu. The modern Urdu prose originated at Calcutta. Great poets and litterateurs of Urdu have flourished in Bengal. There are still some fine writers and poets of Urdu in many parts of Bengal. But today somewhat a sort of disregard of Urdu is growing on account of the influence of the new system of English schools which has been founded on the ruins of the old system of education based on Arabic, Persian and Urdu. We feel the danger that if conditions are not reformed the time may come when few shall be able to understand Urdu in Bengal. The only remedy for this bad state of affairs is that Urdu must be made a compulsory second language in schools in Bengal at least for the Muslims. Calcutta University, the citadel of Hindu culture, is the greatest obstacle in the path of enforcing this reform... Anyway I am determined to make Urdu a compulsory subject for at least the Muslim students in Bengal and God willing I shall succeed with the help of the Muslims.

Fazlul Haq also endorsed the conference recommendation to adopt Arabic script for Bengali,<sup>214</sup> which was the only language of a Muslim majority province in the subcontinent with a script representing the symbols of Brahmanical godheads. In a truncated Pakistan, lacking geographical unity and facing the wrath of the frustrated and angry rulers of India, the question of national unity could not be taken lightly and in this the desirability of bridging the linguistic differences acquired an added weight. Even West Bengali scholars recognized that its acceptance as the *lingua franca* would have given Pakistan a distinct identity of its own.<sup>215</sup> Being the mother tongue of only 1 and 7 percent East and West Pakistanis respectively, Urdu had, moreover, no particular regional bias. Furthermore, it was not wholly unfamiliar and unintelligible to the people of East Pakistan. In the Madrassas, which outnumbered schools and colleges, students were taught mainly in Urdu. It was more intelligible to the unlettered in the sanskritized Bengali. From a number of points of view, Urdu had, indeed, a strong claim to selection.<sup>216</sup>

The fact that the introduction of Urdu as the official language was mooted with the best interest of the newly created country could not be doubted.<sup>217</sup> Nor was there any question of stifling Bengali or stopping its use as the language of administration and education of the province. The working committee of the East Bengal Muslim League at its meeting of 5 December 1947 had made it clear that Bengali would serve as the province’s language of instruction and administration and its president,

<sup>213</sup> *The Star of India*, Kalikata, 16 and 17 October 1937

<sup>214</sup> Cited in R. Ahsan, *Pakistan Language Formula*, Dhaka, 1952

<sup>215</sup> G.P. Bhattacharjee 1973: 62

<sup>216</sup> D. Wright 1988: 66

<sup>217</sup> G.P. Bhattacharjee 1973: 57; M.A. Mohaimen 1994: iii-v

Akram Khan, issued a press statement to this effect.<sup>218</sup> Two days later Akram Khan again told the same to a seminar of Dhaka University students.<sup>219</sup> Had there been any lingering doubts, a few months later Jinnah left no scope for uncertainty on this.

Whether Bengali shall be the official language of this province is a matter for the elected representatives of the people of this province to decide... Let me tell you in the clearest language that there is no truth that your normal life is going to be touched or disturbed as far as your Bengali language is concerned.<sup>220</sup>

Within a week of Jinnah's unambiguous statement, on 6 April 1948 the East Pakistan provincial assembly was formally moved to adopt Bengali as the official language of the province. Until 1952 the demand for Bengali to be made one of the state languages of Pakistan was confined to a limited circle of students and intelligentsia<sup>221</sup> and among the political elements allied to the Congress and the Communists. The emotional outpouring came only after police fired on the Communist organised student protesters at Dhaka on 21 February 1952, in which three people, including Abul Barkat, a university student, were killed. The next day the provincial government recommended and within two years the central government adopted Bengali as the second state language of Pakistan. Moreover, two semi-government authorities – the Central Bengali Development Board and the Bengali Academy - were created. The Pakistan Writers Guild was organized in 1959 with an East Pakistani majority in its executive committee. Besides, annual literary prizes and awards were instituted for encouraging literary works of merit in Bengali; in the Central Government's honour lists Bengali authors and poets were equally represented. Apart from encouraging the creative writers of Bengali, measures were also taken to protect them from being swamped by West Bengali writers and their cheap, often ideologically motivated, work hostile to Islam and Pakistan.

Like the Bengali language and literature, the historical heritage of the province also received due attention. The archaeological excavations at Mainamati, Mahastan and Paharpur were carried out and the remains of East Pakistan's Buddhist past were brought in to a fresh light to the admiration of the Buddhists of East Pakistan as well as foreign Buddhist scholars.<sup>222</sup> Dhaka Museum was supported and developed by generous grants from the central government. Anyone who cares to examine the archaeological search or the growth of creative writings in Bengali during the days of the united Pakistan may be forgiven if they find the whole charge of suppression of the language and culture of the province mysterious. If the lack of official status and backing to the Bengali language and culture had been a genuine factor in separatism, it should have emerged in West Bengal where the high Hindus had long

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<sup>218</sup> S. Chatterjee 1972

<sup>219</sup> A and A. Dil 2000: 135-36

<sup>220</sup> Speech at Dhaka, 21 March 1948 in J.U. Ahmad 1964-68ii: 490

<sup>221</sup> N.H. Bhyuiya, and M. Toaha cited in M. Kamal ed. *Bhasa Andolan: Shatchallish Theke Ba'anna* (Language Movement: Forty-seven to Fifty-two), Dhaka, 1987

<sup>222</sup> Cf. Sri Lankan Buddhist scholar S.A. Vijaytilak in S. Ali, *Amader Sahitya O Bhavnaya Quaid-i-Azam* (Quaid-i-Azam in Our Literature and Thought), Dhaka, 1989: 97-100

before created the cult of Mother-Language in contradistinction to mother tongue<sup>223</sup>, not among the Muslims of East Pakistan whose forefathers had paid dearly because of the British-Brahmin led Sanskritization of Bengali and the sanctification of the Sanskritized Bengali under the cult of Mother-Language.<sup>224</sup>

## 9. Creation of Language Controversy

In the light of the above, the separatist accusation about the suppression of East Pakistani culture and language needs a careful revisit. After all, the general view in 1947 was that Hindi and Urdu would be the official language of India and Pakistan respectively. Not just Muslim nationalists but also the Communists had regarded this as a settled fact.<sup>225</sup> What sea change had occurred that brought within a fortnight of the precarious birth of East Pakistan the demand for Bengali to be made a state language of Pakistan? Even after such a demand was voiced, almost all the leading opinion makers, whether Muslim nationalist, communist or secular democrat, expressed them in favour of having Urdu as the *lingua franca* of Pakistan with Bengali as the language of administration and public instruction of East Pakistan.<sup>226</sup> This was the longstanding position of the broad spectrum of the Muslim intellectuals.<sup>227</sup> It is in this context that a further question is to be asked. Why did the language issue remain alive after Bengali was made the state language of the province in April 1948? In the light of this question, another question is to be asked. What was behind Jinnah's repeated warning against the poison of provincialism and playing into the hands of fifth columnists? Was it mere political scare mongering?

Two weeks before Pakistan came into being in 1947, a small group of young Dhaka activists, including Kamruddin Ahmad, Muhammad Toaha, Oli Ahad, and Tajuddin Ahmad who would all feature prominently in the secession of Bangladesh, formed a Gana Azadi League (The People's Freedom League). Espousing economic independence of the Bengali people in Pakistan, its manifesto advocated that

1) The medium of instruction should be the mother tongue of the people, 2) Bengali is the mother tongue of the people in East Bengal and all efforts should be made to make it capable of carrying on the State's work, and 3) The State Language of East Pakistan should be Bengali.<sup>228</sup>

<sup>223</sup> R. Guha, *An Historiography of India: A Nineteenth Century Agenda and its Implications*, New Delhi, 1988: 36-41

<sup>224</sup> S.K. Das, *Bangla Gadya Sahityer Itihas* (History of Bengali Prose Literature), vol. i Kalikata, 1956: 62

<sup>225</sup> Shahidullah Kaiser in B. Umar, *Purbo Banglar Bhasa Andolon O Tatkalin Rajniti* (Language Movement and East Bengali Politics of the Time), Dhaka, 1970: 261-68

<sup>226</sup> A and A. Dil 2000: 135

<sup>227</sup> M. Kamal 1987: 1-8

<sup>228</sup> B. Umar 1970: 17-18



East Pakistan was barely two weeks old when Abul Kasem, a lecturer in Physics at Dhaka University and one of the attendants of the meeting in which the Gana Azadi League was formed,<sup>229</sup> launched Tamaddun Majlis (Cultural Forum). Although its professed aim was to create an Islamic society and state,<sup>230</sup> making Bengali the state language of Pakistan<sup>231</sup> was its immediate objective. By his own admission, the three persons, Shamsul Alam, A. K. M. Ahsan and Syed Nazrul Islam, guided him in launching the Majlis.<sup>232</sup> Yet unlike Shamsul Alam, neither Ahsan<sup>233</sup> nor Nazrul<sup>234</sup> featured in its activities. Notably, in spite of its avowed Islamic aims, Kasem's Gana Azadi League associates - the secular Bengali nationalists Kamruddin and the Communist Toaha - had been active in it.

Within a fortnight of the establishment of the Majlis, Kasem brought out a booklet in support of the extended demand to make both Bengali and Urdu official languages of Pakistan. A Hindu press printed the booklet and the Hindu magician P.C. Sarkar raised funds. Apart from Kasem, contributors to the booklet were Abul Mansur Ahmad and Dr Kazi Mutahar Hussain. Like Kasem, Mansur who was the editor of Kalikata's Bengali daily *Ittehad*,<sup>235</sup> had no difficulty in changing his stance from preferring Bengali to be the official language of East Pakistan<sup>236</sup> to making it the state language of Pakistan. Mutahar - a teacher of statistics at Dhaka University and a close associate of the Indian nationalist Kazi Abdul Wadud - argued that in the past Muslims had blamed the Hindus for the Hinduization of Bengali, and now was the time to Islamize the language. Moreover, the common people have to be made acquainted with Islamic culture and civilization and that this could not be done in Urdu. That for any of these objectives Bengali did not need the status of a state language, let alone the state language of Pakistan escaped him! Furthermore, in a second piece three months later he divined that if Bengalis' demand was not met fuming dissatisfaction might bring separation.<sup>237</sup> At about the same time, Dr Muhammad Enamul Haq, a scholar of Bengali language and literature, lent his alarmist voice to the debate.

If Urdu is accepted as the state language of East Pakistan, the Bengali language will be buried and we will have to make arrangements to bury the East Pakistanis as a nation...

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<sup>229</sup> A and A. Dil 2000: 138

<sup>230</sup> M. Kamal 1987: 48

<sup>231</sup> S. Chatterjee 1972

<sup>232</sup> M. Kamal 1987: 36-37

<sup>233</sup> Ahsan was a communist who later joined the superior service of Pakistan and turned out to be a behind the scenes organizer of secession. [J. Sen-Gupta, *History of Freedom Movement in Bangladesh, 1947-73: Some Involvement*, Kalikata, 1974: xxii-xxiii]

<sup>234</sup> Nazrul rose to become the acting President of the Bangladesh government in exile.

<sup>235</sup> He later served as a central minister under Suhrawardy, helped put secessionist elements in touch with the Indian government [R. Islam, *Mukti Juddher Prakkapat: Birodhisakti O Brihatsaktir Protikria* (Liberation War's Background: Reaction of Opposing Forces and Big Powers), Dhaka, 1992] and wrote the book referred to earlier justifying secession as a rectification of the betrayal of the Lahore Resolution.

<sup>236</sup> M. Kamal 1987: 7

<sup>237</sup> Q.M. Hussain in *Sawgath, Dhaka, Agrahayan* 1354 BS

This will bring destruction to East Pakistan. It will be political, cultural, and economic death.<sup>238</sup>

Although he did not call for Bengali to be made the official language of Pakistan, Enamul's fear of the deathblow to it was strange. Since its inception Bengali had never been the language of administration, yet it flourished. Under Muslim rule when Persian was the court language, Arabic-Persian and Hindustani had enriched it. One need not go that far but only needs to look at modern Bengali language and literature, which, far from being destroyed, was immensely enriched by the English language. Enamul's political and economic apprehension had, however, a historical resonance in the displacement of Persian by English as the language of the administration in 1835. It had placed the Muslims at yet another disadvantage vis-à-vis the high Hindus who had already established a de facto Hindu *raj* and taken to English education eagerly. Kasem's piece in the Majlis's booklet had, indeed, pointedly underlined this.<sup>239</sup> As Toaha's later admission showed,<sup>240</sup> this historical fear had the potential of getting magnified among the young and uninformed, for to them Urdu was the mother tongue of every West Pakistani. By their silence on the actual position of Urdu in West Pakistan these East Pakistani intelligentsia had, wittingly or unwittingly, left the youth vulnerable to that mistaken fear of risking their career prospects to an uneven competition from the West Pakistanis.

Anything resembling an official position came in the form of an address by the central education minister to the first national education conference at Karachi during the last week of November 1947. Fazlur Rahman, an East Pakistani, said that although it may seem undesirable to have a foreign language as the national language, English had to serve that role for some years, at least at the university level, and in inter-regional and international communication. Retaining English was also necessary since it was fast becoming a world language and the medium of scientific and technological knowledge. In Pakistan, Arabic and Persian would have to be given prominence because they were the sources of Pakistan's religious and cultural heritage. Besides, the regional and provincial languages should be given more prominence and stated that the government would take steps to widely disseminate the cultural heritage and languages of the provinces for infusing a national culture. Urdu would serve as the *lingua franca* and the medium of national integration because it has a rich tradition of borrowing and assimilating words and ideas from other languages as well as from abroad. When the ministerial proposal was discussed in the plenary session questions were raised about the implications of such a proposal for the position of Bengali as the medium of instruction and administration in East Pakistan. At the end, all that the conference did was to recommend that Urdu be accepted as the *lingua franca* of Pakistan.<sup>241</sup>

<sup>238</sup> M.E. Haq in *Krishti*, Narayanganj, *Kartik* 1354 BS

<sup>239</sup> A and A. Dil 2000: 134

<sup>240</sup> M. Toaha in Bangla Academy, *Ekusher Sankalan: Smriticharan* (Collection on Twenty-first: Reminiscences), Dhaka, 1981: 83-103

<sup>241</sup> A and A. Dil 2000: 307-09

Had the stifling of Bengali been the real concern, this should have laid it to rest. Yet the Tamaddun Majlis held a protest meeting at Dhaka University campus denouncing the conference recommendation. It contended that the failure to meet their demand would amount to betraying the Bengali language and the people of East Pakistan. The provincial government, however, responded by seeking to allay the fear. As mentioned before, on behalf of the ruling party its president, Akram Khan, issued a public statement and spoke before the university students that there was no question of forcing Urdu on, or displacing Bengali from, East Pakistan. Bengali would serve as the language of education and administration of the province. Undeterred, the Majlis proceeded by setting up the State Language Committee with representations from the newly formed student bodies (the Student League, the Student Federation and the Democratic Youth League).<sup>242</sup> About this time, the East Bengal Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Islam, who had tirelessly worked for Pakistan, submitted a petition to the central government with one hundred thousand signatures calling for Urdu to be made the official language of Pakistan.<sup>243</sup> Immediately after this petitioning, a clash between Bengali and Urdu speaking clerks of the secretariat occurred when a busload of unidentified people voiced support for Urdu.<sup>244</sup> By early 1948 the East Bengal Communist Party, which in its Workers' Convention in the previous September had, while supporting the demand for Bengali to be made the state language of East Pakistan, left the question of Pakistan's state language for the people to decide,<sup>245</sup> changed its position.<sup>246</sup> *Bangla Urdu bhai bhai, Urdu sath Bangla o rastrabhasa chai* (Bengali and Urdu are brothers, We want Urdu and Bengali as state languages) became their new cry.<sup>247</sup> The Gana Azadi League also made a similar shift in its stance. The State Language Committee warned people against government-supported propaganda about the Hinduized nature of their language.<sup>248</sup>

On 25 February 1948 the Congress leader Dhrendranath Dutta moved the Pakistan Constituent Assembly to change its rule allowing proceedings in Bengali alongside Urdu and English. Tabling the motion he said:

'The State language of the State should be the language, which is used by the majority of the people of the State, and for that I consider that Bengali language is the lingua franca of our State. I know I voice the sentiments of the vast millions of our State.

Not a single East Pakistani Muslim member sympathized with it and a number of them openly voiced their opposition. M.H. Gazdar from Sindh captured the common feeling: when he said that the amendment seems to be innocent on the outside, but it is dangerous for Pakistan. East Pakistan's chief minister Khwaja Nazimuddin said

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<sup>242</sup> A and A. Dil 2000: 140

<sup>243</sup> R. Ahsan 1952

<sup>244</sup> *Azad*, Dhaka, 13 December 1947

<sup>245</sup> B. Umar 1970: 26

<sup>246</sup> B. Umar 1970: 261-68

<sup>247</sup> M. Toaha 1981

<sup>248</sup> A and A. Dil 2000: 143

that while Bengali would be the language of his province's education and administration, the majority opinion favoured Urdu should be the state language of Pakistan. Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan pointed out that Pakistan was created by and for the Muslims of the subcontinent whose common language was Urdu. No language other than Urdu could promote the national solidarity of Pakistan and serve its need for a *lingua franca*.<sup>249</sup>

In a seemingly concerted move the next day protest meetings were organized at Dhaka University and other educational institutions. Curiously, the *Daily Azad*, owned by the Muslim League chief Akram Khan, criticized Nazimuddin for saying that the province's public favour Urdu to be the state language of Pakistan.<sup>250</sup> A number of well-known student leaders belonging to the League also declared their support and appealed to the people to join the protest. A group of leftist youth leaders attending a conference in Kalikata sent their congratulation to Dhrendranath. From Kalikata Suhrawardy said:

'If an attempt is made to change the language of any group of people, a strong protest is quite natural. It is even more so when this language is the language of fifty million people. I feel that the position of Bengali in East Pakistan, even in the whole of Pakistan, is very strong. No one opposes the fact that Urdu should be a common language of Pakistan, as Urdu certainly is an inter-provincial language. Because of this Urdu can be taught in East Pakistan as a second language.'<sup>251</sup>

After 1971 another Congress leader, Manoranjan Dhar, would recount that the reception Dhrendranath's espousal on behalf of Bengali had bowled over even the hardest Pakistanis.<sup>252</sup> Heartened, on 2 March an All-Party State Language Action Committee was formed and student demonstrations were organized from 11 March. Septuagenarian Fazlul Haq, who was quietly serving as advocate general, appeared in the demonstrations signalling his readiness to take-up Bengali's cause in contravention of his past stand. Within the provincial League leadership some lesser luminaries also sought to use the unrest to advance their careers. From behind the scenes high Hindu Congress and Communists leaders also continued instigating.<sup>253</sup> With Jinnah due to visit East Pakistan from the 19<sup>th</sup>, an embarrassed Nazimuddin saw a delegation of the Action Committee and signed an agreement with them. Bengali was to be made the language of East Pakistan's education and administration and its acceptance as the second state language of Pakistan was to be recommended. The chief minister was also to declare over the radio that highly patriotic motives had inspired the proponents of Bengali's claim.<sup>254</sup>

<sup>249</sup> Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, Debates vol. II: 11-17

<sup>250</sup> *Azad*, 27 February 1948

<sup>251</sup> *Azad*, 28 February 1948.

<sup>252</sup> B. Chatterjee 1973: 52

<sup>253</sup> A and A. Dil 2000: 151-52

<sup>254</sup> A and A. Dil 2000: Appendix 17

With Nazimuddin displaying weakness, the demonstrations continued showing that the Committee had no control and those pulling the strings from behind the scenes had no intention of letting it pass. It was claimed that Nazimuddin was forced to sign the agreement under duress. His government appeared an easy pushover, lacking conviction and leadership. However, after arriving on the scene Jinnah took a firm stand and warned about 'lurking dangers' from 'fifth columnists' and the campaign leaders made a retreat. In a press statement, issued from Kalikata, Fazlul Haq denied the existence of any subversive drive and claimed that the government had forfeited public confidence by their misadministration.<sup>255</sup> Fearing backlash, the Tamaddun Majlis blamed the provincial government's misrepresentation for Jinnah's rejection of Bengali as the second state language of Pakistan and the Communists for poisoning the atmosphere by continuing demonstrations after the 15 March agreement with Nazimuddin.<sup>256</sup> The leftists, in turn, blamed the Majlis for not being earnest in its commitment to Bengali.<sup>257</sup> While the provincial government moved to make Bengali the state language of East Pakistan, the Congress leader Dhrendranath protested on its inadequacy. He moved an amendment requiring Bengali to be declared the state language of Pakistan. While all high Hindu members supported the amendment, no Muslim member joined them.<sup>258</sup>

### 10. Stalling of Print Language Reform

After establishing Bengali as its state language, in March 1949 the provincial government set up an East Bengal Language Committee to suggest standardization and reform of the print language. After wide-ranging consultation and advice, including those of the Tamaddun Majlis, the Committee recommended the gradual creation of a simple language avoiding, as far as possible, the ideologically unacceptable and practically difficult Sanskrit vocabularies. It preferred reintroduction of the purged Islamic words and ideas as well as words and idioms commonly used in East Pakistan and a harvest from the once rich *Puthi* and popular literatures. However, the Committee, on the grounds of practicality, advised against changing the extent script for the next 20 years.<sup>259</sup>

This was a longstanding Muslim aspiration. From at least the sixteenth century there had been a deep-seated concern among the Muslims about the Brahmanical symbolic connotations of the Bengali script and many Bengali works were written or copied in Arabic script.<sup>260</sup> Even those who used the Bengali script had their pagination from right to left, as a distinctive marker. Not just that, up to the first half of the nineteenth century the Muslims of Bengal vigorously resisted the growing

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<sup>255</sup> The Civil and Military Gazette, Lahore, 24 March 1948

<sup>256</sup> Abul Kasem and Shahed Ali's statement in *Azad*, 24 March 1948

<sup>257</sup> M. Toaha 1981: 102-3

<sup>258</sup> A and A Dil 2000: 161-62

<sup>259</sup> *Report of the East Bengal Language Committee*, Dhaka, 1949

<sup>260</sup> In spite of ravages of time in Abdul Karim Sahityavisharad collection in Dhaka University alone over 50 such manuscripts exist. [S.S. Husain, *A Descriptive Catalogue of Bengali Manuscripts in the Dhaka University Library*, Dhaka, 1960]

high Hindu drive towards sanskritization of the print language and their new cult of Mother Language, as the greater number of books in 'Muslim Bengali' compared to that of 'Sanskrit Bengali' as Rev. James Long's catalogue of 1855 would show. Nearly three quarters of a century later when poet Nazrul Islam endeavoured to reintroduce Islamic words and idioms high Hindu opposition was vociferous.<sup>261</sup> Since 1935, a group of East Bengali Muslims led by Zulfiqar Ali of Chittagong had been publishing a Bengali weekly, *Harooful Quran*, in Arabic script<sup>262</sup> As mentioned earlier, Fazlul Haq was committed to switching to the Arabic script.

Disappointed by the Language Committee's deferment of script change, the *Ulema* of East Pakistan came out demanding an immediate change of script to Arabic.<sup>263</sup> The push for an easy, Islamized East Pakistani Bengali, distinct from that of West Bengal, now met with silent disapproval from the likes of Motahar Hussain and sniping from the leftists and the secularists. The latter argued: 'Bengali is recognized as one of the richest languages of the world and it is the Muslims of this region who have brought it to the present status and as such there is no reason to discard it.'<sup>264</sup> They further insisted that no 'language under heaven can be Islamic or Christian or Heathen. If Urdu is Islamic, Bengali is ... more Islamic as a larger number of Muslims speak Bengali.' Moreover it was unbecoming of Bengalis' language patriotism. To discredit the language reformists they, moreover, accused them of being inspired by those who wanted to put the province under the perpetual cultural domination of West Pakistan in the name of national solidarity.<sup>265</sup> These votaries of language patriotism were clearly economical with the truth in presenting the history of Bengali language and disingenuous in their views about beliefs, values and the language in general. But they were banking not on history and facts but on the growing out-put of the de-Islamised and stigmatising college and university education pioneered by the Kalikata University. A decade earlier Fazlul Haq had warned against this malignancy; political expediency now made him turn a blind eye to all that.

## 11. Revival of Language Controversy

Pulsating through the politics of language patriotism was a wider stance. The Congress leaders were demanding a secular democratic Peoples State and the Communists were seeking a United States of Socialist Republics. Notwithstanding their outward differences both were united in their aim to disassociate Pakistan from its Muslim identity and aspirations and leave it with a weak central government in the name of autonomy. Moreover, they wanted to keep the linguistic unity with West

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<sup>261</sup> Birbal (Pramath Choudhury) in Central Bengali Development Board, *Nazrul Rachanabali* (Nazrul's Collected Works) vol. 2: 659

<sup>262</sup> R. Ahsan 1952

<sup>263</sup> R. Ahsan 1952

<sup>264</sup> K. Ahmad 1953.

<sup>265</sup> Letter to the members of the Constituent Assembly from the convener of the leftist led Dhaka University State Language Committee of Action, April 1951, cited in A and A. Dil 2000: 174.

Bengal intact. Although by the time the Language Committee's report came out the fear on which the language movement was premised had been largely diffused, the Congress and the Communist Party remained disinclined to let the demand to make Bengali the state language of Pakistan pass; observation of the State Language Day on 11 March continued.

After the death of Jinnah (1948) and Liaquat (1951), there was no leader who could claim equal allegiance from the people of both the wings. With politicians seeking personal power and office, Pakistani politics began falling off the seam. In East Pakistan, the reorganised Muslim League's membership was kept restricted among those who supported government policy.<sup>266</sup> The student front was allowed to lapse. Rattled by a by-election defeat in which voters preferred a young radical Muslim against a scion of a zamindar family, the government kept 29-seats vacant rather than hold by-elections. This made the Muslim League detached from the people. The Congress, the Communist Party and the newly formed secularist party, the Awami Muslim League (People's Muslim League), were already calling for a weaker central government in the name of provincial autonomy and scare mongering by alleging a conspiracy to turn the majority of East Bengal into a minority, and East Bengal into a colony of Pakistan.<sup>267</sup> It was in such a political environment that Nazimuddin, now prime minister of Pakistan, disclosed in a public meeting in Dhaka on 27 January 1952 that the National Assembly's Basic Principles Committee had recommended only Urdu to be the official language of Pakistan.<sup>268</sup>

The announcement led to several protest demonstrations by students. At a meeting presided over by Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani, President of the Awami Muslim League, who had earlier vowed to fight for the Bengali language, an All-Party State Language Action Committee was formed. It called a general strike on 21 February; the day the provincial assembly was due to meet. The government issued a public order prohibiting outdoor meetings and demonstrations. On the 20<sup>th</sup> in the absence of Bhasani, the Action Committee met under Abul Hashim and decided to stay within the law and called off the next day's planned demonstrations. But during the night the leaders of the Youth League at the behest of their communist elders decided to disregard the decision and go ahead with demonstrations, which ended in fatality. The Congress denounced the government and walked out of the assembly. Several Muslim members also joined them. The editor of the Daily Azad resigned from the Muslim League and changed the paper's pro-government stance, while its owner Akram Khan continued as the president of the Muslim League. The next day, the offices of the Muslim League supporting dailies - The Morning News and the

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<sup>266</sup> A.M. Ahmad, *Amar Dekha Rajnitir Panchas Bachar* (Fifty Years of Politics As I Saw it), Dhaka 1989: 37-38; A.R. Khan, *Ojaratir Dui Bachar* (Two Years of Ministership), Dhaka, 1984: 22

<sup>267</sup> Nur Ahmed's speech, 21 November 1950, *Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, Debates*, vol. viii: 183

<sup>268</sup> The BPC report did not reach the Assembly until 22 December 1952. Curiously it was silent on the question of state language. [*Report of the Basic Principles Committee, Karachi, 1952*]

Sangbad - were attacked; the Morning News was burned down. A *Shahid Minar* also appeared near the place of the police firing. The government made a number of arrests and brought the situation under control, set up a judicial inquiry under an English judge of the high court and recommended that the central government adopt Bengali as one of the state languages of Pakistan.<sup>269</sup>

A month later, Chief Minister Nurul Amin gave a detailed report to the Assembly blaming the Communists and Indian agents along with political malcontents seeking to subvert the state from within under the cover of a political agitation. He disclosed that from the Salimullah Muslim Hall of Dhaka University large quantities of subversive leaflets were recovered which must have been printed and collected over a long period. In a procession in Narayangonj demonstrators had chanted *Joi Hind* (victory to India) and *Jukta Bangla Chai* (We want united Bengal). From the house of MLA Osman Ali, a merchant in raw jute with close Marwari connections and a leading light in the newly formed Awami Muslim League, subversive leaflets were recovered and several Indian Hindu youths were arrested. Similar arrests of Indian nationals were made in Chittagong, Rajshahi and a number of other places. Although the chief minister's report was dismissed by its opponents as an attempt to hoodwink the people,<sup>270</sup> the daily bulletin produced by the leaders of the Youth League, who had led the fateful demonstrations, carried headlines such as 'East Bengal's first step towards bloody revolution' and 'The inevitable progress of the Language Movement under the leadership of the East Bengal Communist Party'.<sup>271</sup>

Kalikata's Communist Party mouthpiece, *Swadhinata*, published reports and wrote an editorial claiming communist guiding hands both at district and central levels.<sup>272</sup> On the first anniversary of the police firing, now commemorated as Martyr Day, Tammadun Majlis's mouthpiece, the *Sainik*, acknowledged that both the political opportunists and the anti-Pakistani elements had taken advantage of the language agitation.<sup>273</sup> Nearly two decades later the chief secretary of the time confirmed that police intelligence had reported that a large number of Indians had infiltrated and the communists were also very active.<sup>274</sup> Significantly, most of the leading campaigners stayed away from the Ellis Commission, which exonerated the police officers involved in firing. As pointed out by Justice Ellis, had all the campaigners for the Bengali language cooperated, the inquiry could have been more thorough.<sup>275</sup> Thanks to Prof. Abdur Razzak, the national professor of Bangladesh, it is now known that Abul Barkat, with whose death the trouble started on that fateful day, was a police informer who was killed while leading an assault on the police on duty.<sup>276</sup> One may

<sup>269</sup> Dawan, Karchai, 23 February 1952

<sup>270</sup> B. Al-Helal, *Bhasa Andolaner Itihas* (History of the Language Movement), Dhaka, 1985: 449-50

<sup>271</sup> M.A. Mohaimen 1986: 21

<sup>272</sup> *Swadhinata*, Kalikata, 10 and 11 March 1952

<sup>273</sup> *Sainik*, Dhaka, 21 February 1953

<sup>274</sup> A and A. Dil 2000: 183

<sup>275</sup> A. Wahab in B. Umar 1985: 166-70

<sup>276</sup> Prof. Abdur Razzak in *Bichitra*, Dhaka, (Eid issue), 1988



ask, why and in whose interest the young *muhajir* from West Bengal was sacrificed.<sup>277</sup>

## 12. Ritualisation of Language Patriotism

In the aftermath of the killing of the 'language patriots', Fazlul Haq, together with Suhrawardy and Bhasani, formed a United Front with a number of other parties, ranging from the Nizam-i-Islam to the pro-Communist Ganatantri Dal, for fighting the government in the provincial election of 1954. Intent on making capital of the 21 February 1952 incident, the United Front offered a 21-Point pledge, which included erecting a grand Shahid Minar, compensating the bereaved families, declaring the 21 February a public holiday, and making Bengali the second state language of Pakistan. The pledge, while assuring to make Pakistan an Islamic state, stipulated to set Dhaka and Rajshahi Universities free of all government control, secure autonomy for the province 'in accordance with the historic Lahore resolution' and release all prisoners held under security laws. Faced with the old stalwarts, the government leaders not only looked but also acted like puffed-up political lightweights<sup>278</sup> and were miserably beaten in the election.

The language campaign resulted in the restoration of the old stalwarts of the pre-independence Muslim struggle to power and helped end the festering debate. But it also installed the Congress leaders at the head of many important ministerial departments, turned them into kingmakers and allowed the anti-Pakistani elements to become firmly entrenched in the body politic of the province. Thanks to them, the mischievous accusation of West Pakistani conspiracy and colonialism never went out of circulation. In addition to kindling language patriotism, the annual Martyr Day celebration became a convenient occasion to tell and retell tales about West Pakistani malevolence.

During the 1960s the leftists and the Awami Leaguers started openly crediting the language movement for helping them 'discover' the motherland and the mother-language.<sup>279</sup> In the wake of the 1965 war the radio stations in East Pakistan, under government order, stopped airing Rabindranath Tagore's songs. A group of

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<sup>277</sup> Less than a year after independence a section of police force in Dhaka, egged by the Communists, had mutinied and it was suppressed with the help of a company of the 3<sup>rd</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> Punjab regiment. [M.A. Khan 1967: 28] After 1971, Abul Hasanat, the head of Intelligence Bureau in 1952 showed him to be pro-Indian separatists. [A. Hasanat, *The Ugliest Genocide in History*, Dhaka, 1974: 26-36] Whether persons like him within the police and/or the communists had a hand in getting Barkat killed has remained unanswered. Unsurprisingly, the Communist academic Sardar Fazlul Karim, who interviewed Prof. Razzak, thought that since the Martyr myth was beneficial to the Bengali nation, it should be left intact.

<sup>278</sup> The rejection of the League government came not because of economic disaffection (the province was having an annual economic growth rate of around 25 percent but due to its failure to give people 'a true appraisal of the situation ... frankly and repeatedly...' [C.M. Ali 1967: 354, 371]

<sup>279</sup> *Ittefaq*, 27 September 1970

intellectuals came out accusing the government of cultural suppression, claiming Tagore to be the philosophical fountainhead of Bengali culture. Incidentally, it was this definition of Bengali culture which Gandhi had asked the Muslim leaders to publicly accept as the price of his backing for the united Bengal in 1947 and they had all indignantly refused. That it was a repudiation of Islamic faith as well as a circumvention of the basic orientation on which Pakistan was founded was kept under wraps in the name of having the right to hear Tagore's songs. About the same time, an academic committee of Dhaka University, set up at the instance of Dr Muhammad Shahidullah, a hallowed luminary of the language movement and an opponent of Urdu, suggested dropping a number of letters from the extent script in order to simplify spelling and facilitate speedy writing. It met with opposition from a number of academics, including some who were signatories to a similar proposal made by the Bangla Academy only a few years earlier. Their changed stance was justified on the grounds that times had changed. Moreover, to frighten the university authorities, student demonstrators were also let loose.<sup>280</sup> Articles also appeared in newspapers saying:

In the name of simplification this was an attempt to destroy the Bengali language... The people of the province understand clearly the real motive behind the frequent attempts to interfere forcibly with their mother-language... The youths of East Pakistan have shed blood for the protection of their language and the Bengali-speaking people of East Pakistan will never accept any scheme that would deprive their language of its own tradition and features.<sup>281</sup>

That such modernising language reform was necessary for prompt, economical communication was ignored in the name of protecting the language. Such language protectionism was, however confined to a section of the newly educated classes, who had embraced the mid-nineteenth century Bengali high Hindu cult of Mother-Language. Yet without being forthright they continued to take cover under Muslim idioms such as Azadi, Awami, Ittefaq, shahid, minar etc. when it came to presenting themselves to the public at large. Until his death, Prof. Syed Sajjad Husain, who never recanted his Muslim nationalism or commitment to a united Pakistan, remained insistent that had a referendum been held at any time up until Ayub's advent in power, an overwhelming majority would have voted for Urdu as the only state language of Pakistan.<sup>282</sup>

### 13. The String Pullers

The irony was that after 1971 the mischief that was done in the name of Mother-Language started to haunt many separatists when it was:

'openly confessed with no small measure of pride by certain Indian elements that they had fomented the Language Movement of 1952 and that they had all along been encouraging

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<sup>280</sup> S.S. Husain 1995: 200-02

<sup>281</sup> *Ittefaq*, 12 October 1969

<sup>282</sup> S.S. Husain 1995: 203

the separatist movement in East Pakistan in the guise of Bengali nationalism under cover of beautiful words like 'freedom', etc.<sup>283</sup>

Even while sitting in Kalikata these secessionists were confronted with the fact that,

In our fight against Urdu, West Bengal Hindus shouted support to us and shed oceans of tears for Bangla-Bhasa – the mother goddess. But surprisingly enough, they have been found devoting themselves to learning Hindi, their national language, simultaneously with the preaching of violence to us for protecting the honour of Bangla-Bhasa.<sup>284</sup>

After Bangladesh was created, Mujib's law minister Manoranjan Dhar, the erstwhile Congress leader and one of the self-confessed behind the scenes facilitators of the break-up of Pakistan, publicly told Bangladeshis to take help from Hindi and improve their Bengali.<sup>285</sup> Neither Mujib nor the super sensitive language patriots of Bangladesh uttered a murmur of protest. Not only this, when the Bangladesh leader wondered aloud in front of a delegation of men of letters from West Bengal why West Bengalis were staying under India, instead of joining Bangladesh and be free, Annada Shankar Roy, the leader of the delegation, told him:

'Unlike you, we are not mere Bengalis. We are Indian as well. We have fought for India's independence and for us the question of becoming free again does not arise. We are not interested in playing politics for politics sake. The repeated division of Bengal had their deeper reason, and if united it would divide again.'<sup>286</sup>

More remarkably, Joyti Basu, West Bengal's communist chief minister, not only dismissed the possibility of the two parts of Bengal coming together in the next five hundred years, but also put scorn on Bengali language patriotism.<sup>287</sup> Another West Bengali communist leader, Ashok Mitra, maintained that the myth of Bengali nationalism was built on emotion fanned by media propaganda.<sup>288</sup> Indian media correspondents, on their part, are not shy now in pointing out that the Muslims and Hindus of Bengal represent two distinct and conflicting civilizations and could never form a nation.<sup>289</sup> This is not the only surprise. Most of the 'Bengalis' in Bangladesh now send their children for education in Indian English medium schools and colleges.

### 14. Military Rule and the Rise of Mujib

Despite his efforts to accelerate the economic development of East Pakistan, reduce inter-wing disparity and foster national integration, President Ayub contributed to

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<sup>283</sup> Anon, 1979: 26

<sup>284</sup> Anon, 1979: 106

<sup>285</sup> *Holiday*, 30 December 1973

<sup>286</sup> Cited by R. Karim in *Bangla Bazar Patrika*, Dhaka, 28 October 1992 and by M. Rahman in *Purnima*, Dhaka, 14 December 1994

<sup>287</sup> *Dainik Banglar Bani*, Dhaka, 8 August 1992.

<sup>288</sup> Cited in M. Rahman 1994.

<sup>289</sup> S. Das-Gupta in *The Daily Telegraph*, 18 June 1992

the success of separatists. Under his military regime civilian institutions became almost completely dependent upon decisions of the West Pakistani military elite, seriously reducing East Pakistani participation in policymaking.<sup>290</sup> The growing number of East Pakistanis who had entered the national administrative and military services but had not yet reached the top experienced this powerlessness from close quarters. Moreover, Ayub's Basic Democracy and indirect election tilted the power balance towards the rural elite. Although it was an all-Pakistan process, given the nature of East Pakistani politics, where the cities are the powerhouse of politics, the politicians and intelligentsia felt it more keenly.<sup>291</sup>

During the 1965 Indo-Pakistan War, East Pakistanis in the armed forces made an impressive display of fighting skills and heroism; this gave the province a new self-confidence. Yet they felt neglected seeing their province being left undefended.<sup>292</sup> These boosted the urge for political reform and greater autonomy, which gave Mujib an excellent platform and a sympathetic audience for launching his Six Point Programme. The boldness of the programme and Ayub's strong response and Mujib's subsequent indictment for Agartala conspiracy made him the focus of the province's discontent. Moreover, it also created an impression that the West Pakistani ruling circle may resist reform to the last. Arguably, had Mujib been successfully tried and punished for treason, the people of East Pakistan might have begun to see things differently. Instead, when Mujib walked free from the conspiracy case, his public credibility soared. He was seen not only to be innocent of alleged Indian connections but also risking his life for the good of the province.<sup>293</sup>

On coming to power, General Yahya Khan, sought to win back the confidence of East Pakistanis. He abrogated the 1962 Constitution, dissolved the 'one unit' in West Pakistan and revived the old provinces, and made arrangements for elections to the national and provincial assemblies. The national assembly was to be elected on the basis of one man, one vote. Given its numerical superiority, East Pakistan was to have 162 (plus 7 reserved for women) seats against 138 (plus 6 reserved for women) between Sindh, Baluchistan, the Punjab and the North-West Frontier. By a simple majority, the national assembly was to draw up a new federal constitution giving the country a parliamentary system of government without undermining the unity and the Islamic character of the state within 120 days of its meeting. These amounted to entrusting the future of the whole of Pakistan in to the hands of East Pakistan's elected representatives.

In addition, Yahya took a number of initiatives for quickly removing the disparity in the services, including the armed forces. A number of East Pakistani civil servants were placed at the head of different central government departments disregarding

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<sup>290</sup> D. Wright 1988: 92

<sup>291</sup> D. Wright 1988: 92-95

<sup>292</sup> K.A. Huque 1986: 502; D. Wright 1988: 95-96

<sup>293</sup> A confidential US embassy report said that he had been 'martyrized in the eyes of the East Pakistani people'. [R. Khan 1999: 435]

seniority rule in order to bolster East Pakistani confidence. As a confidential US report noted:

'In its decision on the Fourth Five Year Plan Outline, in its appointments policy and in many other ways the MLA (Martial Law Administrator) has sought to convince the East Pakistanis that the interim GOP wants them to have a fair share of national resources and political power. The MLA may go further.'<sup>294</sup>

These measures addressed the suspicions and helped to improve the political climate making it conducive to the holding of general elections.<sup>295</sup> Besides, it also seemed that East Pakistan would be in the driving seat in Pakistan. It gave a strong incentive to the people in East Pakistan to back Mujib and help him to make their dreams to come true.

The claim that the victims of the East Pakistani cyclone were badly treated by the Central Government and that West Pakistan failed to express sympathy was a fiction. It was invented at the time of the civil war to swell the list of 'Pakistan's crimes'. Yahya's message of sympathy and the relief and rehabilitation assistance are still fondly remembered.<sup>296</sup> It was one of the worst natural disasters ever recorded. The situation was appalling and the truth is that the administration had done as well as any government in any country could have in similar circumstances.<sup>297</sup>

## 15. 1970 Elections and the Military Action of March 1971

A large section of East Pakistanis did vote for the Awami League candidates in the General Elections of 1970 giving Mujib the unquestioned right to run Pakistan. But to frame a federal constitution, a leader has also to carry all the federating units with him. The fact that Pakistan consisted of five such units of which Mujib represented only one made it all the more compelling. After East Pakistan's absolute majority in the national parliament was established, its enlightened self-interest could have been better served by a strong central government dominated by its representatives, rather than by the constitutional arrangements envisaged by the Six Points. By taking such a course Mujib could have looked magnanimous and earn the gratitude of all Pakistanis and yet served the interest of East Pakistan far better. Not only ordinary people of West Pakistan were prepared to endure hardship for the sake of East Pakistan,<sup>298</sup> its prominent elected representatives such as Mufti Mahmud even offered allocation of three-fourth of national resources to East Pakistan until the extent economic disparities were removed.<sup>299</sup>

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<sup>294</sup> R. Khan 1999: 380

<sup>295</sup> K. Ali, *History of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh*, Dhaka, 1991: 652-53

<sup>296</sup> K. Ali 1991: 653.

<sup>297</sup> B. Cloughley, *A History of the Pakistan Army: Wars and Insurrections*, Karachi, 2000: 157-58

<sup>298</sup> S.S. Husain, *Ekattarer Smriti* (Memoirs of 1971), Dhaka, 1993: 27

<sup>299</sup> A and A Dil 2002: #

Claims are made that Mujib drifted towards secession against his will because the Awami League politicians felt no loyalties other than to the Bengalis and their numerical strength in the parliament took away his freedom to manoeuvre on the autonomy issue.<sup>300</sup> Moreover, he also had to contend with the uncompromising stance of the Tajuddin faction<sup>301</sup> and the ultra nationalist student leaders.<sup>302</sup> But the US diplomats' assessments show him to be the unquestioned king of a party in which all decisions were handed down from him, always playing 'his cards close to his chest, confiding wholly in no one but effectively using everyone'.<sup>303</sup> The ability and willingness of the small cabal of militant student leaders to stand against his wish was overblown and, as the later events showed, Tajuddin had little hard following. Moreover, during the election campaign, Mujib had often said that the Six Points were not written on a tablet of stone and repeatedly gave assurances that apprehensions about the future of the united Pakistan were baseless. More significantly, a large number of his MNAs were not against such an accommodation and most of them remained so even while in India. There was even a move to remove Tajuddin from the leadership of the government in exile<sup>304</sup> and seek a settlement within a united Pakistan.<sup>305</sup> Instead of encouraging the conciliatory attitude of the Awami League MNAs, Mujib did the opposite. He made them swear an oath at a public meeting in Dhaka on 3 January 1971 declaring the Six Points non-negotiable.<sup>306</sup>

While Mujib became more insistent on framing the constitution on the basis of the Six Points, Bhutto's sanguinity to have a share in power and inflammatory style of standing against Mujib's drive to impose a constitution on Pakistan regardless of the wishes of the rest of the provinces,<sup>307</sup> revived the suspicion of the East Pakistani public. The picture of Yahya and Bhutto having tittle-tattle in the garden of Bhutto's Larkana estate strengthened it further.<sup>308</sup> An impression grew that they were seeking ways of denying Mujib the power. The dispatch of 1,700 soldiers between 27 February and 1 March, the postponement on 1 March of the National Assembly meeting due to be held in Dhaka on 3 March, the failure of talks and, above all, the army crackdown on the night of 25 March 1971 strengthened the impression. Not unnaturally, many in East Pakistan came to believe that Yahya and Bhutto wanted to keep the province suppressed at any cost, including genocide. They felt they had left them no option except to fight for their liberation.

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<sup>300</sup> D. Wright 1988: 99-100

<sup>301</sup> J. Sen-Gupta, *Bangladesh in Blood and Tears*, Kalikata, 1981: 36-37

<sup>302</sup> M.R.A. Mukul 1984: 172, 356-57, 365

<sup>303</sup> R. Khan 1999: 434, 446, 458, 461, 465

<sup>304</sup> M.R.A. Mukul 1984: 378-79

<sup>305</sup> H. Kissinger, *The White House Years*, London, 1979: 869-70

<sup>306</sup> *Epar Bangla Opar Bangla*, no.xi, *Falgun* 1377 BS: 3; *Sangbad*, 4 January 1971

<sup>307</sup> G.W. Choudhury, *The Last Days of United Pakistan*, Karachi, 1993: 146; O.B. Jones, *Pakistan – Eye of the Storm*, New Haven, 2002: 163-66; S. Salik, *Witness to Surrender*, Karachi, 1977: 36; S. Wolpert, *Zulfi Bhutto of Pakistan*, Oxford, 1994: 142-52

<sup>308</sup> B. Cloughly 2000: 164-65

## 16. Pakistani Shenanigans or Separatist Seriatim?

Unsurprisingly, Tajuddin blamed Yahya's strategy of deception for the failure of the crucial Yahya-Mujib talks and declared Pakistan dead and buried under a mountain of corpses.<sup>309</sup> Later, declaration of independence and the formation of a government in exile were justified on the same grounds.<sup>310</sup> Bangladesh Documents compiled by the government of India highlighted Mujib's election speeches wherein he had spoken before a tormented people, as if he was the last defender of the united Pakistan, assuring them: 'Pakistan has come to stay and there is no force which can destroy it.' Likewise, within days of going on the air from Kalikata, the *Swadhin Bangla Betar* (Free Bengal Radio) broadcast a talk, From Pakistan to Bangladesh, in which the well-known writer and filmmaker Zahir Raihan blamed the ruling circle of Pakistan for the sad death of Pakistan.<sup>311</sup>

The claim that West Pakistani rulers had forced separation on East Pakistan rested wholly on what was outwardly seen to have happened rather than what actually went on outside the public gaze. The Awami League apologists later added on to this the appointment of the 'hard line' General Tikka Khan as governor and the subsequent arrival of army units on M. V. Swat. They also pointed to the army crackdown, arguing that it showed premeditated preplanning.<sup>312</sup> But even at the time there was another contesting, though less audible, claim. Following the army action, Sir Alec Douglas-Hume, the British Foreign Secretary told his country's parliament on 29 March 1971:

'The President of Pakistan as we understand it, was faced with a situation in which his country might have been divided in half ... The ironic aspect of this situation was that for the first time (sic) it was possible for an East Pakistani to be Prime Minister of a united Pakistan, and this opportunity has slipped.'<sup>313</sup>

From Delhi the correspondent of the Columbia Broadcasting Corporation sent a similar report on 31 March 1971:

'All the indications are that Mujib and his outlawed Awami League had carefully planned an advance military campaign. ... It is believed that Mujib had received supplies from outside sources for a long period and that these were hidden till the crunch came from Yahya (on March 26, 1971). Many Western diplomats in New Delhi feel these weapons could only have come from India.'<sup>314</sup>

The White Paper of the Pakistan government made a similar claim.<sup>315</sup>

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<sup>309</sup> S. Mansingh, *India's Search for Power*, Delhi, 1984: 215

<sup>310</sup> M.R.A. Mukul 1984: 334-35

<sup>311</sup> M.R.A. Mukul 1984: 97

<sup>312</sup> M.R.A. Mukul 1984: 327-33

<sup>313</sup> *Hansard*, 5 April 1971 [R. Islam 1992: 158-59]

<sup>314</sup> Cited in L.F. Rushbrook-Williams 1972: 69

<sup>315</sup> L.F. Rushbrook-Williams 1972: 69-70

## 17. Confessions of the Sanguinary

Recounting how the Yahya-Mujib talks failed, Abdur Razzak - one of Mujib's student lieutenants<sup>316</sup> - disclosed:

'Yahya gave such an offer that a compromise was reached. The offer was, *Bangabandhu* would become Prime Minister and Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister. Yahya also agreed to all of *Bangabandhu's* Six Points demands except the one stipulating two separate currencies for East and West Pakistan. On the Awami High Command's advice *Bangabandhu* accepted the compromise. We were greatly disheartened by this. Hanif got the news first and passed this to Mrs. Sheikh Mujib. This proposal was given to *Bangabandhu* and his High Command on 22 March 1971 and they accepted it. It was to be finalised on the 23rd, and both the sides were due to issue a joint declaration. *Begum* Mujib sent the news to me through Hanif. Then I took Brother Moni, Tufail and Sirajul Alam Khan with me and together we went to the residence of *Bangabandhu*. I am talking about the evening of the 22nd March. Like a mad person *Bhabi* [Mrs. Mujib] said, 'It is a catastrophe, you dissuade your leader.' She was a great woman. We stayed put in her drawing room. At nine in the evening *Bangabandhu* returned home. Seeing five of us, he straight went to his upstairs bedroom without saying a word. Before we left he advised us to stay away from our home during the night. I spent the night at the residence of Anwar Hussain Manju. Next morning again I went. On reaching his residence I came to learn that for the whole night *Bangabandhu* did not sleep. *Bhabi* said, 'you have set the fire on and for the whole night he did not come to bed. He spent the night pacing on the verandah.' After a little while *Bangabandhu* called me upstairs. I sat close by. He said, 'You must not tell anyone, not even to your friends, what I am going to tell you.' I nodded. He said, 'You are right, I have thought about it for the whole of last night. No risk, no gain. Would you be able to carry the first stage? Be careful, don't tell anyone. I have decided what I am going to say to Yahya Khan.' I told him, 'We shall be able to carry through the first stage. It will be better if you can also arrange Indian help.' Afterwards we had breakfast. Together we came down. *Bangabandhu* called Mr. Nazrul Islam, Brother Tajuddin and Mr. Mushtaque and took them to the library room. They all came out dark faced. I took *Bangabandhu* to the President House. There he recanted from yesterday's agreement and demanded for the handing over of power to the East Pakistan Assembly. The world does not know the contribution of *Begum* Mujib in this. But we know.<sup>317</sup>

Razzak's account has remained unchallenged. There is also no other reason, substantial or circumstantial, to doubt its veracity, except his claim that Mujib's acceptance of the compromise was genuine. If Mujib was forthright, then the manner of his rejection appears utterly perplexing. It beggars belief that a political leader could have taken such a momentous decision, because of the objection of his illiterate wife and a handful of his young lieutenants, and that too, without consulting his senior colleagues and advisers. Moreover, had Mujib and his colleagues been sincere in their acceptance of the compromise, then it would have been reasonable for them to immediately cancel their planned observance of next

<sup>316</sup> Later Mujib made him General Secretary of the Awami League and the BAKSAL, and his daughter gave him a seat in her cabinet.

<sup>317</sup> Interview in *Meghna*, vol. 3 no. 9, Dhaka, 4 February 1987



day's Pakistan Day as Bangladesh Day. It was not only observed, Mujib himself raised the Bangladesh flag and went to tell Yahya of his decision to recant the previous day's agreement with the Bangladesh flag flying on his car. More remarkably, he handed over a draft proclamation for the president to make by 25 March, stripping all but a tenuous link between the two wings of the country.<sup>318</sup> It is obvious that the draft proclamation was kept ready beforehand and nullifies Razzak's claim about Mujib's change of mind under pressure. When on 24 March he and his senior colleagues met Yahya, Mujib declined to alter his stand. In a subsequent press briefing Tajuddin declared, 'From our side there is no need of further meetings', indicating that the draft proclamation was their ultimatum.<sup>319</sup> Clearly, Mujib and his close associates were not interested in achieving their Six Points; their goal extended beyond autonomy. Razzak himself confirmed this.

In the same interview referred to above, Razzak also disclosed that Mujib had detailed discussions with his principal student lieutenants, including Razzak, on 10 and 18 January 1971, over an independence plan.<sup>320</sup> In another interview he also disclosed that these student leaders had, in 1962, secretly formed *Swadhin Bangla Biplobi Parishad* (Independent Bengal Revolutionary Council) under Mujib's instruction.<sup>321</sup> According to Kazi Arif, another of these student leaders, after the elections the secret *Swadhin Bangla Biplobi Parishad* had devoted them to preparing for a war against Pakistan. While the Mujib-Yahya talks were progressing, a Dr Abu Hena was sent to Kalikata to ensure arrangements for arms supplies inside East Pakistan and the organization of training camps in India.<sup>322</sup>

### 18. Advance Preparations

Apart from these claims, the public postures of Mujib's student lieutenants were no less revealing. They had issued a public circular on behalf of the East Pakistan Student League, the student front of the Awami League, and also spoke at Dhaka's Paltan Maidan on 3 March 1971, claiming that the independence of Bangladesh had already been proclaimed.<sup>323</sup> To give substance to their assertion, they also raised a new flag and sung *Sonar Bangla*, Rabindranath Tagore ode to the partitioned Bengal of 1905 as the national anthem of Bangladesh.<sup>324</sup> The swiftness of their actions was a further indication of prior preparation. Confirming extended preparation, they have disclosed that the design of the flag came from India and had been kept ready since June 1970.<sup>325</sup> Dovetailing with this, the 35 administrative directives that Mujib

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<sup>318</sup> *White Paper on the Crisis in East Pakistan*, Islamabad, 1971: 47-63

<sup>319</sup> L.F. Rushbrook-Williams 1972: 63

<sup>320</sup> In *Meghna* vol. 3 no. 9, 4 February 1987

<sup>321</sup> In *Aei Somoya*, Dhaka, 24 March 1987

<sup>322</sup> In *Meghna*, vol. 3 no. 14, 18 March 1987

<sup>323</sup> R. Islam 1992: 62

<sup>324</sup> M.R.A. Mukul 1984: 172

<sup>325</sup> Kazi Arif in *Meghna* vol. 3 no. 14, 18 March 1987

issued during the March crisis also indicated that it was a deliberate and carefully planned move prepared in advance.<sup>326</sup>

Even before March, Awami League leaders had sounded out US officials on possible American posture towards their separatist aims<sup>327</sup> and Awami League organized liberation committees were in existence all over East Pakistan.<sup>328</sup> RAW had set up cells all along the border and kept underground resistance groups ready all over the province before the elections. Besides, during the elections around 100,000 Indian agents were sent to help the Awami League in its election campaign.<sup>329</sup> The extent of India's massive intervention in ensuring Awami League's electoral success could be seen from the fact that these 100,000 Indian campaigners had come to assist a party, which had about 2,000 activists in Dhaka and another 8,000 throughout the province.<sup>330</sup> Moreover, Hindus were told to vote only for the Awami League candidates.<sup>331</sup> This may explain the enormous electoral success of the Awami League.

## 19. Yahya Out Manoeuvred

Yahya and his advisers must have known about Mujib's secessionist aim. They could not have been unaware that the Agartala conspiracy was real. Moreover, as early as April 1970 Mujib had reconfirmed his separatist intention, when Pakistan intelligence taped him telling his closest associates:

My aim is to establish Bangladesh; I will tear the LFO [Legal Framework Order] into pieces as soon as the elections are over. Who could challenge me once the elections are over?

Bewildered but still maintaining confidence in his ability to persuade, Yahya told his advisers: 'I shall fix Mujib if he betrays me.'<sup>332</sup> What made him to trust Mujib is still a mystery. However, the manner in which Mujib deceived Daultana, the leader of the Council Muslim League, into making him believe in his commitment to keep Pakistan together is quite revealing in this respect.<sup>333</sup>

In the run-up to the elections Yahya had repeatedly told the Awami League leader that the Six Points would have to be modified, to which Mujib had, time and again, promised that he could compromise.<sup>334</sup> After the elections when Mujib became intransigent, Yahya implored him to reach out to West Pakistani politicians. He even

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<sup>326</sup> R. Khan 1999: 522

<sup>327</sup> R. Khan 1999: 508

<sup>328</sup> *The Guardian*, London, 27 March 1971

<sup>329</sup> A. Raina, *Inside Raw: The Story of India's Secret Services*, New Delhi, 1981: 50-51

<sup>330</sup> T. Maniruzzaman, *The Bangladesh Revolution and Its Aftermath*, Dhaka, 1980: 27

<sup>331</sup> Anon 1979: 26

<sup>332</sup> G.W. Choudhury 1993: 85

<sup>333</sup> R. Khan 1999: 526

<sup>334</sup> O.B. Jones 2002: 163

told him 'I have nothing against the Six Points programme, but you will have to carry the West Pakistan leaders with you.'<sup>335</sup> Sensing that Mujib may betray his trust, a forlorn Yahya started muttering to his advisers: 'Mujib has let me down. Those who warned me against him were right. I was wrong in trusting this person.'<sup>336</sup> Desperately hoping that the assurance of having office might make Mujib conciliatory, he publicly told reporters that Mujib was going to be the future prime minister of the country.<sup>337</sup> Using Bhutto's demand for compromise on the Six Points as a handle, Mujib's reply was that for the sake of ministry he would not budge and 'If you still want to play with fire, well, we shall show you such a game, which no body has ever seen.'<sup>338</sup> In his 21 February Bengali language Martyr Day speech he was openly in inciting mood. He told the people

Hard days lie ahead. I may not remain with you. Every man must die one day. I do not know when I shall be able to appear before you again. I, therefore, call upon you and every one of Bengal to prepare them for supreme sacrifice... Do not be cowards; secure your rights for self-determination even at the cost of supreme sacrifice.

To his followers, he said:

It is time for the final struggle... Go to different parts of the country and ask the people to remain prepared for the supreme sacrifice. Turn every house of Bengal into an impregnable fort.<sup>339</sup>

Faced with Mujib's stridency, Bhutto's sanguinity for a share in power, and the rumour that the US might back East Pakistan's separation, a despondent Yahya worried aloud to US ambassador about the possibility of a split and sought to check whether the US really preferred Pakistan's continued unity.<sup>340</sup> Joseph Farland's report leaves little doubt about Yahya's position. Accommodative to East Pakistan's aspirations, he was determined not to allow a constitution that would be the death knell of united Pakistan. Faced with two regional politicians determined to have power at any cost he considered a working coalition between the two offering the best solution not only for saving the integrity of the country but also for giving the new constitution a chance to work.<sup>341</sup> In view of the Bhutto-Mujib impasse he thought it desirable to allow them time by deferring the planned national assembly of 3 March. Disclosing his mind on this, he even asked Farland to see Mujib as soon as possible, which the latter did on 26 February.<sup>342</sup>

Although the gap in declassified US records has left the outcome of the visit in dark, records show Yahya conveyed his decision to Mujib on the 28<sup>th</sup>. On receiving it,

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<sup>335</sup> R. Session and L.E. Rose 1990: 63; H. Zaheer 1994: 134

<sup>336</sup> G.W. Choudhury 1993: 149

<sup>337</sup> *Sangbad*, 15 January 1971

<sup>338</sup> *Ittefaq* 16 February 1971; *Sangbad* 16 February 1971

<sup>339</sup> *Ittefaq* 23 February 1971

<sup>340</sup> R. Khan 1999: 466

<sup>341</sup> R. Khan 1999: 481-83

<sup>342</sup> R. Khan 1999: 494-95

Mujib calmly told the governor if the assembly were called within March he would be able to control the situation, if in April it would be difficult.<sup>343</sup> Yet on the same day under his instruction his associates in London went to demonstrate in front of the Pakistan High Commission and set up vigils. Apparently tipped off by them, the Evening Standard broke the news of the impending presidential announcement.<sup>344</sup> Following Yahya's formal announcement on 1 March, protesters also appeared on the streets of Dhaka and the next day Mujib himself vehemently denounced the postponement as the continuation of the longstanding conspiracy to maintain the colonial status of East Pakistan and observed that Bengalis know how to shed blood. He announced that on the 7<sup>th</sup> he would address a rally and disclose his plans for the future.<sup>345</sup> On the 3<sup>rd</sup> his UK associates again returned to the embassy and publicly announced, as did the leaders of the Student League in Dhaka, Pakistan's death, and marked it by burning the Pakistan flag.<sup>346</sup>

## 20. Waiting for Green Light

Off the record, Mujib had told foreign press reporters that his announcement of the 7<sup>th</sup> would be equivalent to independence,<sup>347</sup> raising speculation that he intended to declare UDI.<sup>348</sup> Meanwhile, faced with an unmanageable situation both the governor and the GOC of the province resigned. Yahya, however, remained committed not to give-up trying. He sent message to Mujib urging him not to take a hasty decision and told him that he had a scheme in mind that would more than satisfy Six Points.<sup>349</sup> Next day, Farland also saw Mujib and reportedly pressed him into talks with Yahya.<sup>350</sup> With no direct communication from the 2<sup>nd</sup><sup>351</sup> but still counting on press reports on impending UDI, on the 7<sup>th</sup> the UK Awami Leaguers proceeded to adopt a resolution welcoming independence at a public gathering.<sup>352</sup> Within East Pakistan separatist army officers also started preparing for an armed showdown.<sup>353</sup> Although Mujib's announcements of the 7<sup>th</sup> stopped short of UDI, they left its imminent possibility dangling and gave emotional incentive to violence. On the 10<sup>th</sup> he issued a public statement, again warning people to expect extreme violence and genocide.<sup>354</sup>

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<sup>343</sup> B. Cloughley 2000: 166

<sup>344</sup> A. Matin, *Swadhinata Sangramy Pravasi Bangali* (The Role of Overseas Bengalees in the Liberation Struggle), London, 1989: 17

<sup>345</sup> R. Khan 1999: 497

<sup>346</sup> A. Matin 1989: 18

<sup>347</sup> R. Khan 1999: 501

<sup>348</sup> *The Sunday Times*, London, 7 March 1971

<sup>349</sup> B. Cloughley 2000: 167-68

<sup>350</sup> J. Sen-Gupta 1981: 36-37

<sup>351</sup> *Amrit Bazar Patrika*, 3 March 1971

<sup>352</sup> A. Matin 1989: 17-18

<sup>353</sup> R. Islam, *A Tale of Millions: Bangladesh Liberation War 1971*, Dhaka, 1974

<sup>354</sup> B. Cloughley 2000: 169

Other than Yahya's overtures and Farland's possible persuasions, Mujib had a more compelling reason to play for time: he was yet to get confirmation that all planned preparations across the border had been completed. On 6 March he sent Tajuddin, who was against any settlement within the framework of Pakistan,<sup>355</sup> to see the Indian deputy high commissioner in Dhaka. Unable to confirm, K. C. Sengupta dashed to Delhi.<sup>356</sup> Separately, Mujib also wrote to the Indian parliamentarian Samar Guha to help obtain the confirmation.<sup>357</sup> Moreover, on the 10<sup>th</sup> he sent three UK Awami Leaguers to meet the Indian high commissioner. On the 12<sup>th</sup> Appa Pant brought the needed reply.<sup>358</sup> Sengupta also brought back the confirmation on the 17<sup>th</sup>. Remarkably, on the same day Indian ambassador privately briefed the American secretary of state that Indian policy was to stay out of the East Pakistan crisis. A few days earlier the Indian foreign secretary had similarly told the US ambassador that India wanted Pakistan to remain united.<sup>359</sup> Clearly, the good men employed to lie for their country did their job tremendously well.

Within a week or so of the Pakistan army's crackdown, Field Marshall Manekshaw got instructions from the Indian Prime Minister – Indira Gandhi - to prepare for an all out war on behalf of Bangladesh.<sup>360</sup> Only on Manekshaw's advice did she agree to wait until early winter.<sup>361</sup>

### 21. Behind Mujib's Stratagem of Bloody Separation

After being released from detention in Pakistan to hero's welcome, Mujib publicly confirmed his and India's methodical preparations. In the very first post-Bangladesh council session of his Awami League at Dhaka, he boastfully disclosed that before courting arrest by the Pakistani authorities, he had made all arrangements with Delhi so that his followers could have safe sanctuary and assistance.<sup>362</sup> But Mujib had no need for Indian intervention; he could have secured independent Bangladesh without spilling blood. Faced with his draft proclamation, which would have brought in a *de facto* secession, Yahya proposed that if the Awami League leaders were hell-bent on separation, the central government would be prepared to consult East Pakistanis and act upon their wishes. Unwilling to take the democratic route, Mujib insisted on having outright independence.<sup>363</sup> It was only in this context and faced with an impending armed challenge on the 26<sup>th</sup>, Yahya ordered his army to act preemptively on the 25<sup>th</sup> of March. Operation Searchlight by the Pakistan Army was

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<sup>355</sup> J. Sen-Gupta 1981: 36-37

<sup>356</sup> R. Islam 1992: 147

<sup>357</sup> R. Islam 1992: 148

<sup>358</sup> A. Matin 1989: 19

<sup>359</sup> B. Cloughley 2000: 170

<sup>360</sup> P. Gupte, *Mother India: A Political Biography of Indira Gandhi*, New York, 1992: 401-02

<sup>361</sup> S. Bhaumik, *Insurgent Crossfire: Northeast India*, New Delhi, 1996: 34-35

<sup>362</sup> *Sangbad*, 8 June 1972

<sup>363</sup> G.W. Choudhury 1993: 177-79

hastily put together between the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup>.<sup>364</sup> Notwithstanding the fury and bloodletting, it was no more than fumbling fury of a tricked tiger in a corner.

In spite of having popular support for his demand for autonomy, Mujib could not bank on the majority of East Pakistanis to back his separatist agenda. He had privately admitted before that most of them were not ready for secession.<sup>365</sup> The willingness of a large number of them to take arms in defence of the united Pakistan, even after the painful army crackdown, showed the strength of this reluctance. After Yahya's offer of accepting five of his Six Points, he had more reasons to expect them not to back his separatist agenda. Moreover, even if somehow he could persuade the majority and succeeded in taking East Pakistan out of Pakistan amicably, there was no certainty that the separation would be lasting. In this he could not ignore the fact that the economic realities of a self-standing Bangladesh would have laid bare the myth of West Pakistani exploitation. His hope of boosting the economy of Bangladesh by intensive trading and joint irrigation and flood control measures with India<sup>366</sup> was at best a long shot and could in no way help mitigate the shock of the unbarring of the falsity of the propaganda about West Pakistani exploitation. The post-Bangladesh public opinion favouring continued political association with West Pakistan,<sup>367</sup> brought to spectacular relief during Bhutto's visit in 1974,<sup>368</sup> demonstrated the weight of this assessment.

It is a myth that West Pakistanis wanted to keep East Pakistan tied to its apron strings at any cost. In the early 1960s when certain East Pakistani economists started calling for two economies and the talk about separation was heard, President Ayub told leading East Pakistani politicians, journalists and opinion leaders if they were serious there was no need to quarrel, hurl accusations and hurt each other. He offered to sit with them like brothers, and in a spirit of goodwill and understanding separate. The answer was 'Never! Never! We do not even dream of it.' Taffazul Husain (Manik Miah), the editor of *Ittefaq* said:

Mr. President, our differences are with your government, not against our country. I want to assure you that as long as my generation has any influence left on our people nothing will hurt the unity of Pakistan. What will happen after we are gone is what worries us above everything else. On several occasions we have been secretly offered weapons by two super powers. But we have always replied to them that whatever our internal differences may be we will not tolerate interference from any outside power. We know that these super powers are all the time at each other's throats but they are agreed on dividing Pakistan into two.<sup>369</sup>

Mujib had stayed away from that meeting. Nevertheless, he must have known that anything other than an amicable separation would make bloodshed inevitable.

<sup>364</sup> B. Cloughley 2000: 170-71

<sup>365</sup> R. Khan 1999: 469

<sup>366</sup> R. Khan 1999: 445

<sup>367</sup> G. Ayub in *Jiggasa, Mag-Chaitra*, Kalikata, 1399BS; S. Roy-Choudhury in *The Daily Telegraph*, London, 12 May 1973; W. Schwartz in *The Guardian*, 3 July 1974

<sup>368</sup> *The Guardian*, *The Times*, *The Daily Telegraph*, London, 28 June 1974; *Le Monde*, Paris, 11 July 1974

<sup>369</sup> Q.U. Shahab 1987: 851, cf. also M. Munir, *From Jinnah to Zia*, Lahore, 1979: 92-93; A. Gauhar, *Ayub Khan: Pakistan's First Military Ruler*, Lahore, 1993: 487-90

Surprisingly, he was ready for it. From the start of his Six Points campaign Mujib had dismissed his associates' fear of a civil war and bloodbath by saying 'of course, people will get killed'.<sup>370</sup> Indian interventionist strategy also required the excuse of refugees and genocide. Without staging a bloody conflict India would not have the chance to get directly involved, create a flaccid state under its close embrace and leave many people of the fledgling state with deep aversion towards West Pakistan.<sup>371</sup> By becoming embroiled in a conspiracy with India and having advanced down the road to staging a bloody separation, Mujib was not free to have a peaceful settlement, however attractive.

Against this, it might be argued that were Mujib so much hand-in-glove with India, instead of courting arrest he would have escaped to India at the start of the Pakistan Army's crackdown. Moreover, on the night of 6 March he would not have sent a message to the GOC East Pakistan telling him about the pressure from the militant student leaders and the Tajuddin faction against an amicable settlement and urging him to place him under protective military custody. Furthermore, while in detention after the army crackdown, he would not have affirmed, under oath, his continued commitment to a united Pakistan. Above all, he would not have, as his tape-recorded discussion with Bhutto immediately before his release from Pakistan's prison in January 1972 shows,<sup>372</sup> considered retaining a semblance of unity even when the two wings of the country stood separated. He might have solicited Indian help out of despondency, but all this disclosed his lingering commitment to keep Pakistan together.

In view of the methodical preparations for an armed showdown in which Mujib was engaged, the purpose of Mujib's private request to the GOC hardly deserves to be treated at face value. The fact that the GOC did not respond to the request<sup>373</sup> suggests that the army leadership had no trust left in him and had probably taken it as a ploy to stir further violence. Nor could his prison statement be given any weight. He was capable of committing perjury in the service of his politics, as his protestation of innocence during the Agartala conspiracy case had shown. However, regarding his conversation with Bhutto one would be hard pressed to draw any firm conclusion. Still in captivity, it was not beyond him to feign commitment to Pakistan's unity. However, it is also possible that being confronted with the realities he was shaken and was disposed to consider having a confederation with West Pakistan as his only means of escaping the Indian tutelage. The fact that on reaching London he had mentioned it to his journalist friend Anthony Mascarenhas with apparent seriousness<sup>374</sup> gives weight to this possibility. But once he had spoken to Mrs Gandhi, the thought dropped out of his mind.<sup>375</sup> Clearly, Mujib's fleeting interest in a new confederal Pakistan, even if genuine, could not be taken as proof of his unbroken fidelity to Pakistan.

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<sup>370</sup> A. Begum in *Tarokalok*, Eidul Azha issue, Dhaka, 1987

<sup>371</sup> M.A.M. Chowdhury, *Behind the Myth of Three Million*, London, 1996

<sup>372</sup> S. Wolpert 1994: 173-74

<sup>373</sup> H. Zaheer 1994: 488

<sup>374</sup> A. Mascarenhas, *Bangladesh: A Legacy of Blood*, London, 1986: 5

<sup>375</sup> J. Sen-Gupta 1974: 145

Likewise, his decision not to escape to India had little to do with his commitment to a united Pakistan. Mujib's own explanation, given to the British broadcaster David Frost, was that he wanted to stop the Pakistan army killing people while searching for him.<sup>376</sup> Those who were close to him had, however, a different story. According to them, the plan was for Mujib to escape, but at the last moment he had a phone call and abruptly decided to stay back.<sup>377</sup> The phone call was said to have been from the US ambassador.<sup>378</sup> Although the gap in the declassified US records has kept the truth shrouded, given Farland's previous brokering it was possible that he may have advised Mujib against fleeing. But the bottom line was, while mindful not to defy the US envoy, Mujib sent his associates to India as planned with the parting word 'you know well we are not alone, we have a friend. We have a reliable and sincere friend.'<sup>379</sup> It is also worth pointing out that immediately after Farland had seen him on the morning of 7 March and pressed him to enter into talks with Yahya, Mujib had asked his communist confidante Khandkar Ilyas to let India know about the US pressure. The same day, he also dispatched a top Awami League official, who later served in his cabinet, to Kalikata for informing the Indian authorities.<sup>380</sup> Clearly, the US pressure did not stop him from preparing for an armed showdown. Similarly, it is likely that the US envoy's eleventh hour advice to keep the option for a negotiated settlement open was heeded to without intending to stop the civil war or to save the unity of Pakistan. In all probability, to him it was more of a contingency in case India shied away from intervening militarily.

## 22. Tracing Mujib's Secessionism

To understand Mujib's actions, one has to retrace his secessionist drive. In his book, which was publicly endorsed by Mujib, Khandkar Ilyas has quoted him saying that he never believed in Pakistan.<sup>381</sup> To his biographer, Mazharul Islam, Mujib also claimed to have warned a student meeting at Kalikata in June 1947 that soon another 'independence struggle' would have to be waged in East Pakistan.<sup>382</sup> Tufail Ahmed, his political assistant and one of the closest associates, has claimed that from 1948 Mujib started working for secession.<sup>383</sup> Mujib himself made similar claims. For instance, while receiving arms back from a contingent of the Mukti Bahini at Dhaka stadium, he told them that he had dreamt of Bangladesh and its flag for a long time. Again, in an interview with a journalist from Chittagong, he claimed that as early as 1948, along with Zahur Ahmed Choudhury and M. A. Aziz of Chittagong, he began seriously thinking about Bangladesh. Mujib was capable of falsifying history to create new legends and myths and to make a political point.<sup>384</sup>

<sup>376</sup> A. Matin 1989: 8

<sup>377</sup> Abdur Razzak in *Meghna*. vol. 3 no. 9, 4 February 1987

<sup>378</sup> Q.Z. Qayyum in S.H. Choudhury, *Ekatharer Vijay* (The Victory of Seventy-one), Dhaka, 1984

<sup>379</sup> K. Ilyas 1972: 572, 578

<sup>380</sup> J. Sen-Gupta 1981: 36-37

<sup>381</sup> K. Ilyas 1972: 20

<sup>382</sup> M. Islam, *Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib*, Dhaka, 1974: 78-79 However, this claim is patently false, for after June 1947 he continued to act loyally for Pakistan and went to take an active part in the Sylhet referendum.

<sup>383</sup> In 'Bangladesh 25', BBC, London, 27 November 1996

<sup>384</sup> S. Banerjee in A.G. Chaudhury 1977



However, the testimony of two Indian writers - Manuj Basu and Joyti Sen-Gupta - and the Congress leader Manoranjan Dhar can hardly be discounted. According to Basu, a leading West Bengali writer and leftist intellectual, while attending the World Peace Conference in Beijing in 1954, Mujib discussed with him his separatist plan. During his visit to Dhaka in 1972, Mujib recalled that discussion and thanked Basu for keeping the secret in the presence of a group of West Bengali men of letters.<sup>385</sup>

Sen-Gupta was no ordinary journalist; his account was based on an insider's knowledge.<sup>386</sup> He was involved in the abortive Indian attempt to bring Sri Lanka under Indian embrace in early 1954, when Sir John Kotelawala, an ethnic Indian, briefly became the prime minister of the island nation. When the secret move became known and Kotelawala was removed from power, Sen-Gupta hurriedly left Colombo and was sent to Dhaka. In Dhaka he became an active organizer of the secessionist drive.<sup>387</sup> According to him, India tacitly facilitated the setting up of the Awami League, and Mujib held regular appointments with India's Deputy High Commissioner, C. C. Desai.<sup>388</sup> When in 1957 Desai was expelled, Sen-Gupta escaped arrest. Two senior East Pakistani civil servants, A. K. M. Ahsan (who was instrumental in setting up the Tamaddun Majlis which started the language campaign) and Shamsur Rahman Khan (one of Mujib's co-accused in the Agartala conspiracy case) warned him off. Another leftist CSP officer, Sanaul Haq, helped him with false travel documents.<sup>389</sup> During his stay in Dhaka, Sen-Gupta was able to broker a secret five-point agreement between Congress leaders represented by Manoranjan Dhar and Mujib in the presence of Paresh Das Gupta, First Secretary at the Indian deputy high commission.<sup>390</sup> According to Sen-Gupta, after Pakistan came under Martial Law, the behind the scene Indian backed drive was no longer,

'for the restoration of democracy but for independence. And senior Civil Service of Pakistan men, former ministers and political leaders joined hands. [And he himself was] in constant touch with developments secretly taking place in East Pakistan.'<sup>391</sup>

Before Sen-Gupta published his account, Manoranjan Dhar, whom Mujib made his law minister, disclosed that the leaders of the Congress had never accepted Pakistan; that without their influence the Awami League might not have become secular; and that they secretly facilitated the secessionist drive. According to him,

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<sup>385</sup> M. Basu in *Banglar Dak*, London, 16 January 1977

<sup>386</sup> *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 2 August 1974

<sup>387</sup> J. Sen-Gupta 1974: xx-xxi

<sup>388</sup> J. Sen-Gupta 1974: xxi

<sup>389</sup> J. Sen-Gupta 1974: xxii-xxiii

<sup>390</sup> J. Sen-Gupta 1974: 83-84

<sup>391</sup> J. Sen-Gupta 1974: xxiii

'if Bangladesh is not only free today but is also a staunch friend of India, most of the credit for bringing about that happy result must go to those handful of Congressmen here who fought every adversity.<sup>392</sup>

Dhar also claimed that the Congressmen were instrumental in setting out the Six-Points. Both Sen-Gupta and Dhar made their disclosures when Mujib was alive. The fact that he did not repudiate them attests to their veracity. More importantly, in dovetailing with his own claims, theirs' gain in weight and authenticity.

These are not, however, the only evidence to go by. A group of Awami League and National Awami Party activists from Jamalpur formed in 1958 a clandestine body, the East Bengal Liberation Front (EBLF), for making East Pakistan an independent socialist state. They contacted, among others, Mujib and Manik Miah. With the help of Abul Mansur Ahmad they met B.M. Ghosh, Second Secretary at the Indian Deputy High Commission. With the help of Ghosh, an EBLF team went to Delhi in March 1959 and met Nehru. While giving words of encouragement, Nehru avoided committing to help the EBLF. But on their way back Indian intelligence got in touch with the delegation, promised them help and told them to report back to the Indian deputy high commission for direction. On returning home the delegation found them under warrant of arrest and further moves could not materialise. On his release from prison in 1963, Abdur Rahman Siddiqui, the leader of EBLF, again went back to India. This time, the officers of the Indian intelligence told him that all help was being given through Mujib and they should work with him.<sup>393</sup>

According to Tufail Ahmed, during 1961-62 a number of leaflets reached the student activists and 'we knew Bangabandhu was behind it.'<sup>394</sup> The account of Qazi Zafar Ahmed<sup>395</sup> corroborates Tufail's claim. According to Zafar, during this period through Manik Miah the agreement of the Communist Party and the National Awami Party was sought and obtained for reinvigorating the demand for autonomy with a view to preparing the province for eventual separation and Mujib was entrusted to lead the drive.<sup>396</sup> In the words of Kazi Arif, leaders of the Awami League's student front also started setting up cells of secessionist students from 1962.<sup>397</sup>

In a signed affidavit, Jogendralal Singh, Chief Minister of the Indian state of Tripura, has revealed that in 1962 Mujib along with a number of his associates turned up in Agartala with the aim of launching insurgency against Pakistan. At Mujib's request Jogendralal went to New Delhi, along with Tripura's chief

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<sup>392</sup> In B. Chatterjee 1973: 54-60

<sup>393</sup> R. Islam 1992: 37-45

<sup>394</sup> In *Meghna* vol. 3 no. 12, 4 March 1987

<sup>395</sup> Qazi Zafar Ahmed was then the general secretary of the Communist student front, East Pakistan Student Union. Later he was active in trade union and rose to become prime minister under Erashad's military regime.

<sup>396</sup> R. Islam 1992: 55

<sup>397</sup> In *Meghna* vol. 3 no. 14, 18 March 1987

secretary, Ramon, to get Nehru's approval. Nehru was against allowing guerrilla base inside India and asked Jogendralal to tell Mujib to go back and fight from within East Pakistan. However, he also told him to assure Mujib of continued Indian help.<sup>398</sup> The assurance of continued Indian help leaves little doubt that Mujib had been getting help from India well before 1962. According to Aminul Haque Badsha, Mujib's press secretary, the 1962 visit was not the Awami League leader's first clandestine trip to India. He had been to Agartala, via Sylhet in 1959, for consultation with the Indian authorities.<sup>399</sup>

Soon after having Nehru's assurance through Jogendralal, Mujib again went back to Agartala to meet the Indian intelligence bureau's foreign desk operatives. During the meeting 'Colonel Menon' (Sankaran Nair, head of Pakistan desk) was impressed by the fact that the group was eager to escalate their movement. But he found their plans half-baked and advised them that it was far too early for them to take to insurgency.<sup>400</sup> Around this time, Mujib also became involved with a small group of East Pakistani armed forces personnel and senior civil servants, brought together in Karachi by Lieutenant Commander Muazzam Hussain of the Pakistan Navy. They wanted to achieve the separation of East Pakistan through an armed rebellion. Muazzam was also linked with India and, as his wife's disclosure showed, had visited Agartala separately. Mujib's visits to Agartala, the conspiracy with Indian intelligence on the one hand, and with Muazzam's group on the other, would later form the basis of the Pakistan government's charges against him in 1967.

By the early 1960s Mujib was undoubtedly spearheading a number of clandestine initiatives to get East Pakistan out of Pakistan.<sup>401</sup> At that time his party, the Awami League, was defunct. His mentor Suhrawardy was opposed to its reviving and committed to campaigning for the restoration of parliamentary democracy under the banner of the National Democratic Front, a coalition of former parties. Moreover, Suhrawardy, who had publicly stated that the 1956 constitution had accorded East Pakistan 98 percent autonomy, could not be expected to lead a renewed campaign for autonomy. In an interview in 1962 an impatient Mujib gave away his predicament by saying 'As long as the leader is alive, I cannot raise any demand for East Pakistan alone.'<sup>402</sup>

A desperate Mujib followed Suhrawardy to London during the winter of 1963. The latter had gone there for treatment. The aim was to change the leader's mind on the question of reviving the Awami League and to win him over to the secessionist cause. Suhrawardy, who in 1962 had vigorously denied Ayub's oblique accusation of being surrounded by anti-Pakistani elements,<sup>403</sup> refused to join the move to break-

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<sup>398</sup> In F. Ahmad, *Agartala Mamlā, Mujib O Banglar Vidroha* (Agartala Case, Mujib and Bengal's Revolt), Dhaka, 1994

<sup>399</sup> Personal communication

<sup>400</sup> A. Raina 1981: 49-50

<sup>401</sup> R. Islam 1992: 60

<sup>402</sup> D. Wright 1988: 96

<sup>403</sup> S.S. Hussain 1995: 238-47

up Pakistan and angrily asked Mujib to leave, warning others present that Mujib was embarked upon destroying their country.<sup>404</sup> Yet Mujib remained undeterred and proceeded to approach the Cuban embassy for assistance in training insurgents.<sup>405</sup> Within two months Suhrawardy met a sudden death in Beirut, freeing Mujib to revive the Awami League.

1966 saw Mujib in full stride, pursuing the Six Points programme. The authorship of the Six Points was beyond his competence<sup>406</sup> and since 1971 many competing claimants have appeared.<sup>407</sup> Without doubt much clever thinking had gone into the drafting and in concealing the real authors. Mujib had by then one Chittaranjan Sutar placed in Kalikata to liaise with the Indian government on his behalf. Indian government housed Sutar at 27 Rajendra road, which in 1971 became the hub of the Mujib Bahini and RAW.<sup>408</sup> While Mujib was in custody, RAW mobilized East Pakistani intellectuals,<sup>409</sup> which to a great extent explains the sudden conversion of so many hitherto 'patriotic' Pakistani writers, academics and journalists into Pakistan hating Bengali super-patriots. Following his release from the Agartala conspiracy case, Mujib visited London, for the stated purpose of meeting his party workers. The real objective was, however, to finalize the next phase of his separatist drive. A team of Indian high officials, accompanied by Sutar, was flown to London for the purpose.<sup>410</sup>

During his trial in the Agartala conspiracy case, Mujib had protested his innocence under oath. On his release from prison he castigated the Pakistan government's efforts to punish him as the 'Islamabad conspiracy'.<sup>411</sup> Even after his death some of his admirers continued to lie on his behalf.<sup>412</sup> Now Mujib's perjury in court and brazen lie to the people of East Pakistan are defended on the grounds of political necessity.<sup>413</sup> After the return to power of the Awami League in the late 1990s, even the country's parliament was told about the factual nature of the Agartala conspiracy. The question is, therefore, not whether Mujib had acted on an Indian sponsored separatist agenda, but why? An equally important question is why did India undertake to break-up Pakistan and create Bangladesh?□

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<sup>404</sup> A.F.M.A. Jalil, *Mujib Sarkarer Uttan-Pathan* (The Rise and Fall of the Mujib Government), Dhaka, 1976: 79-80

<sup>405</sup> A. Choudhury in *Bichitra*, vol. 16 no. 29, 18 December, 1988; R. Islam 1992: 47-48

<sup>406</sup> K.A. Haque 1986: 516

<sup>407</sup> Abdur Razzak in *Meghna*, vol. 3 no. 9, 4 February 1987

<sup>408</sup> Abdur Razzak in *Meghna*, vol. 3 no. 9, 4 February 1987; Kazi Arif in *Meghna*, vol.3 no. 14, 18 March 1987 and in *Tarokalok*, 1-14 April 1989

<sup>409</sup> S. Bhaumik 1996: 33

<sup>410</sup> Abdur Razzak in *Meghna*, vol. 3 no. 9, 4 February 1987; Kazi Arif in *Meghna*, vol.3 no. 14, 18 March 1987

<sup>411</sup> Speech in A.H. Badsha, *Aungkurito Aketrish* (Germinal Thirty First), Dhaka, 1993: 3-6

<sup>412</sup> A.G. Choudhury 1977: 11-12

<sup>413</sup> F. Ahmad 1994

## Politics of Partition and Secession

*Dr M. Abdul Mu'min Chowdhury*

### 1. The Sultan's Manacles

Thanks to Mujib and his lieutenants and their Congress and the Communist handlers as well as their Indian sponsors, we know infinitely more about the real story behind the creation of Bangladesh. That their success was achieved through a seriatim of politics of deception is too obvious to be denied. From their admissions and actions it is patently clear that in bringing about the 'only successful case of sponsored insurgency',<sup>414</sup> Mujib and his associates' assigned task was to spread popular disaffection and create an atmosphere of insurrection in order to goad many otherwise reluctant East Pakistan Muslims into siding with them and give India the opportunity to enter directly into the fray and hive off Pakistan by military force.

Although Mujib and the Indian policy elite were united in their desire to break up Pakistan, their motives were far from being the same. The 'king of the Awami League' who lacked organization and support outside East Pakistan, wanted India to separate the province so that he could become its 'sultan'. Although per chance he had the 'throne' of Pakistan and, then, a peacefully separated East Pakistan on offer before him, having thoroughly entangled himself with India he was in no position to avail either of them. In spite of his immense practical cunning, he lacked mental equanimity and intellectual discernment to fully appreciate that a throne obtained second hand may have its price as well. Nor was he clear-sighted enough to recognize the pitfalls of the politics of deception in which he was drawn into and made the spearhead. It is possible he may have thought that once in power he would be free to brush them off.

The Indian policy planners knew in advance the twin fact that the support for separation was restricted and not many East Pakistani Muslims were enamoured by India.<sup>415</sup> After splitting the country, they quickly imposed a number of binds,

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<sup>414</sup> S. Bhaumik, *Insurgent Crossfire: Northeast India*, New Delhi, 1996: 39

<sup>415</sup> D. Moraes, *From East and West: A Collection of Essays*, New Delhi, 1971; A.L. Khatib, *Kara Mujiber Hoithakari (Who Killed Mujib?)*, Dhaka, 1992: 87; *The Minutes of The Washington Special Action Group On Indo-Pakistan Hostilities*, cited in R. Islam,

including a 25 years treaty on Bangladesh. Neither temperamentally cut out, nor mentally prepared to be satisfied at being the 'viceroy' of India, Mujib quickly turned sullen.<sup>416</sup>

Apart from the anti-separatists, many of those who had impulsively joined the separatist bandwagon were deeply disturbed. Some of the latter had started to have second thoughts even while in India and after the birth of Bangladesh the drift of Indian policies made them alarmed and caustic. Faced with a pervasive public disquiet, the watchful Indian wits started acknowledging that their country was faced with a 'real' antagonism<sup>417</sup> and the possibility that it would never be forgiven by Bangladesh for 'liberating' it.<sup>418</sup> Mujib, who all along knew that most people were against the separation, least of all under Indian sponsorship, could hardly remiss the potential threat it was posing to his public standing.

While publicly showing himself beholden to the 'friend-state', a troubled Mujib secretly started looking for an escape route by moving closer to Pakistan. He started by engineering Bangladesh's entry into OIC, the body of Islamic states, and his own visit to Pakistan to signify its importance. There he confidentially told one of his East Pakistani detractors that he needed help and time to cool down the bitterness left behind by the heavy handedness of the Pakistani army crackdown before he could take up the task of repairing the broken tie.<sup>419</sup> Indian policymakers, who expected the negative turn in the Bangladeshi public mode, did not discount the prospect of Mujib's double-crossing and reevaluated him as an unreconstructed Muslim.<sup>420</sup> The inquisitive Indian press even questioned a visiting Bangladeshi minister about his country's fresh desire to reestablish 'federal links' with Pakistan.<sup>421</sup>

President Bhutto's Dhaka visit again showed that for most Bangladeshis Pakistan had been and still remained an emotional reality<sup>422</sup> and some Western media even regretted their own role in the breaking up of Pakistan, blaming their 'badly informed compassion' and its sly exploitation by the politically interested.<sup>423</sup> Before he could atone his folly and extricate himself from his new fetters Mujib was politically finished, thanks, beside the simmering anguish of a cheated majority, to the monster of a party that he had built. The Awami League was awash with so

*Banladesher Muktijudher Prakkapat O Brihath Saktir Pratikria* (Background to the Bangladesh's War of Independence and the Reaction of Big Powers), Dhaka, 1992: 184

<sup>416</sup> *The Daily Telegraph*, London, 11 March 1972; M.R. Choudhury in *Khoborer Kagoj*, Dhaka, 11 January 1990

<sup>417</sup> Sanjay Roy Chowdhury in *The Daily Telegraph*, London, 12 May 1973

<sup>418</sup> *The Statesman Weekly*, Kalikata, 25 August 1973

<sup>419</sup> Mahmud Ali in personal communication

<sup>420</sup> J.N. Dixit, *Liberation and Beyond*, Dhaka, 1999: 220-50

<sup>421</sup> *Holiday*, Dhaka, 5 May 1974

<sup>422</sup> W. Schwartz in *The Guardian*, London, 3 July 1974

<sup>423</sup> *The Wall Street Journal*, New York, cited in K. Sindhi, *Bangladesh - Vision and Reality*, Hyderabad, 1977: 2

many avaricious crooks and crafty traitors whom Mujib could neither check nor forsake and was compelled to rely upon, despite their role in causing one of the severest man-made famines, for safeguarding his power base from evaporating. To make matters worse, out of desperation and on the prompting of one of his high Hindu ministers,<sup>424</sup> he threw away his democratic pretension and turned the country into a one-party state with himself as its sole arbiter. A section of the army officers, who guided by their unstudied emotion had thought they had fought for a genuine liberation of their land and people and now felt betrayed, wreaked vengeance on Mujib amidst marked public relief and rejoicing. The irony was that unbeknown to his nemeses at that very point in time his private emissary, Khawja Khairuddin, was busy in Islamabad trying to get Bhutto's agreement on a bridge-building initiative.<sup>425</sup>

Within three months India arranged a *coup d'etat* by its protégés in the Bangladesh army<sup>426</sup> that would have invited the Indian army under the terms of the Indo-Bangladesh 25 year treaty.<sup>427</sup> That sparked off a mass uprising by the rank and file of the army. The soldiers lynched the plotters and catapulted the army chief of staff Ziaur Rahman, who had been put under arrest by the plotters, to power. Zia was neither an Indian acolyte nor a separatist; he was one of those driven to take up arms by the crackdown of the Pakistan army against the country he and other East Pakistani soldiers had defended bravely with distinction during 1965 war of which they remained justifiably proud.<sup>428</sup> Although a soldier by profession, he proved an exceptionally adept politician. After ditching the Indian inspired 'state principles' of Bengali nationalism, secularism and socialism, he reaffirmed Bangladesh's Muslim credentials and established a degree of normality in public life. He quietly also took to the road to reconciliation that Mujib perhaps wanted but could not travel. However, within months of reaching an informal agreement with President Zia-ul-Haq of Pakistan to bring the two wings of Pakistan together again, President Ziaur Rahman was killed by a group of his army officers of Bangladesh.<sup>429</sup> It is impossible to say whether his murder was Indian inspired, but it was certainly what Prime Minister Indira Gandhi had ordered her intelligence agency (RAW) to do.<sup>430</sup>

## 2. Probable Indian Motives

Not surprisingly, most Bangladeshis continued to agonize over Indian motives. To avoid being called 'agents' or 'traitors', Bangladeshi secessionists found it necessary

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<sup>424</sup> *The Far Eastern Economic Review*, Hong Kong, 16 May, 1975.

<sup>425</sup> Khawja Khairuddin in personal communication

<sup>426</sup> A. Raina, *Inside RAW – The Story of India's Secret Services*, New Delhi, 1981: 51

<sup>427</sup> *The Financial Times*, London, 10 November, 1975

<sup>428</sup> In a public display of his pride in his part in defending Pakistan, only a few days before he was catapulted to the leadership of Bangladesh he donated the revolver he had used in the 1965 war to the Bangladesh army museum.

<sup>429</sup> M. Salahuddin, editor of *Takbir*, Karachi who brokered the agreement, in personal communication

<sup>430</sup> N. Mitra and R. Sarin in *The Sunday*, Kalikata, 18-24 September 1988; A.A. Biswas in *The New Nation*, Dhaka, 31 August-2 September, 1994

to revise their public view of India's role. Instead of portraying India as unselfish and magnanimous, their new witticism is that India had acted as the mid-wife to Bangladesh out of its own interest and with the aim of cutting Pakistan down in size degrading its military might, economic strength and international stature, knocking out its Islamic foundation so that it too could move towards the sunlight of secularism and stopping leadership in the Bangladesh war going over to the Marxist left.<sup>431</sup> Indian scholars have also given a somewhat similar explanation. While insisting that their country's backing for the Bangladeshi secessionists was neither long, nor premeditated, they claim that India took the opportunity of enforcing separation in order to weaken Pakistan militarily, save its own conflict ridden North-East from Sino-Pakistani subversion, and undermine the basis of Pakistan's claim on Kashmir by exposing the hollowness of the Muslim nationhood.<sup>432</sup> But reading their actual accounts one comes across evidence, which patently goes against their disavowal of India's long involvement and premeditated role and gives the suggested factors at best the character of a secondary motive.

Indian role in the break-up of Pakistan was by its own volition. It had been stirring unrest in East Pakistan long before it gave Mujib the Six-Points. It was also instrumental in spawning 'Bengali nationalism' with its separatist sub-text through the Congress and the Communist leaders in East Pakistan since the creation of Pakistan. This raises the question whether Indian rulers were moved by their urge to undo partition and Pakistan. In this connection, it is worth recollecting the public warnings that Mohammed Ali Jinnah had given to East Pakistanis in 1948. He had warned that having failed to prevent the establishment of Pakistan the Indian leaders had set out to disrupt it by creating a split among the Muslims of Pakistan with the help of Muslim fifth columnists and in acting on this strategy they had chosen East Pakistan in particular.<sup>433</sup> It also seems to point to the above possibility. But the Muslim demand for the division of British India and to have Pakistan was implemented with the agreement of Indian leaders and Bengal had been divided at their insistence. In addition, the fact that after occupying all of East Pakistan in 1971 the Indian rulers had stopped short of annexing it and also desisted from the temptation of mauling West Pakistan seems to belie that suspicion. Or, does it?

### 3. Understanding Indian Mind and Mien

Readers may have noticed that I have placed Mujib's quest for supreme political power on the same categorical order as those of the would-be Muslim sultans of the past. This I have done with the view that Mujib's craving for power was more than an idiosyncrasy and had its root in the subcontinent's sultanic political culture of unrestrained individual dash for political power. It would be sufficient to appreciate the strength of this quintessential Muslim cultural proclivity if the endless attempts

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<sup>431</sup> R. Islam 1992: 127

<sup>432</sup> S. Bhaumik 1996: 11, 33; S. Ganguly, *Conflict Unending – India-Pakistan Tension since 1947*, New York, 2001: 51-52

<sup>433</sup> Jinnah's speech at Dhaka on 21 March 1948 in J.U. Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah*, Lahore, 1964-68ii: 487-90



of the powerful provincial governors to break away from their parent sultanate and the regular wars of succession of the royal princes that were witnessed throughout the history of Muslim India and its modern replication in the habitual jockeying for power by the politicians and the instances of military take-over both in Pakistan and Bangladesh are brought before our mind's eye.

In the same vein, it is my firm conviction that to understand what drives India's governing mind and mien one has to see them in their Brahmanical mind-set. Unlike the essentially open and mutable Muslim political classes and policy elite, the Brahmins and their fellow 'twice-born' acolytes, from whom India's political classes and policy elite are drawn, had been by definition a close, immutable community of blood and birth and their power and prestige over the so-called 'Hindus' were achieved throughout the known history and beyond with ceaseless wars and wiles. Nehru, the Congress 'uncrowned king'<sup>434</sup> and 'the Alcibiades of the Indian scene',<sup>435</sup> who aspired to make India 'the pivot and fulcrum of Asia'<sup>436</sup> was adept at wiles. Revealingly enough, his hero was none other than the past Brahmanical master strategist, *Kautilaya*<sup>437</sup> in whose honour he had named New Delhi's diplomatic zone. He, it is said, bequeathed to the policy elite of post-independent India the tradition of artful opportunism in which the end justifies the means.<sup>438</sup> However one considers, the high Hindus of South Asia are an arch type of the Weberian 'imperious prestige community'<sup>439</sup> and the Gramscian 'hegemony'.<sup>440</sup> To recognise this and understand contemporary India's governing mind and mien one needs to look from the beginning of the revival of their drive for state power from the onset of British rule.

### 4. Opening the Way

Historically the British succeeded the Mughals, whose empire had, contrary to the version presented under British rule, brought peace, prosperity and progress to the people of the subcontinent. Acknowledging this, Aurobindo Ghose, the early twentieth century precursor of Bengali terrorism who later devoted his life to spiritual contemplation, wrote:

A great and magnificent construction and an immense amount of political genius and talent was employed in its creation and maintenance. It was as splendid, powerful and beneficent and, it may be added, in spite of Aurangzeb's fanatical zeal, infinitely more

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<sup>434</sup> M.K. Gandhi, *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, New Delhi, 1969-84Ixxxiv: 243

<sup>435</sup> P. Spear, *British Policy in India: A Memorandum in Short Collection*, Mss F.189/16-17/45-59, India Office Library

<sup>436</sup> J.L. Nehru, *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru*, (ed. S. Gopal), New Delhi, 1978xv: 123

<sup>437</sup> J.L. Nehru, *The Discovery of India*, London, 1960: 111-12

<sup>438</sup> *The Oxford English Reference Dictionary*, Oxford, 1995: 862

<sup>439</sup> For the concept of 'prestige community' and its passing itself as the 'nation' cf. J.

Hutchinson and A.D. Smith, *Nationalism*, Oxford, 1994: 21-25

<sup>440</sup> For the concept of hegemony cf. P. Anderson in *New Left Review*, no.100, 1976: 5-80; J. Femia in *Political Studies*, 1975; A. Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, London, 1971

liberal and tolerant in religion than any medieval or contemporary European kingdom or empire and India under its rule stood high in military and political strength, economic opulence and brilliance of its art and culture.<sup>441</sup>

As James Grant's Political Survey of the Northern Circars and the Ninth Report of the Parliamentary Select Committee of 1783 have confirmed, the Mughals and their predecessors, as a rule, did not 'disappropriate the ancient Hindu states or proprietors (of land) whom they conquered'.<sup>442</sup> Early nineteenth century high Hindu leaders like Rammohan Roy and Dawraknath Tagore also admitted that the Hindus 'enjoyed every political privilege in common with Mussalmans'.<sup>443</sup> More remarkably, in spite of being the ruling power, the Muslims did not arrogate the wealth of the land, instead they protected peasants and artisans and promoted agriculture and manufacturing. In 1750, for example, 40 per cent of South Asians were engaged in manufacturing and produced one-fourth of the entire world's output.<sup>444</sup> Although the Muslims formed between one-third and a quarter of the population, they owned only one-ninth of the total wealth.<sup>445</sup>

Yet the Mughal Empire, together with its *legate* states, fell to the British, whereas China, Japan, Turkey and Persia were able to save themselves from the British. Even in South Asia, Muslim Afghans fought successfully to preserve their independence. Buddhist Sri Lanka fought back and lost one-tenth of its population resisting British advances.<sup>446</sup> At the heart of South Asia's failure to resist lies the fact that it was not so much conquered as subverted.<sup>447</sup> Instead of recounting stories of high Hindu treachery and subversion, it is more important to understand, why? The renowned Hindu nationalist Bankimchandra Chatterjee was not only boastful that it was the high Hindu natives who had given South Asia away to the foreigners, but also passed it off as an act of gift-giving on behalf of Vishnu, the principal Brahmanical god.<sup>448</sup> Gandhi too, alluded to this historical truth when he said in his *Hind Swaraj* (1909), 'The English have not taken India; we have given it to them.'<sup>449</sup> The aim of this unexampled act of 'charity' given in the first Bengali history book in print was to end the *adharmic*, that is the non-Brahmanical rule that had started with the Nandas of Magadh in the fourth century BCE and continued through that of the Mughals and restore Brahmanical rule.<sup>450</sup> Rammohan made a similar admission.<sup>451</sup> In removing the Muslim thorn with the British tweezers, their calculation was that

<sup>441</sup> S. Aurobindo, *The Spirit and Forms of Indian Polity*, Kalikata, 1947: 86

<sup>442</sup> B.B. Misra, *The Unification and Division of India*, New Delhi, 1990: 269

<sup>443</sup> R.M. Roy, *The Correspondence of Raja Rammohan Roy, 1809-1831*, 2 vols. (ed. D.K. Biswas), Kalikata, 1992i: 364

<sup>444</sup> C. Simmons in *Modern Asian Studies*, vol. 19 no.3, 1985

<sup>445</sup> D.D. Kosambi, *Introduction to the Study of Indian History*, London, 1979: 389

<sup>446</sup> J. Davy, *An Account of the Interior of Cylone and its Inhabitants with Travels in that Island*, London, 1821: 233-47

<sup>447</sup> R. Hyam, *Britain's Imperial Century, 1815-1914*, Lanham, 1993: 4-10

<sup>448</sup> O. Paz, *In Light of India* (tr. E. Weinberger), London, 1997: 54

<sup>449</sup> M.K. Gandhi, *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, New Delhi, 1969-84x: 22

<sup>450</sup> M. Vidyalkar, *Rajabali* (Royalties), Srirampur, 1808: 12-13, 294-95

<sup>451</sup> R.M. Roy 1992i: 3, 224-25

they needed preparatory time to climb the summit of power and need not worry about the rootless, floating British over staying, for they could not survive a 'chill'.<sup>452</sup>

Their mutual co-operation was not restricted to the inaugural subversive abetment alone. The colonial edifice - built, run, and maintained by an astonishingly small number of Britons, less than a quarter of a percent of the overall population, was made possible by active high Hindu collaboration. In return, their scribal classes came to establish a *de facto* 'Hindu Raj' throughout the countryside.<sup>453</sup> Not only Lord Clive at the beginning and Wellesley at the high noon of British conquering stride offered *puja* to high Goddesses, through their codification of 'Hindu law' and participation in the management of temples and other religious institutions, the British rulers endorsed and enhanced Brahmanical control over the masses. Through their census classification they even hugely inflated the Hindu numbers by enlisting those ethnic and/or faith communities who were opposed to Brahmanical *Varnasram Dharma* and whom ordinary Hindus did not consider Hindus. A majority of Bengal's Hindus, for example, belong to such 'Census Hindus'.

On the basis of this strategic mutuality, the high Hindus egged the British on as their providential deliverer from the Muslim tyranny.<sup>454</sup> The British returned the compliment by attributing their advent to divinely impelled forces of historical destiny,<sup>455</sup> making them their Aryan cousins and past preceptors, and projecting themselves as a transient power<sup>456</sup> desirous to helping their agnates recover greatness, and eventually freedom from Britain.<sup>457</sup> Until the Congress took to the conceit of rhetorical anti-imperialism in the late 1930s, it was indeed commonplace for the high Hindu political leaders to remind the British about the debt of gratitude they owed to them for that charitable act of their forebears. The roster of such latter-day political debt collectors starts with Radhakantha Deb, the first president of the British Indian Association,<sup>458</sup> which was the first body to petition the British parliament praying for the 'Home-rule', and runs up to M.K. Gandhi.<sup>459</sup> The fact that India did not become an Algeria, Kenya, Angola or Zimbabwe and the last British viceroy was invited to serve independent India as its first head of state, underscored

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<sup>452</sup> M. Edwards, *The Shahibs and the Lotus: The British in India*, London, 1988: 5

<sup>453</sup> R.E. Frykenberg in G.D. Sontheimer and H. Kulke, *Hinduism Reconsidered*, New Delhi, 1991

<sup>454</sup> S. Sarkar in S. Chaudhuri, *Calcutta - The Living City*, Kalikata, 1995i: 97

<sup>455</sup> W. Cowper, *Boadicea* (1782) cited in T.O. Lloyd, *History of the British Empire*, London, 2001: 86; *East India Military Calendar*, Kalikata, 1823:44

<sup>456</sup> H. Morris, *The Life of Charles Grant*, London, 1904: 258; A.T. Embree, *Charles Grant and British Rule in India*, London, 1962: 142

<sup>457</sup> T.B. Macaulay, Speech in the House of Common, 10 July 1833 in A.B. Keith, *Speeches and Documents on Indian Policy 1750-1921*, London, 1922i: 265

<sup>458</sup> His address at Kalikata's Town Hall on 29 July 1853 in S.A. Siddiqui, *The Forgotten History, 1857-1947*, Chittagong, 1974: 22

<sup>459</sup> M.K. Gandhi 1969-84x: 22-23

the remarkable amiability and convergence of interests with which Indian independence was pursued.

## 5. Would-Be Home-Rulers

During the second quarter of the nineteenth century, the indeterminate British promise had found a concrete channel in a new eagerness to transform their worldwide empire of rule to a burden free, more profitable empire of commerce by granting overseas colonies self-rule. Guided by instances of the accrument of greater profits from the former colonies in America and the wisdom of the liberal economist Adam Smith, the Durham commission in Canada and the Colebrooke-Cameron commission in Colombo set Britain firmly on this course. Lord Durham's father-in-law and political master Lord Grey, the mover of this 'retrenchment policy' even the Gold Coast was told that the real interest of Britain was to gradually train Africans in government until they were capable of protecting themselves and of managing their own affairs. Preparations for such a transition in British India started from the 1840s, with open hints that the Aryan cousins would get the future charge.<sup>460</sup> Reflecting the aimed transition, in 1852 the East India Company's charter was renewed for an unspecified period, rather than for the customary fixed period of 20 years, and the pre-1857 policies were directed to this end.<sup>461</sup>

The uprising of 1857, in which to a man the Bengali high Hindus had backed the British with unconcealed delight at the impending discomfiture of the detested Muslims and the Marathas, as it turned out, made repairing and rebuilding British hold, rather than shedding the administrative burden, the urgent priority. Although the commitment to restore the Aryan cousins to power and glory remained undiminished,<sup>462</sup> the road to 'home-rule', to the disappointment of the Bengali high Hindu pretenders in waiting, started getting longer. While the British determination to strengthen their hold led to the unification of the three presidencies and the centralisation of administration under a strong centre, it also led the British policymakers to consider the difficulties posed by the huge diversities, complicated further by the Hindu-Muslim division, for a future self-governing pan-Indian polity,<sup>463</sup> especially when Britain's own internal political development ruled out any non-democratic dispensation. With it came the realisation that somehow British India would have to be welded into a nation, with the Western educated natives, less than one percent of the population, as its vanguard.

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<sup>460</sup> Ellenborough to Peel, 23 March 1843, *Peel Papers*, Add. Mss. 40471, British Museum; Ellenborough to Hardinge, 15 April 1845, Add Mss. 40475, British Museum, London

<sup>461</sup> S. Gopal, *British Policy in India, 1858-1905*, Cambridge, 1965: 176

<sup>462</sup> S. Laing, *Lecture on the Indo-European Languages and Races*, Kalikata, 1862; G. Smith, *Conversion of India*, London, 1893: 85; *Imperial Gazetteer*, London, 1881iv: 192; W.C. Pearce, *History of India*, London, 1876: 119

<sup>463</sup> Letter no. 8,427 of December 1883 from the Government of India to the Secretary of State in *East India (Religious disturbances) Parliamentary Papers*, 5 March 1894

## 6. New Nation Creators to Voices of Ever Present Nation

Eager to carry forward the nation-creating project, the retired ICS Allan Octavian Hume, at the prompting of his Aryan-Brahmanism admiring Theosophist friends, and with behind the scene backing of the viceroy,<sup>464</sup> set up the Congress (1885) and at the viceroy's request Hume was made its secretary.<sup>465</sup> The leading high Hindu press in Kalikata, Bombay and Madras welcomed the Congress as the harbinger of a new phase in British India's political development.<sup>466</sup> Despite the viceroy's disliking of the style of agitation of the Bengali press and politicians,<sup>467</sup> the Bengali vanguards of Indian nationalism, divided between the calm and cautious British Indian Association presided by Radhakanta Deb and the up and coming, restless Indian Association led by Surendr Nath Banerji, joined in, and in line with the official British thinking committed the Congress to creating an overarching nation in a federation of states similar to that of Canada and Australia.<sup>468</sup>

Not long after, the rise of American economic power and the new European challenges to the British commercial hegemony sparked off a renewed dash for colonies in Asia and Africa and took Britain to two world wars, shattering its dream of having a worldwide empire of commerce.<sup>469</sup> With the onset of this process, the British enthusiasm for home-rule began slackening, while the high Hindu restlessness started growing. Alongside older moderates, there appeared younger extremists and terrorists, impatient of waiting and ready to confront the British rather than to rely upon the moderates' method of polite cajoling through prayers and petitions. The difference between the extremists and the moderates was not of aim or ideology but of strategy or as Gandhi cogently put it, between 'the slow and the impatient'.<sup>470</sup>

In the wake of the First World War, the British - still bound by their old promise and faced with the terrorists outside and the extremists inside the Congress - had to start moving again towards granting self-rule and during the Second World War got themselves ready to leave for good. With the British bound up by their new official commitment, the post-First World War US led sanctification of the national right to independence, with its rank elitist sub-text,<sup>471</sup> came handy. With the British power dying of 'chill', under Gandhi's leadership the Congress now started speaking in a way as if the subcontinent had always been a country and a nation. While casting the 'nation' in the Brahmanical mould, the high Hindu Congress leaders also became

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<sup>464</sup> W.C. Bonnerjee in C.H. Philips *et al.*, *Evolution of India and Pakistan, 1858-1947*, London, 1962: 138-39

<sup>465</sup> K. Antonova *et al.* *Bharatvarser Itihas* (History of India), Moscow, 1982: 485

<sup>466</sup> A.C. Roy, *Bharater Itihas*, 2 vols, Kalikata, 1993ii: 355-56

<sup>467</sup> Dufferin to Northbrook, 23 June 1886, Mss. Eur. C.144 no.16: 3, IOL

<sup>468</sup> *Proceedings of the First Indian National Congress held at Calcutta ... 1886*, Kalikata, 1887: 99

<sup>469</sup> R. Hyam 1993: 30-39

<sup>470</sup> M.K. Gandhi 1969-84x: 13

<sup>471</sup> N. Chomsky in *Cleveland State Law Review*, vol. 44, no. 4, 1996

thoroughbred democrats overly keen to do away with the 'communal' separate representation and started insisting on a devolved federation under a strong central government. From this new position they went to reduce the complex political issues confronting the subcontinent to one of simple restoration of national independence wherein all Britain was to do was to hand over power to an elected national government and leave South Asia. In their sanguinity for the spectre they simply wriggled out of the Congress's own past commitments and undertakings on spacious pretences.

When the Second World War started, it was obvious that neither the Anglicist dream of an India of Western values nor the hope of a united Indian nation with which the Congress was created had come about. Gandhi himself was both the symbol and the voice of the rejection of the former; while the report of the Joint Select Committee on Indian Constitutional Reforms of 1933-34 was a candid admission of the latter. Yet despite twists and turns and occasional display of acrimony, the Congress-British compact was never broken; nor had they disagreement about keeping the subcontinent together. The high Hindu Congress leaders wanted it with a view to have their hegemony all over the subcontinent on the fictitious pretext that India had always been a country and a nation. The British, on the other hand, desired it because of their economic and strategic interests,<sup>472</sup> and for reasons of emotional satisfaction.<sup>473</sup> The British policymakers openly argued that if some sort of Indian unity had not been present, it would have to be invented.<sup>474</sup> Indeed, British academics had already lent their witticism by investing the subcontinent with a cryptic 'unity in diversity'.

While the Congress began projecting Muslims as an undistinguished blob among the masses, the Muslim leaders started getting terrified about the future<sup>475</sup> and became more vigorous in their insistence on political safeguards.<sup>476</sup> Following the All-India Muslim Conference at Delhi in 1929, where the irreducible Muslim position was set out in the form of Jinnah's 'Fourteen Points', Kalikata hosted a Bengal Muslim All-Parties Conference where, beside supporting the Delhi resolutions, it was said that 'Muslims will in no account tolerate the substitution of British domination in India by the Brahmanical domination and tyranny of majority'.<sup>477</sup> The Lahore resolution of 1940 and the demand for territorial division and Pakistan were a sequel to that resolve.

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<sup>472</sup> Defence Committee Paper, 12 June 1946 in N. Mansergh *et. al.*, *Transfer of Power*, 1970-82vii: 889-90

<sup>473</sup> *Auchinleck Papers*, MUL Hem 1152, 11 May 1946; B.B. Misra, *The Unification and Division of India*, Delhi, 1990: 371-72

<sup>474</sup> L.S. Amery, *India and Freedom*, Oxford, 1942: 8

<sup>475</sup> Jackson to Berkenhead, 9 May 1927, Mss Eur. D 703/21, India Office Library

<sup>476</sup> *Indian Quarterly Review*, Kalikata, 1926, no. 1: 65-67, no.2: 95-98; *Indian Statutory Commission Report, vol.XVI, Selection from Memoranda and Oral Evidence by Non-Officials, Part I and Part II*, London, 1930: *passim*

<sup>477</sup> *Statesman*, 31 December 1929

Muslim India's demand simply stirred distaste in British governing circles.<sup>478</sup> Even after Pakistan was conceded, many British academics continued wishing its obliteration from the map. Not surprisingly, when the British had to drop the federal scheme of the 1935 Act, which neither met the Congress desire for a centralised state under the high Hindu sway nor satisfied the League wish for a loose federation of countervailing Hindu and Muslim majority states as a means of safeguarding Muslim India, after Jinnah had told the viceroy that he saw no way out other than partition,<sup>479</sup> the viceroy went public insisting on India's future unity.<sup>480</sup> On taking power in 1945, the Labour government - whose prime minister Clement Attlee had, in a secret meeting at the residence of Sir Stafford Cripps in London on 24 June 1938, signed a Pact with Nehru for the transfer of power to Congress 'on a Labour government coming into power'<sup>481</sup> - were bent on handing over India to their Congress friends as soon as possible.<sup>482</sup>

Even after the elections of 1945-46, in which a reawakened Muslim India unequivocally expressed itself in favour of Pakistan, when the visiting British parliamentary delegation discovered the implacable resolve of Jinnah to achieve Pakistan and recognized that Pakistan would have to be reckoned with,<sup>483</sup> the deputy leader of the Conservative Party, Rab Butler, spoke about the desirability of an all-India central nexus,<sup>484</sup> which despite Churchill's well-known disliking of Gandhi and the Congress had been the Conservative position.<sup>485</sup> Dismissing the views of Jinnah and the Muslim League, who were hoping for an orderly division over a longer time, yielding to the view of pro-Congress Attlee, insisted on a British withdrawal not later than June 1948 and said that Britain would not allow a minority to place a veto on the advance of the majority.<sup>486</sup>

Gandhi was promising a paradise of *Ram Rajya*, which held the Brahmanical spell-bounds, while his heir apparent Nehru was pledging a modern democratic socialist heaven for endearing the liberal West. Both, together with the rest of the Congress leadership, were one in decrying the Muslims demanding Pakistan as communalist bigots and sinners against India and the Indian nation. Although their earlier

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<sup>478</sup> I. Stephens, *The Horned Moon*, London, 1967: 15

<sup>479</sup> Notes of Meeting between Jinnah and Linlithgow, 5 October 1939, *Linlithgow Papers*, Mss Eur F/125, India Office Library, London

<sup>480</sup> Viceroy's statement, 18 October 1939, M. Gwyer and A. Appadorai, *Speeches and Documents on the Indian Constitution, 1921-47*, London, 1957ii: 490-93

<sup>481</sup> T. Burridge, *Clement Attlee: A Political Biography*, London, 1985: 272; A G.P. Pradhan, *India's Freedom Struggle - An Epic of Sacrifice and Suffering*, London, 1990: 199

<sup>482</sup> Wavell, *Wavell: Viceroy's Journal*, (ed. P. Moon) Karachi, 1973: 169-70

<sup>483</sup> R.W. Sorensen, *My Impression of India*, London, 1946: 108-12; *A Backbencher's Pilgrimage*, SOR/230, House of Lords Record Office, London; and The Parliamentary Delegation to India in C.H. Philips and M.D. Wainwright, *The Partition of India*, London, 1970: 535-45; also *Dawn*, Karachi, 14 February 1946.

<sup>484</sup> W. Ahmad, *Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah - The Nation's Voice*, Karachi, 1992v: 686

<sup>485</sup> M.J. Moore, *Churchill, Cripps and India, 1939-45*, Oxford, 1979: 132-35

<sup>486</sup> *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, 15 March 1946, cols. 1418-24

generations had upbraided Muslims as foreign intruders, they now insisted that vastly being descendants of converts the Muslims could not claim to be a nation apart from the parent stock,<sup>487</sup> and condemned them as medievalist, highly anti-national and pro-imperialist.<sup>488</sup> Remarkably, in all this they conveniently forgot their own abandonment of the Congress's founding promise of forging Hindu-Muslim unity and forming a composite nation based on inter-community partnership and the Lucknow Pact of 1916, which they had entered with the League in the light of those promises.

## 7. The *Betashi Vritti*

The Congress switchover from a freely consenting pluralist nation-to-be to an implied but not straightforwardly stated antiquarian organismic nation bonded to soil and blood, like all the high Hindu strategic ploys starting from the supplanting of Muslim political power with the Aryan cousins from the long lost *Sheta Dipa* (White Island) of the fraudulent Brahman text,<sup>489</sup> was in the main not involuntary, but deliberate. To appreciate this one has to go back to when their aims were given expression in 1858 and from there on to follow their track. This would also show that in twisting and turning with increasing assertiveness they were following the age-old Brahmanical strategy of *Betashi Vritti* or the manner of the vines, which had been specially recommended for difficult times and was in use since the downturn in their political fortune with the advent of Muslim rule.<sup>490</sup>

The Bengali high Hindus, who with an exclusivist eye on a Home-ruled Bengal had developed the cult of *Matri-Bhasa* (Mother-Language) by the 1840s<sup>491</sup> and as late as 1857 were against delaying their own advent to power in Bengal,<sup>492</sup> quickly adopted the mien of an Indian after 1857. The discomfiture of the Muslims and the Marathas in the uprising of 1857 made them see the opening of a possibility for a Hindu *Raj* on a pan-Indian scale with themselves at its helm. Their very first post-uprising prayer was for the extension of their peer ranks through the introduction of the *zamindari* system all over the subcontinent,<sup>493</sup> which they pursued through the Congress well into the next century.<sup>494</sup> Likewise, the very first textbook on the subcontinent's history written in Bengali in 1858 for the students of the soon to be

<sup>487</sup> M.K. Gandhi, 1969-84lxxi: 388; lxxviii: 101 Gandhi to Jinnah, 15 September 1944, *Quaid-i-Azam Papers*, NAP, Islamabad

<sup>488</sup> C. Rajagopalachari in *The Hindu*, Madras, 27 March 1940; J.L. Nehru, *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru*, (ed. S. Gopal), New Delhi, 1978: 215; xi: 17, 20-21

<sup>489</sup> C. Allen, *The Buddha and the Sahibs: The Men Who Discovered India's Lost Religion*, London, 2002: 64-65

<sup>490</sup> J.N. Sarkar, *History of Bengal* vol. 2, Dhaka, 1948: 28

<sup>491</sup> R. Guha, *An Indian Historiography of India: A Nineteenth Century Agenda and its Implications*, Kalikata, 1988: 36

<sup>492</sup> Harishchandra Mukerjee, editor of the *Hindoo Patriot* cited in T. Roy in P.J.O. Taylor, *A Companion to Indian Mutiny of 1857*, Oxford, 1996: 65

<sup>493</sup> C.H. Philips et. al. 1962: 101-02

<sup>494</sup> J.R. McLane, *Indian Nationalism and the Early Congress*, Princeton, 1977: 230



opened Kalikata University had come out asserting that *Bharatvarsa* had always been a *desh* (country), where the Aryan-Hindu *jati* with their distinctive race and religion had their *rajatta* (rule).

The book said that 'Hindu' self-rule, and with it the glories of ancient Hindus, was undone by the Muslims. The Muslim *rajatta* was, in turn, replaced by the Christian *rajatta*. In projecting *Bharatvarsa* in the image of the European model of a national homeland and in presenting its history in the style of contemporary European historiography with the help of Orientalist witticism, its author, an alumnus of the Hindu college and a professor of the Sanskrit college, was, of course, unmistakably modern. Yet, unlike the European nation of liberal imagination, the nation he espoused was based neither on shared political experience of the past or with common will to have a polity of their own; nor was it inclusive of all the inhabitants. Not just the Muslims were considered alien, the so-called *jangla jati* over whom the Aryan-Hindu *jati* had their *rajatta* before, together with the Hindu under-class of the defeated *autochthons*, the Shudras, were also explicitly excluded. Moreover, his ambition for the Aryan-Hindu *jati* went beyond regaining its *rajatta* or restoring its past glories; he wanted to see it in its conquering stride regarding and treating other nations with contempt.<sup>495</sup>

Remarkably, in defining the nation in terms of race-religion and in naming the country after a mythical Aryan king in the tradition of the ancient Sanskrit literature the author not only followed the traditional Brahmanical xenology in contradistinction to the English and French concept of nation but also foreshadowed early European racist political theorists like Johann Kasper Bluntschli<sup>496</sup> and John W. Burgess<sup>497</sup> from whom the latter-day Hindu fascist like M.S. Golwalkar had borrowed their 'true' Western conception of nationhood.<sup>498</sup> Eighteen reprinting of the *Bharatvarser Itihas* in 20 Years showed its ready resonance with its high Hindu readership.<sup>499</sup>

Unsurprisingly, between 1860s and 1880s the literati started writing *Bharat Kalanka* (Shames of Bharat), *Bharat Bilap* (Wails for Bharat), *Bharat Uchchhash* (Exhilarating Bharat) etc,<sup>500</sup> began taking lessons from the Maratha success against, and the cost of the Rajput surrender to Muslim rule,<sup>501</sup> and even toyed with the idea

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<sup>495</sup> T.C. Chattopadhyay, *Bharatvarser Itihas*, (History of the Land of Bharat) 18<sup>th</sup> ed., Kalikata, 1878: 1-12, 32

<sup>496</sup> J.K. Bluntschli, *The Theory of the state*, Oxford, 1885

<sup>497</sup> J.W. Burgess, *Political Science and Comparative Constitutional Law*, Boston, 1890

<sup>498</sup> C. Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement and Indian Politics, 1925 to the 1990s*, London, 1996: 52-55

<sup>499</sup> P. Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Post-Colonial Histories*, Princeton, 1993: 94

<sup>500</sup> A.C. Roy 1993ii: 302

<sup>501</sup> S. Chandra, *The Oppressive Present: Literature and Social Consciousness in Colonial India*, Delhi, 1992: 127

of giving the Muslims options either to accept the revived Hindu rule and make *Bharat* their home or go back to their ancestral homes.<sup>502</sup>

Like the *Bango-Mata* (Mother Bengal) within the cult of *Matri-Bhasa* before, soon *Bharatvarsa* came to be deified as *Bharat-Mata*. As the successive deification pointed to, the transition from being Bengali to Indian reflected a mere shift in territorial gaze rather than a change of identity and outlooks. The Bengali worthies of British Indian Association who had petitioned the British parliament in 1852 for immediate ceding of power had, indeed, named their mouthpiece 'The Hindoo Patriot'. This was perfectly in accord with their self-identity, since Bengali had an exclusively Hindu connotation. More revealingly, by the time the Congress was in place, Bengali literature showed a 'definitive' move away from a predominantly liberal to a markedly Hindu revivalist discourse.<sup>503</sup> In this revivalist discourse Indian and Hindu was one and the same, and the Muslims were alien outsiders, past Hindu tormentors, and a future national threat. Soon all over the North, Central and Western India similar strident Hindu revivalism with a discernible Bengali influence came to dominate the literary-intellectual discourse.<sup>504</sup>

This step back from the previous modernist liberalism to Hindu revivalism needs to be put in perspective. Brahmanism of the high Hindus had never been a religion *per se* with fidelity to a particular set of immutable beliefs, moral codes or philosophy; instead it had a historical career of serial creedal concoction. This came from the repeated hegemonising reforms that had to be undertaken for widening its support base without proselytization and the attendant need for revalidating the Brahmins' and their acolytes' enduring claim to power and privilege. Because of the inherent difficulties in putting their minority exploitative pursuit and its amorphous validation in a good light, the Brahmins and their twice-born acolytes had always hyped up irrational fear and/or devotion among their supplanted and subordinated spell bounds, directed them to look across the fence with acridity and forged for them a collective identity and solidarity in contradistinction to the repellent characteristics of their most potent challengers of the time such as the anti-*jajana* dark-skinned Dasas, the *Shramanic Yogis*, the *Nastik* Buddhists. Besides, in addition to tarring the enemy with abominable characteristics, for undercutting its spirit, solidarity and strength, a number of time-tested *nitis* or strategies were used. It was by acting in this quintessential Brahmanical way that Hindu identity was, indeed, first adopted in sixteenth century Bengal for rallying all non-Muslims against the ruling Muslims<sup>505</sup> and ever since the anti-Muslim antagonism remained the central plank of the Hindu consciousness.

<sup>502</sup> B. Mukherjee, *Swapnalabha Bharatbarser Itihas* (History of Bharat Found in Dream) (1876) in *Bhudeb Racanasambhar* (Complete Works of Bhudeb), Kalikata, 1969: 341-74

<sup>503</sup> T. Sarkar in D. Ludden, *Contesting the Nation – Religion, Community and the Politics of Democracy in India*, Philadelphia, 1996: 166

<sup>504</sup> S. Chandra 1992; Y. Malik, *Boeings and Bullock-Carts, Essays in Honour of K. Ishwaran*, Delhi, 1990; J.E. Sanjana, *Studies in Gujrati Literature*, Bombay, 1950

<sup>505</sup> J.T. O'Connell in M. Israel and N.K. Wagem ed. *Islamic Society and Culture: Essays in Honour of Professor Aziz Ahmad*, New Delhi, 1985

Until the uprising in 1857, the Muslims were deemed an impotent, decaying force; not threatening but a useful reminder of the past Dark Age. The post-uprising British restoration of the North Indian Muslim landed potentates signalling an eagerness to win back Muslim loyalty, the appearance of a number of Muslim landed potentates in the central and the provincial councils, and the British wish to foster an inclusive nation before granting self-rule were unexpected and disturbing developments. Thus, when gazing at the unified subcontinent the literati could see the possibility of realising the ancient dream of trans-subcontinental sway, encapsulated in such a regal ideal as that of the *survabhauma chakravartin*, by making use of their Hindu, qua Hindu identity and affiliation, it was also natural that the incensing reappearance of the Muslims in the political frame could not pass without stirring fear and other negative emotions.

Of course, those in the Congress did not present them as Hindu, qua Hindu; moreover, they promised to bring Hindu-Muslim unity and create a composite pluralist nation of modern European perception and values. Mainly from the up and coming English educated backgrounds and sharing the public platform with many distinguished English liberals, their claim of being modernist liberals and their promise of a New India<sup>506</sup> had an immediate positive look. Yet, when one inquires beyond their words and looks, one finds a conspicuous absence of efforts towards either contesting the Hindu supremacists or fostering Hindu-Muslim unity. Although Hume tried to put efforts to win Muslim and peasant support, his high Hindu colleagues gave him 'little more than rhetorical help'. Instead, they concentrated on 'objectives, which would most directly benefit their own economic and social groups or religious community'.<sup>507</sup> In fact, after Hume's bid to override Sayyid Ahmad Khan's opposition by invading 'our opponents own dominions' and holding the fourth Congress session at Allahabad proved fruitless,<sup>508</sup> for the next ten years it sessions did not attract more than seven per cent Muslim delegates and that too 'despite special efforts to swell the proportion'.<sup>509</sup>

In addition to pursuing objectives beneficial to their community, all high Hindu Congress Party men not only continued delighting in their Aryan-Brahman past, those among them with literary gift treated the Muslims as not quite 'one of us', alien enemies of 'our country and religion'. Romeshchandra Dutt, the highest-ranking native ICS who had played a leading part in Lord Ripon's liberal reforms, inspired the rise of 'economic nationalism' and served as Congress president, was a case in point.<sup>510</sup> Moreover, literary or not, when it came to communicating in the vernacular all Congress leaders took to rendering the word nation as *jati* and referring to the subcontinent as *Bharatvarsa* or *Bharat*, revealing on the one hand

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<sup>506</sup> H. Cotton, *New India*, London, 1885; B. Martin, *New India 1885*, Berkeley, 1969

<sup>507</sup> J.R. McLane, *Indian Nationalism and the Early Congress*, Princeton, 1977: 90

<sup>508</sup> J.R. McLane 1977: 109-10

<sup>509</sup> P.C. Ghosh, *The Development of the Indian National Congress 1892-1909*, Kalikata, 1960: 23-25

<sup>510</sup> S. Chandra in B. Chakrabarty ed. *Secularism in India*, New Delhi, 1990

their unbroken attachment to their Brahmanical xenology, while preserving their modernist liberal standing before the British, on the other. Such caution came directly from their *Betashi Vritti niti*.

Bankimchandra, the originator of the cult of *Bharat Mata*, had composed his hymn *Bande Mataram* in 1875 when he was a liberal writing pro-peasant tract and on equality only to put it in print, together with his well-known Hindu chauvinist work, *Annadamath* (Abbey of Bliss), in 1882<sup>511</sup> when the Liberal Viceroy Ripon was engaged in creating a new chapter in Anglo-Brahmanical amity. But this was short lived and the first edition of the *Annadamath*, which described a *sanyasi* rebellion against the British, changed its plot by substituting Muslim rulers as the object of the revolt in its subsequent editions in order to avoid prosecution for sedition.<sup>512</sup> As a front ranking Bengali poet of the time, Hemchandra Banerji, had pointed out, the practical reality of dependence on the British, without whom the oncoming Hindu polity would be doomed, made venting of Hindu patriotic feelings and frustrations problematic.<sup>513</sup> Those in the Congress were not devoid of practical sense to throw their caution to the wind. Indeed, such proof is not wanting. Years later G.K. Gokhale had admitted that in coming under the Congress and accepting Hume as their official leader they were all guided by tactical considerations rather than forthright sincerity.<sup>514</sup> As shown by a liberal Westernised moderate like Gokhale deep down all high Hindus believed the subcontinent belonged naturally to them and saw no distinction between a Hindu and an Indian.<sup>515</sup> Unsurprisingly, Muslim bashing in vernacular print, and on the street grew, alongside movements for the Hindi language, the protection of cows and the recovery of the supposed converts to Islam. Although officially the Congress kept away from these drives aimed at reinvigorating Hindu consciousness and rank and/or cowering the Muslims, many Congress Party men took active part in them.

By the last decade of the nineteenth century, the British interest in granting Home-rule had dissipated. It was in this context B.G. Tilak's Hindu mass mobilisation through Sivaji and Ganapati festivals and organised agitation against excise duty on cotton and no-revenue campaign started breaking new grounds for the nationalists beyond the Congress's standing policy of prayers and petitions. The assassination of two British officials by the Chapekar brothers in Pune added terrorism to it. By the turn of the century, the Bengali journals *Yugantar* and *Bande Mataram* started preaching that self-rule could only be achieved by confrontation and violent revolution. Secret preparation for terrorist violence followed. A good example of the new mode change was the otherwise gentle poet Rabindranath Tagore. Until then he

<sup>511</sup> B.C. Chatterjee, *Bankim Rachanabali* (Bankim's Writtings) [ed. J.C. Bagal], Kalikata, 1965i: 23, 726, 728-29

<sup>512</sup> B.B. Majumdar in *Journal of Indian History*, vol. XLIV, Part I, 1966: 97ff

<sup>513</sup> H.M. Das-Gupta, *Studies in Western Influence on Nineteenth Century Bengali Poetry 1857-87*, Kalikata, 1935: 45, 50

<sup>514</sup> G.K. Gokhale cited in N. Padte and J. Iyer, *Modern History – India 1857-1947*, Hyderabad, 1992:35

<sup>515</sup> S. Chandra 1992: 126

favoured a process of self-strengthening, but now he secretly linked up with the revolutionary terrorists together with his brother Jyotirindranath and fellow *Brahmo Samajist* and writer Shibnath Sastri<sup>516</sup> and announced the aspiration to turn *Bharat* into a *dharma rajya* in the footsteps of Sivaji.

In 1905, the British partitioned Bengal and created a Muslim majority province in East Bengal and Assam, in the main for administrative reasons. Although the scheme had been deliberated upon and thought through on and off over the past three decades,<sup>517</sup> like his many high Hindu peers with real estates and/or other stakes in East Bengal, the poet was also outraged. While passing it as a wanton assault on the heaven-ordained bond between east and west Bengal,<sup>518</sup> he gave lyrical vent to his and his class's sense of lost estate in quintessential Brahmanical idiom through his famous ode to the Mother *Sonar Bangla* (Golden Bengal). While the political seers like Aurobindo divined that it was only when 'the Mother had revealed herself' as she had done to Bankimchandra that 'the patriotism that works miracles and save a doomed nation is born',<sup>519</sup> to stir that patriotism Rabindranath Tagore set Bankimchandra's *Bande Mataram* to music,<sup>520</sup> which quickly became the anthem-cum-slogan of the agitators. In addition to meetings and demonstrations, the agitation involved boycotting of British court, education and consumer goods and putting British made clothes on bonfires. With the bomb throwing, pistol-firing terrorists leading the charge, the image of *Bharat Mata* also changed from being the manifestation of the goddess Durga to that of the destructive, angry goddess Kali. While the terrorists targeted both British and Muslim officials for assassination, the leaders of the mass agitation bought the service of an impecunious Muslim barrister to head their campaign,<sup>521</sup> tied a *rakhi* (cotton string symbolising friendship) on Muslim wrists professing fraternal solidarity and proceeded to pour scorn on the overwhelming majority of East Bengali Muslims, who had seen the new province as a welcome redress to their administrative neglect and a potential relief from the high Hindu economic and cultural domination,<sup>522</sup> as anti-nationals acting under the spell of their government inspired leaders.<sup>523</sup>

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<sup>516</sup> P. Dastidar, *Swadhinata Sangrame Chattogram* (Chittagong in Independence Struggle), Dhaka, 1967: 5-6

<sup>517</sup> S. Sarkar, *Modern India, 1885-1947*, Delhi, 1983

<sup>518</sup> Addressing the British Rabindranath wrote: 'You will cut the bond decreed by Providence / You are so powerful, are you!' [Cited in S. Bose and A. Jalal, *Modern South Asia: History, Culture, Political Economy*, New York, 2004: 95]

<sup>519</sup> A. Ghose in *Bande Mataram*, Kalikata, 16 April 1907

<sup>520</sup> S. Wolpert, *A New History of India*, New York, 1982: 262

<sup>521</sup> A. Maudud, *Maydhyavitha Samajer Bikash: Sanskritir Rupantar* (Growth of the Middle Class: Reformation of Culture, Dhaka, 1969: 282

<sup>522</sup> Srinivas Sastri to Gokhale, 27 January 1907, *Sastri Papers*, no.5, National Archives of India, New Delhi.; Gokhale to Wedderburn, 24 May 1907 in B.N. Pandey, *The Indian Nationalist Movement, 1885-1947: Selected documents*, London, 1979: 7-8

<sup>523</sup> M. Rahman, *From Consultation to Confrontation – A Study of the All India Muslim League*, London, 1971

Faced with irreparable loss of market as well as high Hindu allegiance, the British unsettled what they had declared before as the settled fact. The restoration of Golden Bengal to its status-ante in 1911 removed the festering sore from British-Congress relations and was celebrated with a laudatory loyalist hymn, especially composed for the occasion by Rabindranath, investing anew the king-emperor of British India the role of 'the supreme leader of the people' and 'the destiny-maker of India', which alongside *Bande Mataram* would become *Bharat/India's* alternative national anthem. Indeed, the Bengali poet proceeded to wipe the sweat of his extreme Hindu nationalist exertion by writing an elaborate critique of illiberal nationalism.<sup>524</sup> Remarkably however, in spite of his swing between extremism and moderation the poet's attitude towards the Muslims of Bengal remained unchanged. Nearly a decade after the annulment of partition when the government decided to establish a university at Dhaka so that the poor and disadvantaged Muslims of east Bengal could have easy access to higher education, he joined leading high Hindus in petitioning against the proposal on the ground that it would harm Kalikata university! Likewise, when acting on the MacDonal Award of 1932, the Government of India Act of 1935 allotted Bengal's Muslims more seats (119) than the caste Hindus (70) in the provincial assembly (250), like in 1905, Rabindranath came out to preside the protest meeting at Kalikata's Town Hall, called explicitly in the name of Bengal's Hindu *jati*. Although in terms of population Muslims should have had more and the high Hindus even less seats than they were actually allocated,<sup>525</sup> he found it grossly unjust to the 'advanced' Hindus.<sup>526</sup>

The reaction of the Bengali leaders of Congress was no less revealing. One of their two mouthpieces called the award a 'shameless surrender to the communalists' and 'a gross injustice to Bengal and its Hindu population'.<sup>527</sup> The other regarded it 'insulting and positively mischievous' and apprehended that it would make Hindus 'politically impotent' and bring 'disaster on the cultural, economic and political life of the province'.<sup>528</sup> The Congress as a body called for public protest throughout the province<sup>529</sup> and its provincial legislators termed it as a sentence of their 'expatriation from the legislature'.<sup>530</sup> A new demand for the incorporation of all the Bengali speaking areas of Bihar, Orissa and Assam with Bengal was raised to countervail the Muslim majority<sup>531</sup> and at the All India Nationalist Conference in Kalikata in August 1934 even a Congress Nationalist Party was formed in parallel to the official Congress, which for many reasons had adopted a 'neither accept nor reject' stance,<sup>532</sup> contributing in the latter's growing Hindu assertiveness.<sup>533</sup>

<sup>524</sup> R.N. Tagore, *Nationalism*, London, 1917

<sup>525</sup> *The Star of India*, Kalikata, 19 December 1933

<sup>526</sup> S.C. Chattopadhyay, *Sarat Shahitya Samagra* (Sarat's Complete Literary Works) ed. S. Sen, Kalikata, 1987: 2167-68

<sup>527</sup> *Advance*, Kalikata, 17 and 18 August 1932

<sup>528</sup> *Liberty*, Kalikata, 17 August 1932

<sup>529</sup> *Statesman*, Kalikata, 21 August 1932

<sup>530</sup> *Bengal Legislative Council Proceedings*, Kalikata, 1932v: 120

<sup>531</sup> *Advance*, 29 October 1932

<sup>532</sup> *The Indian National Congress Resolutions, 1934-36*: 19-20

Although the high Hindu arc of consciousness had remained untouched by Muslim sensitivities<sup>534</sup> and a fresh cold dislike of them settled down in their *Swadeshi* heart.<sup>535</sup> Even the leader of Bengali extremists and the editor of the journal *Bande Mataram*, Bipinchandra Pal, continued trotting out the old Congress promise that in the self-ruled India faith and/or ethnic communities would preserve their distinctive features and by cultivating them contribute to the common national life.<sup>536</sup> As if to underline the seriousness of its commitment, a few years later the Congress entered into the Lucknow Pact (1916) with the Muslim League, formed a decade earlier at the behest of the East Bengali Muslim leaders.

In parallel to the apparent accommodation of Muslims, the *Bharat Mata* shrines were set up in various places. In Benaras, the spiritual capital of Brahmanism, a special temple was built, where a large map of the subcontinent was placed for worshipping.<sup>537</sup> After 1926, when the old commitment to create a pluralistic composite nation was forgotten in favour of the antiquarian Indian nation of soil and blood, the phrase *Bande Mataram* also became a Hindu rallying cry during anti-Muslim riots.<sup>538</sup> By the 1930s when the doubt about the British intention to leave the subcontinent had been removed and terrorism had stopped, the image of *Bharat Mata* received another coat of paint. The picture painted by the Bengali artist Jamini Roy for mass use showed the Mother Goddess with Aryan fair skin smiling serenely, unlike the dark-skinned, destructive goddess Kali.<sup>539</sup>

During the anti-partition agitation the moderate liberal Gokhale had not only revealed his deep seated Brahmanical consciousness by equating the Bengali high Hindus with the people of Bengal and regarding Bengal's Muslims as a kind of external proletariat<sup>540</sup> but also complimented the barely concealed Brahmanical drive by stating 'What Bengal thinks today, India thinks tomorrow.' The agitation's mode and method certainly foreshadowed those of Gandhi. Before the First World War, Gandhi started his leadership of the Congress Party subscribing to its ideal of composite nationhood. Yet, contrary to its founding practice of avoiding stirring religious sentiments for political end, he went on to house the stridently Hindu supremacist Hindu Mahashaba, formed in 1915, within the Congress and deliberately picked upon religion as the basis for political action and national

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<sup>533</sup> D. Chakravarty and C. Bhattacharya, *Congress Policy on Communal Award: Bengal Forces a change*, Kalikata, 1939

<sup>534</sup> P.K Datta in G. Pandey ed. *Hindus and Others: The Question of Identity in India Today*, Delhi, 1993; M. Mukherjee in A. Bhalla and S. Chandra ed. *Indian Responses to Colonialism in the Nineteenth Century*, Delhi, 1993

<sup>535</sup> N.C. Chaudhuri, *The Autobiography of An Unknown Indian*, New York, 1951: 232

<sup>536</sup> B.C. Pal, *The Spirit of Indian Nationalism*, London, 1910

<sup>537</sup> A.L. Basham, *A Cultural History of India*, Delhi, 1984: 494

<sup>538</sup> T. Sarkar in D. Ludden 1996: 162

<sup>539</sup> S. Chaudhuri 1995

<sup>540</sup> G.K. Gokhale, *Speeches and Writings of Gopal Krishna Gokhale* (ed. D.G. Karve and D.V. Ambekar), Bombay, 1966i: 35-36

identity to draw the Hindu masses behind the Congress.<sup>541</sup> He ended up waylaying the Lucknow Pact and refusing Muslim pleas for safeguards.

Gandhi might have been 'a strict Hindu',<sup>542</sup> what about the Congress leaders who were deemed to be friends of the Muslims? In his speech at the Round Table Conference in London in 1930 Maulana Muhammad Ali, Gandhi's disillusioned partner-in-chief of the 1920s, had lamented that had C.R. Das, who had made a power-sharing pact between Bengal's Hindu minority and Muslim majority, been alive it might have been possible to resolve the Hindu-Muslim political difference.<sup>543</sup> What he utterly missed and would have probably died of shock if told, that at heart Das never subscribed to the very idea of a composite nationhood of Hindus and Muslims and had entered into the Bengal Pact, which his high Hindu comrades recanted immediately after his death, only to pre-empt Bengal's growing Muslim majority from dominating the province's politics.<sup>544</sup>

Likewise, C.R. Das's friend and associate Motilal Nehru in his private letter to his son Jawaharlal, expressed delight at the *Arya Samaj's* 'the best answer to Mohamedan pretensions by quietly converting the followers of Islam to Hinduism.'<sup>545</sup> Unsurprisingly, the elder Nehru later became instrumental in confirming Congress's refusal to consider Muslim pleas for constitutional safeguards. His son, Jawaharlal, who in his youth had followed his father in joining the Theosophist flatterers of Aryan-Brahmanical spirituality and dreamt of fighting sword in hand for freeing India<sup>546</sup> and later proclaimed himself an atheist and socialist but made the great atheist Brahman statesman and strategist, *Kautilya*, his hero, remained stubbornly insistent on this refusal in the name of the superior claim of a democratic *Bharat* and its uni-cultural nation over and above the so-called converts' claim for freedom and liberty.<sup>547</sup>

The Muslims were able to secure sovereign freedom despite the formidable array of forces assembled against them. But it was the original natives, the Dalits, who suffered the most and continue to suffer because of their leader succumbed to Gandhi's blackmail. Gandhi threatened to kill himself by fasting unto death, if they accepted the protection of 'separate electorate' offered to them by the British under the Communal Award. Their leader, Dr B.R. Ambedkar, faced with a potentially murderous high Hindu attack on the Dalits for their 'crime in causing' the Mahatma's death, signed the Poona Pact giving up protection and assured, unfettered voice in India's high politics. Thus the Dalits lost the opportunity to

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<sup>541</sup> R. Kumar, *Essays in the Social History of Modern India*, Kalikata, 1986: 42

<sup>542</sup> P. Spear, British Policy in India, A Memorandum, 4 February 1947, *Short Collection*, MSS. F. 189/16-17/45-59, India Office Library, London

<sup>543</sup> S.A. Siddiqui 1974: Appendix- 1

<sup>544</sup> S. C. Chattopadhyay 1985: 1970

<sup>545</sup> Motilal to Jawaharlal, 1 April 1909 in B.N. Pandey 1979: 18

<sup>546</sup> J.L. Nehru, *An Autobiography*, Delhi, 1985: 15-16

<sup>547</sup> J.L. Nehru 1960: 341-42



unshackle themselves from thousands of years' high Hindu servitude.<sup>548</sup> Following his successful brow beating of the Dalits, for Gandhi stopping the 'vivisection' of *Bharat* became 'worth a fight to the knife'.<sup>549</sup> His new position was, 'if India wants her blood bath she shall have it, in spite of non-violence'.<sup>550</sup> Nehru, who practically admitted to Wavell that he was preaching violence against the League, 'did not see how violence could be avoided, if legitimate aims could not be attained otherwise'.<sup>551</sup> The Brahmanical 'positive trait of violence',<sup>552</sup> which in keeping with the dictum of *Betashi Vritti* had so long been kept under the wrap of non-violence, was brought to the fore now. Since the ill wind had all but gone and the summit of power was not afar, it was time for the 'vine' to stand up and act as *dandadhar*. After all, without *danda* (force) with *dhanda* (business) Brahmanical hegemony would be impossible to maintain.<sup>553</sup>

## 8. For Unconstrained Power

Leaving aside their 'Hindu militancy'<sup>554</sup> and the fact that 'No historical argument was too false or too foolish to be trotted out by the Hindus to contest the demand of the Indian Muslims to have their own way of life';<sup>555</sup> the Muslim constitutional position set out in the Lahore resolution was not irreconcilable to the Congress-British sanguinity of keeping India undivided. Both the Cripps offer of 1942 and the Cabinet Mission Plan of 1946 attempted precisely to do that.

Cripps proposed a union of India in which provinces were to have the right to opt out and form separate dominions after ten years. Seeing that it recognised the rights of the Muslim majority provinces to self-determination<sup>556</sup> the Muslim League was disposed to accept it,<sup>557</sup> given a satisfactory position in the viceroy's executive and a suitable procedure for opting out of provinces.<sup>558</sup> It was the Congress that rejected the Cripps offer.

The Cabinet Mission, of which Cripps was a forceful member, in its draft proposal stipulated a sub-national Pakistan, with its own flag, forces to maintain internal order, and enjoying parity with Hindustan in an all-India government. Pakistan and Hindustan would draft their respective constitution and, then, together draft the

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<sup>548</sup> B.R. Ambedkar, *Writings and Speeches*, vol. 17 Pt- 1, Bombay, 2003: 71-72

<sup>549</sup> M.K. Gandhi 1968-84lxxviii: 140

<sup>550</sup> Wavell 1973: 341

<sup>551</sup> Wavell 1973: 180

<sup>552</sup> N.C. Chaudhuri, *Continent of Circe*, London 1965

<sup>553</sup> B. Walker, *Hindu World: An Encyclopedic Survey of Hinduism*, London, 1968i: 267

<sup>554</sup> R.P. Dutt, *India Today, Bombay*, 1949: 435-36

<sup>555</sup> N.C. Chaudhuri, *Thy Hand, Great Anarch!, India, 1921-52*, London, 1987: 332

<sup>556</sup> Resolution of the Muslim League Working Committee, 11 April 1942 in N. Mansergh *et. al.* 1970-82i: 606

<sup>557</sup> The Cripps Mission file, *Quaid-i-Azam Papers*, file 802; N. Mansergh *et. al.* 1970-82i: 380, 392-93; M.J. Moore 1979:88

<sup>558</sup> R. Coupland, *Indian Diary, 1941-42*, Rhodes House, Oxford: 221-22

union constitution as equal partners.<sup>559</sup> It was also willing to concede Pakistan's right to opt out of the union after fifteen years.<sup>560</sup> The Mission's final scheme, made known on 16 May 1946, however, split the six 'Pakistan' provinces into two groups, the formation of which was to depend upon the willing accession of each province, abandoned parity in the making of the union constitution, enlarged the union's power to include finance, and failed to provide an opting out provision to groups and provinces from the union.<sup>561</sup> The Congress President Maulana Abul Kalam Azad maintained that the final scheme was in line with his suggestions.<sup>562</sup> Although it had a superficial semblance with the League's Lahore resolution, the Mission's final offer was aimed at appeasing their Congress friends. Wavell considered its back peddling so disgusting that he even contemplated resigning.

Although some Muslim Leaguers feared that the union's powers would enable Congress to abort the emergence of Pakistan,<sup>563</sup> others considered it tactically advantageous to accept the plan and work up to the group stage and then create a situation to force the British and the Congress to concede a fully independent Pakistan.<sup>564</sup> Guided by the latter advisers and quoting them almost verbatim, Jinnah recommended the Muslim League council to accept the plan, promising them Pakistan within ten years.<sup>565</sup> In the spirit of his advice, the council expressed the League's 'willingness to co-operate with the constitution-making machinery proposed in the scheme outlined by the Mission, in the hope that it would ultimately result in the establishment of complete sovereign Pakistan'<sup>566</sup> and authorized Jinnah to negotiate the League's entry into the interim government.

Before the Mission left India, the Congress working committee also accepted the plan, but with the rider that they were against compelling a province or even part of a province to join the proposed zones and would support their rights to secede from a zone even in the future.<sup>567</sup> Instead of honouring their formal acceptance of the plan and availing the opportunity afforded by it to prove the Muslim apprehension about high Hindu hegemonic aims wrong, both Gandhi and Nehru left no doubt that the

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<sup>559</sup> N. Mansergh *et al.* 1970vii: 126

<sup>560</sup> N. Mansergh *et al.* 1970vii: 82

<sup>561</sup> N. Mansergh *et al.* 1970vii: 303

<sup>562</sup> A.K. Azad, *India Wins Freedom*, New Delhi, 1959: 142-45, 149

<sup>563</sup> M.L. Qureshi (joint secretary of the League's planning committee) to Jinnah, 31 May 1946, *Quaid-i-Azam Papers*, file 1092; In Britain Ali Muhammad Abbas similarly raised objection and in defiance named his flat in Russel's Square Pakistan House.

<sup>564</sup> Aurangzeb Khan to Jinnah, 19 May 1946; Liaquat Ali to Jinnah, 21 May 1946; Prof. A.B.A. Haleem to Jinnah, 23 May 1946; Jamil Uddin Ahmad to Jinnah, 29 May 1946, all in *Quaid-i-Azam Papers*, file 12

<sup>565</sup> For his speech and statements, W. Ahmad 1992v: 40-47 In his private discussion with Woodrow Wyatt, parliamentary private secretary to Cripps, Jinnah was emphatic that in accepting the plan League was taking the first step on the road to Pakistan. [N. Mansergh *et al.* 1970vii: 686-87]

<sup>566</sup> N. Mansergh *et al.* 1970vii: 469

<sup>567</sup> N. Mansergh *et al.* 1970ix: 463

Congress would dismantle the plan at the first opportunity.<sup>568</sup> Jinnah pointed out that if the Congress could change so many times while the British were still in the country and before power had been handed over to them, what assurance would the Muslims have once the British left?<sup>569</sup> Naturally, he and the League did not see any point in hoping that the Congress would ever be sincere in honouring their pledge and withdrew their acceptance.

For Jinnah and the Muslim League the Congress position towards the Cabinet Mission plan of 'accepting without accepting' was not unexpected. Long before they had realized that the Congress leaders would never agree to a firm constitutional arrangement that would safeguard Muslims; and it was this realization that had prompted them to seek Pakistan and follow a policy of making Congress lay bare their hegemonic motive by refusing every reasonable conciliatory effort. Gandhi showed them to be right when he told the Cabinet Mission: 'This [safeguards] is really worse than Pakistan.'<sup>570</sup> He may have been instinctively Hindu in his objectives; was the equally hallowed claim of secular Nehru and his colleagues any different? The answer was provided by a senior Congress leader who later served in Nehru's cabinet, 'He [Nehru] spoke what was in our heart but gave a handle to Jinnah.'<sup>571</sup>

In stressing the necessity of safeguards, the League was not alone. Even Azad recognized their imperative, and in 1945 did indeed send a memorandum to Gandhi to this effect.<sup>572</sup> Gandhi not only dismissed the plea, but also told him not to speak about it.<sup>573</sup> Other so-called nationalist Muslim leaders, including Maulana Hussain Ahmed Madani of the Jamiat-i-Ulema-i-Hind, also desired firm constitutional safeguards and said so before the Cabinet Mission.<sup>574</sup> 'The nationalist Muslims were only a little bit behind [Jinnah and the Muslim League]', recollected V.P. Menon. According to him, Patel had said compared to Azad 'Jinnah is much kinder to us, he asks for only Muslim majority areas, so save us from our [nationalist] friends. ... Sardar said it was horrible. Gandhiji did not even bring it before the Congress Working Committee...' About his own reaction, he recorded: 'I was horrified ... he

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<sup>568</sup> Gandhi pronounced it as recommendations and not binding awards and the declared its acceptance by the Congress as not an irrevocable agreement. [H.M. Seervai, *Partition of India- Legend and Reality*, Mumbai, 1989: 66] He also sent words to Bardoloi, the premier of Assam, to bamboozle the plan. [N. Mansergh *et.al* 1970ix: 405] While the plan was drawn Nehru had told the Cabinet Mission in the presence of a hapless Azad that the Congress were going to work for a strong centre and to break the Group system and they would succeed. [N. Mansergh *et.al* 1970vii: 855] After replacing Azad, who had by then out served the Congress, Nehru again reiterated that the Congress regarded itself free to change or modify the Cabinet Mission Plan. [A.K. Azad 1959: 154-59]

<sup>569</sup> A.K. Azad 1959: 157-58

<sup>570</sup> N. Mansergh *et.al.* 1970vii: 46 6

<sup>571</sup> K.M. Munshi, *Indian Constitutional Documents*, Mumbai, 1967: 104

<sup>572</sup> Azad to Gandhi, 2 August 1945 in N. Mansergh *et.al.* 1970vi: 155-57

<sup>573</sup> Gandhi to Azad, 15 August 1945 in M.K. Gandhi 1958lxxxi: 127

<sup>574</sup> N. Mansergh *et.al* 1970vii: 286-87. Why these leaders did not take a public position on this is an interesting but separate question, which is awaiting scholars attention

wanted to save the unity of India at the expense of the majority Hindus and Sikhs.<sup>575</sup>

According to H. M. Seervai, an Indian jurist and constitutional historian:

The published documents show that Gandhi seems to have been influenced, consciously or unconsciously, by the fact that the Hindus constituted a very large majority of the population of India, and that with the force of numbers behind the Congress, and the weapon of direct action ready to hand, the Congress could secure independence for a united India whether the Muslim League agreed or did not agree...

In Seervai's opinion, Nehru reached the same position by a different path. Despite the fact that the League dominated the Muslims as completely as the Congress dominated the Hindus, he believed that he would be able to win over the Muslim voters by a direct appeal. Nehru was also convinced that the Muslims were incapable of launching direct action or creating any real trouble.

Continuing, Seervai added:

The Congress opposition to parity and the Congress demand for a dominion Cabinet, if granted, would have enabled the Congress to get hold of real power over the Government of India as well as over Provincial Governments, leaving the Congress to settle the Hindu-Muslim problem on its own terms.<sup>576</sup>

The conclusion of Lord Wavell, the Viceroy, was not very different.

Their aim is power and to get rid of British influence as soon as possible, after which they think they can deal with both Muslims and Princes, the former by bribery, blackmail, propaganda, and if necessary, force; the latter by stirring up their people ...the Congress will not seriously negotiate with the Muslim League so long as they can get what they want by pressure on H.M.G.<sup>577</sup>

Wavell was not merely conveying a personal impression. To him, 'Nehru disclosed most starkly the real Congress objective: immediate control of the centre, so that they can deal with Muslims... and then make at leisure a Constitution to suit themselves.'<sup>578</sup> Indeed, after examining the voluminous documents collated by Mansergh and colleagues (1970-83) Seervai has no doubt that Wavell's view of the Congress was correct.<sup>579</sup>

Wavell was not alone in this. In spite of his pro-Congress sympathies, Attlee had to admit to his cabinet on 10 December 1946:

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<sup>575</sup> Interview, 7 September 1964, PP MS 39, *Hodson Papers*, School of Oriental and African Studies, London

<sup>576</sup> H.M. Seervai 1989: 66-68

<sup>577</sup> N. Mansergh *et.al.* 1970ix: 240-41

<sup>578</sup> Wavell 1973: 271

<sup>579</sup> H.M. Seervai 1989: 90

Pandit Nehru's present policy seemed to be to secure complete domination by Congress throughout the Government in India. If a constitution was framed which had this effect, there would certainly be strong reactions from the Muslim Provinces where the Muslim majority might refuse to join a Central Government on such terms at all; and the ultimate result of Congress policy might be the establishment of that Pakistan which they so much dislike.<sup>580</sup>

Mountbatten also felt that the Congress were primarily to be blamed for scuttling the Cabinet Mission Plan.<sup>581</sup> Moreover, he 'and the senior members of his staff did feel that Mr. Jinnah's fears had some foundation.'<sup>582</sup> The inescapable truth is that the high Hindus of the Congress wanted to take charge of the whole subcontinent without putting themselves under any constraint in dealing with the non-Brahmanical elements - Muslims, Dalits or anyone else. The documents now available clearly show that they doubted whether Jinnah had either the intention or the power to start a revolt if the Muslim demands were not met.<sup>583</sup> They also felt that the British government would not dare to break with them.<sup>584</sup> With Attlee and the Labour government in charge of Britain, they had extra reason to be confident. They indeed got Wavell recalled.<sup>585</sup> The old soldier had earned a reputation for his straightforwardness and sincerity<sup>586</sup> and earned the Congress displeasure by allegedly not stopping to appease Jinnah and the League who were 'leading India to disaster'.<sup>587</sup> Both Gandhi and Nehru secretly recommended the name of Lord Mountbatten, with whom Nehru had developed a friendship during his visit to Singapore,<sup>588</sup> as Wavell's replacement.<sup>589</sup> Unsurprisingly, Attlee obliged them and sent Mountbatten with the directive: 'Keep India united, if you can; if not, try to save something from the wreck; whatever happens get Britain out...'<sup>590</sup>

## 9. Strategy to Frustrate the Muslims

With Mountbatten, a self-confessed Indiaphile who regarded Pakistan as 'a sheer madness',<sup>591</sup> solidly on their side, the Congress leaders, through their resolution of 8

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<sup>580</sup> N. Mansergh *et.al.* 1970ix: 319

<sup>581</sup> N. Mansergh *et.al.* 1970x: 34

<sup>582</sup> N. Mansergh *et.al.* 1970x: 507-08

<sup>583</sup> N. Mansergh *et.al.* 1970vii: 136

<sup>584</sup> N. Mansergh *et.al.* 1970ix: 240-41

<sup>585</sup> S. Ghosh, *Gandhi's Emissary*, London, 1967: 46-48; L. Mosley, *The Last Days of the British Raj*, London, 1961: 41-48

<sup>586</sup> A.K. Azad 1959: 107; N. Mansergh *et.al.* 1970xii: 799

<sup>587</sup> L. Mosley 1961: 44-47

<sup>588</sup> B.M. Kaul, *The Untold Story*, Delhi, 1967: 86-87; Mountbatten to Listowel, 3 October 1978, *Listowel Papers*, MSS. Eur. C.357, India Office Library, London

<sup>589</sup> L. Collins and D. Lapierre, *Freedom At Midnight*, New York, 1975: 18-19; S. Ghosh 1967:

47; C. Smith, *Fifty Years with Mountbatten*, Middlesex, 1981: 82

<sup>590</sup> P. Ziegler, *Mountbatten: An Official Biography*, London, 1985: 358-59

<sup>591</sup> Viceroy's Personal Report No. 5, 1 May 1947, *Mountbatten Papers*, File No. 208; Viceroy's Interview with Liaquat Ali Khan, 19 April 1947, *Mountbatten Papers*, File No. 192

March 1947, set out to torpedo Muslim unity by demanding that if British India was to be divided, Bengal and the Punjab should also be partitioned. On 12 April 1947, Patel told Mountbatten:

...as soon as I [Mountbatten] announced the partition of Bengal, the Muslims of Bengal would secede from the League in order to preserve the entity of Bengal. He thought he might possibly follow in the Punjab, and it would not be unlikely that there would be a revolt of the League against Mr. Jinnah if he had nothing better than the Sind, and possibly half of the Punjab to offer them for Pakistan, if Congress still retained their hold on the N.W.F.P.<sup>592</sup>

On the same day, Azad also assured Mountbatten of a similar outcome, if the partition of Bengal and the Punjab was announced.<sup>593</sup> In the governors' conference that followed, it was noted:

... it appeared possible that the Muslims in Bengal would not follow Mr. Jinnah's lead; there was a chance of Congress Ministry being returned again in the N.W.F.P. and that Mr. Jinnah's Pakistan would in the end consist only of Sind and part of the Punjab.<sup>594</sup>

Thus persuaded by the Congress,<sup>595</sup> and in line with the first part of his brief, that is, 'Keep India united, if you can', Mountbatten saw in this the last hope of keeping India together. Accordingly, he told Jinnah: 'I simply could not visualise being so inconsistent as to agree to the partition of India without also agreeing to partition within any province in which the same problem arose.'<sup>596</sup> Unsurprisingly, the British cabinet also came out in support of partitioning Bengal and the Punjab.<sup>597</sup>

The stratagem seemed to work to the extent that in Bengal the League leaders, faced with being left with a desolate East Bengal, showed readiness to keep Bengal together at the cost of staying outside Pakistan. The Bengali Congress leader

<sup>592</sup> Viceroy's Interview with Sardar Patel, 12 April 1947, *Mountbatten Papers*, File No. 192

<sup>593</sup> Viceroy's Interview with Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, 12 April 1947, *Mountbatten Papers*, File No. 192

<sup>594</sup> Viceroy's Governors Conference, 15 April 1947, *Mountbatten Papers*, File No. 64

<sup>595</sup> Although Azad [1959: 165] and Mosley [1961: 97] have expressed the belief that it was Mountbatten who had swung Nehru round to partition, the truth was the opposite, as Mountbatten's own admission would show. Even while the Cabinet Mission was in India, Nehru told Woodrow Wyatt about his readiness to concede Pakistan 'granted however (a) a plebiscite, and (b) territorial readjustments so that solid blocks of Hindu territory were not included...' [Wavell to Pethick-Lawrence, 15 January 1946 in N. Mansergh *et. al.* 1970-82vi: 796] V.P. Menon [*Transfer of Power in India*, Princeton, 1957: 358] also recalled that before Mountbatten's appointment Nehru was already in favour of partition. Likewise, in the early 1946 Patel declared that the time had come to cut the diseased limb and be done with the Muslim League. [D.V. Tahmankar, *Sardar Patel*, London, 1970: 191] Moreover, in an interview with the Associated Press of America on 9 May 1947, Patel made it clear a strong central government with a strong army were absolutely essential and if for the sake of them granting Pakistan was necessary, so be it. [N. Mansergh *et. al.* 1970x: 717]

<sup>596</sup> N. Mansergh *et. al.* 1970x: 163-64

<sup>597</sup> Twenty-sixth Meeting of India-Burma Committee of the British Cabinet, 20 May 1947, *Mountbatten Papers*, File No. 125

Saratchandra Bose, who had earlier resigned from the Congress in protest against its willingness to agree to divide India and formed the All-Bengal Anti-Pakistan and Anti-Partition Committee,<sup>598</sup> joined them with the hope that Bengal could eventually be made to join India.<sup>599</sup> But it did not fit with the strategy of the supreme Congress leaders who had determined that if the Muslims were not ready to stay in an undivided India without safeguards, they would give them an unviable Pakistan.

Although Saratchandra and Abul Hashim, Secretary of the Bengal Muslim League, signed a tentative agreement on 20 May 1947, a day earlier Mountbatten, at the behest of the supreme leaders of the Congress, had already informed the British cabinet:

...the Congress leaders had modified their former attitude; indeed they were now inclined to feel that it would be to their advantage to be relieved of the responsibility for the Provinces that would form Pakistan, while at the same time they were confident that those Provinces would ultimately have to seek reunion with the remainder of India.<sup>600</sup>

In spite of being a party to the above Congress decision, Gandhi, who had earlier professed to have no objection to a united independent Bengal, now found grounds for objecting. On receiving the copy of the tentative agreement, on 24 May he wrote to Saratchandra:

There is nothing in the draft stipulating that nothing will be done by mere majority. Every act of Government must carry with it the co-operation of at least two-thirds of the Hindu minority in the executive and the legislative. There should be an admission that Bengal has common culture as embodied in Tagore, which had its roots in the philosophy of the Upanishads.<sup>601</sup>

If Muslim India's demand for political safeguards was so abominable, what made his new set of demands, including the one requiring Muslim acceptance of the philosophy of Upanishads, justifiable? Apparently this all-important question escaped Gandhi. After Mountbatten's announcement of the partition plan on 3 June, he came clean telling Saratchandra to 'cease to disturb the atmosphere that has been created for partition of Bengal.'<sup>602</sup>

To the central leaders of the Congress, a united Bengal outside India was, to quote Nehru, 'even more dangerous than Pakistan'.<sup>603</sup> Many Bengali Congress leaders also wrote to Mountbatten:

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<sup>598</sup> *Statesman*, 27 April 1947

<sup>599</sup> Saratchandra's son Amiya Bose, who had worked closely with his father, disclosed this [L.A. Gordon in M. Hasan, *India's Partition – Process, Strategy and Mobilization*, Delhi, 1994: 312

<sup>600</sup> N. Mansergh *et.al.* 1970x: 896

<sup>601</sup> Gandhi to S.C. Bose, 24 May 1947 in S.A. Siddiqui 1974: 69

<sup>602</sup> Gandhi to S.C. Bose, 8 June 1947 in A and A. Dil 2000: 583

<sup>603</sup> Nehru to Kiron Shankar Roy in *Statesman*, 20 March 1994

If India is to be divided on communal consideration, partition of Bengal becomes an immediate necessity... Sovereign Bengal will be a virtual Pakistan... We are not prepared to make any compromise on this issue on any consideration whatsoever.<sup>604</sup>

Even prominent academics such as the historians Sir Jadhunath Sarkar, Dr Rameshchandra Majumdar and Dr Surendranath Sen and the linguist Dr Sunitikumar Chatterjee joined the chorus.<sup>605</sup>

## 10. Strategy of Reunification through Division

Mountbatten had co-operated with the Congress moves, not simply because he and his wife had fallen for Nehru's charm, but also in view of the second part of his brief 'if not, try to save as much from the wreck'. Jinnah and the Muslim League may not have objected giving up the overwhelmingly Hindu majority Ambala division of the Punjab and the Bardhaman division of Bengal,<sup>606</sup> but the Congress leaders saw to it that their knife mutilated as much of Pakistan as possible. Jinnah's anguish about a 'truncated' Pakistan was not because Pakistan failed to get Bengal and the Punjab in their entirety but because of the Congress-British design behind the extra butchery.

It was the high Hindus and their British friends who were primarily responsible for the untold human suffering that was caused by their dual tactics of forcing the division of Bengal and the Punjab and effecting partition with unsavory haste. Yet without regretting any of this one of the first major historical works to appear in Bengali after 1947 went to characterize the loss of East Bengal as 'the gravest calamity befallen on the Bengalis for over two thousand years'.<sup>607</sup> More strangely, the Congress leaders also began prophesizing that soon Pakistan would fail and India would reunite again. In his radio broadcast of 3 June 1947 Nehru, who had publicly opposed partition and Pakistan as late as the 15<sup>th</sup> April,<sup>608</sup> said he still hoped through partition a united India would be reached sooner than otherwise.<sup>609</sup> A day later Gandhi, who had on the 31<sup>st</sup> March vowed not to accept partition as long as he lived,<sup>610</sup> said 'The Muslim League would ask to come back to Hindustan. They will ask Jawaharlal to come back and he will take them back.'<sup>611</sup> The Congress Working Committee, in their formal resolution of the 5<sup>th</sup> June, also said

Geography and mountains and the sea fashioned India as she is, and no human agency can change that shape or come in the way of her final destiny. The AICC earnestly trusts that

<sup>604</sup> N. Mansergh *et.al.* 1970x: 555-57

<sup>605</sup> M.H. Rahman 1985: 83

<sup>606</sup> This possibility is suggested in view of the confidential analysis prepared in 1941 by Sir Muhammad Shafi's son-in-law Shah Nawaz Khan under the title of 'What is Pakistan?', *National Archives of Pakistan*, F/1099

<sup>607</sup> N.R. Roy, *Bangalir Itihas: Adi-Parva* (History of the Bengalis: Early Phase), Kalikata, 1949: 'Introduction'

<sup>608</sup> E.W.R. Lumbe, *The Transfer of Power in India*, London, 1947: 76

<sup>609</sup> M.J. Akbar, *Nehru*, New York, 1988: 413

<sup>610</sup> A.K. Azad 1959: 218

<sup>611</sup> *New York Herald Tribune*, 5 June 1947



when present passions have subsided, India's problems will be viewed in their correct perspective and the false doctrine of two nations will be discredited and discarded by all.<sup>612</sup>

Patel<sup>613</sup> and Azad<sup>614</sup> made similar prophecies. Dr. Shama Prasad Mookerjee, leader of the Hindu Mahashaba and a cabinet colleague of Nehru, issued similar statements and, moreover, went all over East Bengal urging his fellow high Hindus to do everything in their power to regain Indian unity. While assuring them that for their sacrifice they would not go un-rewarded from their gods in heaven, he even called upon young women to sacrifice their honour to help achieve it. On India's independence day the Congress President, Acharya Kripalani, declared, 'The freedom we have achieved cannot be complete without the unity of India.'<sup>615</sup> Nehru continued saying that the partition may help bring about a united India sooner than otherwise and then it could have a stronger and more secure foundation.<sup>616</sup>

Most scholars have preferred not to probe into either the meaning of the Bengali historian's sense of calamity or the Congress leadership's apparently absurd hopes for reunification. They have given little weight to these statements, as if these were mere empty utterances of the frustrated. Many of them fell for the myth spun by Nehru and Krishna Menon that the Congress leaders accepted partition, lest the British change their mind and decide to stay put.<sup>617</sup> Unknown to them, Krishna Menon also claimed to have been privy to Mountbatten changing the Congress leaders stance by arguing a truncated Pakistan was bound to come back to India.<sup>618</sup> But anyone who had read Nehru's 'The Discovery of India' would have found that from at least the mid-1930s his mind was active on such a strategy.<sup>619</sup>

### 11. East Pakistan – The Prime Target

After India brought East Pakistan out of Pakistan, Mountbatten disclosed that it was Nehru who had convinced him that East Pakistan was likely to be a great embarrassment to Pakistan<sup>620</sup> and would be out of Pakistan in 25 years.<sup>621</sup> At Nehru's request he had ruled out both independent Bengal and independent East Bengal,<sup>622</sup> and even overruled the acting Bengal Governor J.R. Tyson's suggestion

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<sup>612</sup> *Indian Annual Register*, 1947 vol. 1: 122-23

<sup>613</sup> L. Mosley 1961: 248

<sup>614</sup> *Leader*, 16 June 1947 cited in S.R. Mehrotra in C.H. Philips and M.D. Wainwright 1970: 220

<sup>615</sup> Cited by S. Harrison in *Foreign Affairs*, Washington, vol. 43 no. 2, 1965: 319

<sup>616</sup> *Statesman*, 29 November 1947; M. Gwyer and A. Appadorai 1957ii: 682; J. Korbelt, *Danger in Kashmir*, Princeton, 1954: 128; L. Mosley 1961: 248

<sup>617</sup> *Statesman*, 14 October 1947; S.M. Burke, *Main Springs of Indian and Pakistani Foreign Policies*, Minneapolis, 1974: 57.

<sup>618</sup> V. Patel, *Sardar Patel's Correspondence, 1945-50* (ed. D. Das) Ahmedabad, 1972: 114-15

<sup>619</sup> Relevant text in M. Hasan 1994: 74-80

<sup>620</sup> L. Collins and D. Lapierre, *Mountbatten and Partition of India*, Dhaka, 1982: 143

<sup>621</sup> L. Collins and D. Lapierre 1982: 127

<sup>622</sup> L. Collins and D. Lapierre 1982: 104, 143

of making Kalikata a free port for the common benefit of East and West Bengal.<sup>623</sup> Mountbatten was, of course, capable of making a false claim. But on this particular issue, his successor Rajagopalacharia has left us with an independent confirmation.<sup>624</sup> To make it indubitable, the minutes of Mountbatten's meeting of 8 March 1948 with West Bengal Chief Minister Dr. Bidhanchandra Roy also show him actively pursuing the very same policy of the Congress.

Dr. Roy said that this [the prospect of East and West Bengal amalgamating again] was a topic that was on almost everyone's lips, and he had had offers from leading Muslims to go round doing propaganda...

I told him that at the suggestion of Mr. Suhrawardy I had put such a proposal [an independent United Bengal] to the Congress Party, and that Mr. Kripalani, Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel, after consulting their colleagues, had emphatically turned down any idea of a united independent Bengal. I could not believe that their views would have changed; the more so since they had had to give up the idea of an independent NWFP on account of this very policy.

We next discussed the possibility of West and East Bengal joining up directly under Pakistan, and this Dr. Roy said he was sure no Hindu would ever agree to.

So we came to the final alternative: a united Bengal forming part of Indian union. Dr. Roy thought that the Pakistan Central Government would never agree to this. I agreed, and asked him how he thought Pakistan could stop East Bengal from seceding from the rest of Pakistan and joining the Indian union. I pointed out that they could not send any troops by land, sea or air without their being intercepted by the Indian union, and that sort of physical violence they had no means of imposing their will on East Bengal, since more than 40 out of the total 70 million people in Pakistan reside in East Bengal.

Dr. Roy wondered whether the Muslims of East Bengal would be prepared to take such a drastic step ... I replied that that depended entirely on how the West Bengal Government and the Central Government treated the problem. If West Bengal was prepared to go out of their way to be friendly to the Muslims of both East and West Bengal, then they might well create conditions in which the Muslims of East Bengal would feel sufficiently secure as to come over, and some of the more adventurous ones might be ready to take office in West Bengal... then it seemed to me that there was a good chance that East Bengal might voluntarily wish to join up with West Bengal.<sup>625</sup>

The fact that neither Mountbatten nor the Indian leaders were engaged in shadow boxing could also be seen from their extraordinary efforts to lay a claim on the Buddhist populated Chittagong Hill Tracts and create strife there as an excuse for an armed invasion of East Pakistan. Revisiting, it is important not only for understanding the Indian strategy but also for discerning Pakistan's fatal failure in reading the principal thrust of that strategy.

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<sup>623</sup> L. Collins and D. Lapierre 1982: 30, 71

<sup>624</sup> *The Swaraj*, Madras, 1972

<sup>625</sup> Full Text in L. Collins and D. Lapierre, *Mountbatten and Independent India*, New Delhi, 1985: 120-22

At Mountbatten's meeting with the representatives of India and Pakistan on 16 August 1947, Nehru protested against Chittagong Hill Tracts' inclusion in Pakistan and the moral impasse in which he and his colleagues had been put into, because throughout the previous two or three months they had given countless assurances to the representatives of that territory that it could not be included in Pakistan. Mountbatten pointed out that the boundary commission had included the Hill Tracts in East Bengal in view of its own economic dependence on Chittagong district and the importance of the Karnafuli that ran through the Hill Tracts to Chittagong port. Nevertheless, he suggested a compromise whereby it would be given to India while Pakistan would keep control of the upper waters of the Karnafuli along with a strip of territory on either side of the river. In view of its ramification on East Pakistan's economic and strategic future Liaquat Ali refused to consider Mountbatten's suggestion of an adjustment in this territory alone. At this, Mountbatten proposed a new compromise giving India the Hill Tracts in exchange of some predominantly Muslim area allotted by the commission to India. Liaquat Ali also refused that.<sup>626</sup> The Congress, however, went on to declare that the award was 'ineffective, infructuous and incapable of execution in international consciousness.'<sup>627</sup> But that was neither the beginning, nor the end of it.

Nehru was economical with truth; it was not the Hill Tracts' petty chiefs who approached the Congress two to three months before the partition, it was the Congress who began instigating certain groups there seven months earlier. On 10 January 1947, the Congress high command sent J.P. Narayan and A.V. Thakkar to instigate the *Jana Samity* (People's Association) and the Hillmen Association into demanding the inclusion of the Chittagong Hill Tracts in India. The Congress emissaries assured the tribal leaders that the Congress would make strong efforts on their behalf.<sup>628</sup>

During the crucial weeks before the division of British India, Radcliffe, the British Chairman of the Boundary Commission, was accommodated at the Comptroller's House in the Viceregal Lodge<sup>629</sup> and his award was with the viceroy's office on or before 9 August, even though it was officially shown as signed on the 12<sup>th</sup>.<sup>630</sup> The viceroy and his senior aides, including the viceroy's secretary, George Abell, discussed the award on the 9<sup>th</sup>.<sup>631</sup> Regarding the discussion, the viceroy's joint private secretary, John Christie, recorded in his diary 'George tells me H.E. is in a tired flap and is having to be strenuously dissuaded from asking Radcliffe to alter his awards.'<sup>632</sup> Had the viceroy been dissuaded, it was only temporarily, for on the night of the 11<sup>th</sup> V.P. Menon, the viceroy's reform commissioner who acted as a secret

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<sup>626</sup> N. Mansergh *et.al.* 1970xii: 737-39

<sup>627</sup> AICC G33. 1947

<sup>628</sup> S. Bhaumik 1996: 73

<sup>629</sup> A. Campbell-Johnson, *Mission with Mountbatten*, London, 1951: 153

<sup>630</sup> L. Mosley 1961: 220, 227

<sup>631</sup> A. Campbell-Johnson 1951: 151-52

<sup>632</sup> 10 Mss Eur D 718/3 Part 2, IOL

channel of communication between Mountbatten and Nehru and Patel and a spokesman for the Congress to the viceroy,<sup>633</sup> was sent by the viceroy to see Radcliffe. Although Menon did not succeed in having the late night meeting, the next day, that is the 12<sup>th</sup>, Radcliffe was brought to have lunch with the viceroy, where Ferozpur and Zeera Tehsils were taken out of Pakistan and given to India.<sup>634</sup> The same day the viceroy recorded:

...of the disastrous effects that was likely to have on the Congress leaders. He went so far as to say that Nehru and Patel were both certain to blow up, since they had only recently assured a delegation from the Chittagong Hill Tracts that there was no question of their being allotted to Pakistan...

V. P. Menon went on to say that if the details of the award were given to them before the 15<sup>th</sup> he thought they might well refuse to attend the meeting of the Constituent Assembly, which I was to address. If given to them later in the day he thought they would refuse to come to the State banquet and the evening party... I have never known V. P. Menon to mislead me, and I decided that somehow we must prevent the leaders from knowing the details of the award until after the 15<sup>th</sup> August; all our works and the hope of good Indo-British relations on the day of the transfer of power would risk being destroyed if we could not do this.<sup>635</sup>

John Christie separately noted in his diary:

The Staff Meeting, twice postponed, began at 5 and went on for 2 3/4 hours... then we got on to the Boundary Commission – V. P. (Menon) showed a quite unexpected flare up of communal bias when he heard about the C (Chittagong) H (Hill) T (Tracts). H.E. most anxious to postpone publication till after 15<sup>th</sup>. Pug (Lord Ismay) against this for administrative reasons. H.E. adamant: sent Alan (Campbell-Johnson) and me to Sir C. R. (Radcliffe) to arrange the dates. C.R. refused flat – too many people know it's already. Stretched a point to redate 13<sup>th</sup>; will arrive complete after H.E. has gone to Karachi.<sup>636</sup>

The delay thus made in letting the commission's award known to the provincial administrations to avoid infuriating the Congress leaders<sup>637</sup> resulted in millions of deaths in the Punjab.<sup>638</sup> The horrendous consequence of the delay, together with the unexpected allocation of the strategic Gurdaspur district of the Punjab to India, which had been recognized as a Muslim majority district in the Independence Act of July 1947,<sup>639</sup> and the subsequent Indian occupation of Kashmir, left many Pakistanis with the mistaken belief that the decision to delay in letting the commission's award

<sup>633</sup> Abell to Hodson, 17 September 1968, PP MS 39 Box 1-2, *Hodson Papers*, School of Oriental and African Studies, London

<sup>634</sup> Christopher Beaumont, 'The truth of the partition of the Punjab in August 1947', 20 September 1989, deposited with All Souls College Cambridge. [W. Ahmad 1992vii: 596-601]

<sup>635</sup> N. Mansergh *et.al.* 1970xii: 760

<sup>636</sup> N. Mansergh *et.al.* 1970xii: 674

<sup>637</sup> P. Ziegler 1985: 419

<sup>638</sup> L. Mosley 1961: 229

<sup>639</sup> Second Schedule, Districts Provisionally Included in New Province of West Punjab. Indian Independence Act, July 1947

known was prompted by Mountbatten's wish to ensure Gurdaspur's allocation to India.<sup>640</sup> Had Mountbatten played a part in the allocation of Gurdaspur to India, he must have done it before. As early as April 1947 Rajendra Prasad had set out India's claim on Gurdaspur before Mountbatten,<sup>641</sup> and on 11 May Nehru raised it with Mountbatten and, according to Nehru's biographer, 'virtually ensured that this critical land-link with Kashmir remained in India.'<sup>642</sup>

Radcliffe avoided discussing Gurdaspur when Justice Din Muhammad raised it during the commission's hearing<sup>643</sup> and from the start Justice Muhammad Munir had the impression that it would be awarded to India.<sup>644</sup> When on 1 August Gandhi went to Srinagar to persuade the Hindu ruler of Kashmir to accede his Muslim majority state to India, he was able to say that India would get Gurdaspur providing road link between India and Kashmir.<sup>645</sup> On 9 August Liaquat Ali protested against its inclusion in India.<sup>646</sup> The map of the award sent to the Punjab governor on the 8<sup>th</sup>, which later fell into the hands of the Pakistan authorities, showed Gurdaspur had already been allotted to India. Furthermore, Christopher Beaumont, the Secretary of the Boundary Commission, who revealed Radcliffe's reallocation of Ferozpur and Zeera Tehsils after his 12 August lunch with the viceroy, was unequivocal that from early on Radcliffe was minded to give Gurdaspur to India and at no stage it was allotted to Pakistan.<sup>647</sup> There is, therefore, little doubt that during the final week leading to the division, India's unmet aspiration to have Chittagong Hill Tracts, not Gurdaspur, was a problem to Mountbatten.

He removed all doubt about it when he informed Lord Listowell, the Secretary of State for India, in his telegraph of 14 August 1947, that he was warned that there would be a serious reaction amongst Congress leaders if the Chittagong Hill Tracts were not allotted to India.<sup>648</sup> It is possible, failing to obtain a reallocation of the Hill Tracts, which would have required a new set of justificatory arguments along with some other alterations in allocations and was impossible to accomplish in a day or two, Ferozpur and Zeera tehsils were given to India to impress upon the Congress leaders the fidelity of their Governor General-to-be to India's cause. Indeed, his deputy private secretary, Ian Scott, was of the view that in getting Ferozpur and Zeera allocated to India Mountbatten had acted on Nehru's advice.<sup>649</sup> Unsurprisingly, before anyone in the Pakistan camp had a chance to detect, let alone protest, the tempering with the award, Mountbatten had a draft statement ready, seen

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<sup>640</sup> N.S.A.K. Pataudi, *The Story of Soldering and Politics in India and Pakistan*, Lahore, 1978; A.H. Suhurwardy, *Kashmir: The Incredible Freedom Fight*, Lahore, 1991

<sup>641</sup> Prasad to Mountbatten, 18 April 1947, *Mountbatten Papers*, File No. 120

<sup>642</sup> M.J. Akbar 1988: 11

<sup>643</sup> C.M. Ali 1967: 218

<sup>644</sup> K. Singh, *The Partition of the Punjab*, Patiala, 1972: 78-79

<sup>645</sup> Pyarelal, *Mahatma Gandhi*, Ahmedabad, 1958ii: 357-58

<sup>646</sup> M. Rahman, *Divided Kashmir*, Boulder, 1996: 59

<sup>647</sup> Christopher Beaumont – An Obituary, *The Daily Telegraph*, London, 16 May 2002.

<sup>648</sup> N. Mansergh *et.al.* 1970xii: 732-33

<sup>649</sup> P. Ziegler 1985: 421, 734

and approved by Radcliffe, claiming that the award was the result of Radcliffe's 'own unfettered judgment and that at no stage was an attempt made by the Governor-General to influence his decision.'<sup>650</sup> During their lifetime both men continued to lie to cover up their wrongdoing. But they were not the only people involved in covering it up.

In his published account Menon had also suppressed not only his behind the scenes activities to get Chittagong Hill Tracts allocated to India, but also the fact of his presence at the meeting of 12 August.<sup>651</sup> This he had done, since the Hill Tracts was still a live issue at the time of his writing and it was imperative that his country's eagerness to have it remained a secret. Sneha Kumar Chakma, who was the Congress front man in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, has, however, recalled what went on:

I met Patel thrice in as many months. I discussed the matter with the leaders of the Bengal Congress, who had co-opted me onto their state committee. Both, the Bengal Congress leaders and Patel agreed that the Boundary Commission award was a great injustice. Patel asked my secretary to prepare the ground for an Indian intervention by stirring up a rebellion which Pakistanis might seek to suppress by bloody methods.<sup>652</sup>

Following their abortive attempt to defy Pakistan's authority over the Chittagong Hill Tracts, Sneha Kumar and his associates fled to India.<sup>653</sup> Nevertheless, India's preparations for the undoing of East Pakistan continued. Apart from stirring the Communists to create mischief, a 35,000 strong *Banga Sena* force of East Bengali refugees was raised in Kalikata under the barrister J. P. Mitter.<sup>654</sup> B. N. Mullick, a Bengali, was appointed head of the Indian Intelligence Bureau with extra budget and direct access to Nehru himself.<sup>655</sup> Moreover, a special planning and implementation body, called the Bangladesh Cell, was discreetly set up at Jadavpur University near Kalikata in 1949 under Triguna Sen, who later served in the Nehru cabinet.<sup>656</sup> From the same base *Purba-O-Paschim Bangla Sampriti Samiti* (East and West Bengal Amity Association) and its journal *Epar Bangla Opar Bangla* (This Bengal, That Bengal) were set up under Ajit Roy. After 1971 one of the dons of the same university and the co-editor of the *Epar Bangla Opar Bangla* wrote:

Ajit Roy who once worked under the guidance of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose in Japan and other South East Asian countries for the independence of India later devoted himself wholeheartedly to the cause of the emancipation of Bangladesh. His interest in Bangladesh is political, though his active but silent role in Bangladesh politics remains unknown to many.<sup>657</sup>

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<sup>650</sup> Cited in P. Ziegler 1985: 421

<sup>651</sup> V.P. Menon 1957: 409

<sup>652</sup> In *Ananda Bazar Patrika*, Kalikata, 4 July 1986

<sup>653</sup> S. Bhaumik 1996: 73-74

<sup>654</sup> A.M.K. Maswani 1979: 118-19

<sup>655</sup> N. Mitra and R. Sarin in *The Sunday*, Kalikata, 18-24 September 1988

<sup>656</sup> B. Mohammed, *Swadhin Bangla Betar* (Independent Bengal Radio), Dhaka, 1988: 135-36

<sup>657</sup> G.P. Bhattacharjee 1973: vii

In 1950, an invasion of East Pakistan was planned. According to Sneha Kumar Chakma, who was involved in it's planning:

Though Patel was enthusiastic, Nehru was shaky, unwilling to do anything that might justify the Pakistani inspired effort to take over Kashmir. When he turned down the proposal for a limited police action in East Bengal after the 1950 riots, our last hopes vanished.<sup>658</sup>

The riots in question were no more than a local disturbance in a place called Kalisira, which were sparked off when the local Hindus provocatively took out a procession of the goddess *Durga* through a Muslim quarter. The incident was given magnified press coverage by the Kalikata press and the Congress members in the East Pakistan legislative assembly vehemently protested against the government's failure to protect the lives and properties of the minorities. On the floor of the assembly, they tabled several adjournment motions demanding the government's explanation as to why the police failed to save the minorities. As expected, this concerted hue and cry created a widespread anti-Muslim reaction in which Indian Muslims were attacked. As one Indian author has put it, 'for the folly of the Muslim League Government in Dacca innocent Muslims in Kalikata's suburb, Howrah, paid the price'.<sup>659</sup> Although the Liaquat-Nehru accord of 1950 removed the pretext for the invasion, by taking advantage of the accord's provision allowing any member of the minority community to return J. P. Mitter's *Banga Sena* silently melted into East Pakistan.<sup>660</sup>

Soon came the language killing and the electoral routing of the Muslim League, providing India far greater scope for her machination. Joyti Sen-Gupta's account of the period between 1954-58 leaves no doubt how active India was in stifling Pakistan from within. When martial law was imposed in Pakistan in 1958, the pro-Indian elements among civil servants and politicians took up the drive for independence in earnest. Because of the growing realisation about the greater promise of the politics of subversion, during the 1965 war, of all Indian policy makers, J. N. Chaudhury, the army chief who was born and brought up in East Bengal, laid stress on leaving East Pakistan alone<sup>661</sup> and defence minister Y.B. Chavan publicly said:

We have no quarrel with East Pakistan and while our troops have taken up positions within our territory in order to meet any threat of aggression by Pakistan, at the present moment I do not visualize our taking any action to escalate the war in that field except to the extent Pakistan's action compels us to do so.<sup>662</sup>

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<sup>658</sup> In *Ananda Bazar Patrika*, 4 July 1986

<sup>659</sup> J. Sen-Gupta 1974: 35-36

<sup>660</sup> A.M.K. Maswani 1979: 118-19

<sup>661</sup> D. Wright 1988: 159

<sup>662</sup> Cited in B. Cloughley 2000: 138

What was striking in this was that the Indian strategists were adroit enough to venture converting the East Pakistani fear of Indian militarism into a source of disaffection against Pakistan. It was one, and by no means the only, measure of their strategic ingenuity and dexterity, which not only befooled a large section of East Pakistanis but also the people in charge of Pakistan and brought about the disunion of Pakistan.

## 12. Separation was Not an End in Itself

In separating East Pakistan and converting it into Bangladesh, India was obviously seeking to undo partition and Pakistan. As noted earlier, annexation of East Pakistan, is a natural corollary of their objective of separation. After the fall of Dhaka, a three-member delegation of top Bangladeshi high Hindu leaders consisting of Monoranjan Dhar, Phanibhusan Majumdar and Chittaranjan Sutar visited New Delhi and urged Prime Minister Indira Gandhi to do precisely that.<sup>663</sup> She avoided the temptation. According to General J.N. Choudhury, had there been a 'less responsible government' than her, India would have swallowed East Pakistan, rather than to allow Bangladesh to appear on the map.<sup>664</sup>

The reason for this sobriety is not difficult to see. An outright annexation would have exposed Indian hegemonism and turned world opinion against it. It also ran the risk of uniting all East Pakistanis, including the armed liberationists, against India. Mujib, who was still in Pakistan, could have been persuaded to take a stand at the head of his people's resistance by Islamabad, which still had a *de jure* claim over East Pakistan. Given the Naxalite problem in West Bengal and several insurgent movements in North-East India, the prospect of an armed resistance in East Pakistan, with active Pakistani support backed by a favourable world opinion, was a formidable proposition which the Indian policymakers could not take lightly.

The signs that in responding to the countervailing pressures they did not abandon their aim were not lacking either. Although the war was technically fought under a joint command, curiously the Pakistan Army in East Pakistan was made to surrender to General Jagjit Singh Arora of the Indian Army. This was done, as both Field Marshall Sam Manekshaw and General Arora later disclosed, in order to underscore that it was a victory in war against Muslims 'in thousand years'.<sup>665</sup> More importantly, they had already made the Bangladesh Government in exile to sign seven treaties putting Bangladesh in close Indian embrace.<sup>666</sup> Besides, the geographically new state of its own could hardly afford to defy India and venture to break out of the Indian tutelage. With times, it could be 'overwhelmed and destroyed', as Mujib's political mentor, Suhrawardy, had once said.<sup>667</sup> Brahmanical

<sup>663</sup> M.R. Choudhury in *Khoborer Kagoj*, Dhaka, 11 January 1990

<sup>664</sup> J.N. Chaudhury in *Hindustan Standard*, Kalikata, 26 January 1972

<sup>665</sup> Interview in *Bichitra*, vol. 14 no. 37, Dhaka, 7 February 1986

<sup>666</sup> O. Ahad, *Jatiyo Rajniti, 1945-1975* (National Politics, 1945-1975), Dhaka, 1988: 450

<sup>667</sup> S.S. Husain 1995: 238-47



hegemonists do not act like lions, like boa (constrictor) they devour their quarry slowly.

### 13. The *Adhuryas*

To say that the East Pakistanis as well as those in charge of Pakistan were befooled, may appear a sweeping statement and, therefore, needs brief elaboration. Although the majority of East Pakistanis were against separation and remained so even after Bangladesh, it is also true that behind Mujib a large body of East Pakistanis had acted on a separatist agenda and with propaganda and/or situational compulsion got many others to join in their drive, paving the way for the eventual Indian military intervention.

To start with Mujib, he was a power politician, not an intellectual or an ideologue to be driven by any ism or ideal. Given the paucity of detailed and reliable knowledge about his psychological makeup and inner thoughts, and going by his known life history and visible personality traits and proclivity, the best and possibly the kindest reading one can have is that all he wanted was to be the king without minding too much about the cost and consequence of the mode and manner of his attaining the throne. Judging by his post-Bangladesh unease with India, it is likely that in his disaffected ego he may have thought whatever the price of separation would be, all of it would be on West Pakistan's ledger, not on his. In all probability in his unstudied desire for power he may not have given much thought about either the price in fetters that he would be required to pay or the geo-political ghetto he was taking his people into.

He was not unique in having such blinkered view. Immediately before him Fazlul Haq, and before Fazlul Haq Sir Abdul Karim Ghuznavi had displayed similar proclivity. Mujib's difference with them was in the enormity of the restrictive fetters that he brought upon himself and the potential peril in which he had left his fellow Muslims. A physically impressive man of immense raw courage, huge vanity and considerable practical cunning with untiring energy and organizing drive, but equally greatly lacking in intellectual ability and sober discernment, he was cut out to be a dashing rabble rouser to act on behind the scene prompting and fitted better than anyone else to meet the Indian requirement of what Mountbatten had called 'more adventurous' politician to help deliver East Pakistan.

Mujib and his ilk in the Awami League leadership would not have been of much avail, unless India had, through its Congress and Communist henchmen who were from the same Brahmanical prestige community and equally committed to the cult of *Bharat Mata*, had already nurtured a significant body of Muslim men and women from among the modern professional classes, who because of the weakness of their faith, education, intellectual depth and/or personal weakness were ready to 'liberate' themselves from the stigma of a 'communal' Muslim by embracing one or another kind of secular isms and attach themselves to Bengali high Hindu cults of *Matri-Bhasa* and *Matri-Bhum*. They were willing to lend their intellectual wits and weights

to beaver away at the foundation of Pakistani nationhood and the solidarity and integrity of the Pakistan state from within. In this they served in the role of the Rig-Vedic native *adhuryas* (lit. impatient), who had facilitated Aryan victory and brought the defeat and enslavement of their own people, the legates of the Indus Valley civilization,<sup>668</sup> as well as the Kautilyan internal agent provocateurs. True to the Kautilyan teaching, these agent provocateurs 'main task was to soften the enemy for disintegration from within'.<sup>669</sup>

But neither would have found wider following and support without the rising Muslim middle classes that were fast emerging from the peasant stratum<sup>670</sup> of the poverty ridden loosely organized atomistic society in which peoples are prone to suspicion and envy, their sense of binding obligation beyond the immediate family is weak, their wider social ties are essentially instrumental and shifting and when thwarted or frustrated they are likely to take to sentimentality and emotional outbursts. The Awami League activists were mainly drawn from these self-seeking 'hungry' middle classes,<sup>671</sup> who were sanguine to further improve their lot at any cost and psychologically predisposed to looking at West Pakistan as the obstacle to their rapid climb to wealth and privilege and found West Pakistanis annoying and repulsive.<sup>672</sup> The general abrasive character of the West Pakistanis and the subtle differences in the rules of etiquette<sup>673</sup> made their undiscerning feeling worse.

That the Indian strategists chose Mujib and his Awami League to be the pivot of their ultimate machination, placed the wits and weights of the stigmatized members of the professional classes behind them and, moreover, guided them in harnessing the insecure, envious hungry members of the fast growing middle classes was itself a testimony of their thorough pre-planning. Indeed, they successfully worked on and made use of the undiscerning sentimentality, not studied sense, of a section of East Pakistanis, who – ironically – would not have been there but for Pakistan.

In the formulation of their strategy the Indian policymakers had shown no mean acumen. While they remained unwavering in their goal and determination to undo Pakistan, for achieving it they followed a flexible developmental approach having not only more than one tracks, but also changing tack, even imitating the enemy. From the very beginning they had chosen East Pakistan as their target. They may have started with the objective of taking it over by force thinking that a truncated Pakistan would not be able to stand on its legs and start tottering soon after its creation. But they were cautious enough not to wholly bank on that hope and

<sup>668</sup> *Rig Veda*, 1/51/5; 1/173/10; 3/34/6; 8/14-15

<sup>669</sup> D.D. Kosambi, *The Culture and Civilisation of Ancient India in Historical Outline*, Lahore, 1991: 145

<sup>670</sup> N. Chaudhury in *Nabajatak*, Kalikata, vol. 8 no. 2-4, 1971; B. Sarkar in *Parichaya*, Kalikata, vol. 41 no. 6-7, 1971

<sup>671</sup> R. Sobhan in A.G. Choudhury, 1977: 38

<sup>672</sup> G.P. Bhattacharjee 1973: 122

<sup>673</sup> M. Ahmad, *My Chief*, Lahore, 1960: 7-8; L.F. Rushbrook-Williams, *The State of Pakistan*, London, 1962: 43-45.

allowed for an alternative second track. Hence, from the start they were also active in promoting regionalist disaffection among East Pakistan's infant and insecure political classes by stirring their fear of losing out in competition for jobs and other opportunities by engineering the state language and autonomy demands. Seemingly they also understood that the inexperienced and geographically separated political classes of Pakistan with no previous economic and administrative ties and experience of working together would face initial difficulties in achieving mutuality and accommodating spirit.

Judging by the early initiatives that Nehru had taken through B.N. Mullick and his later reluctance to allow the invasion plan of Patel to go ahead, it is likely that all along he had his mind set on the latter course. Mountbatten documents make this more than likely. Whatever it was, as Pakistan did not collapse and the latter strategy started to show promise, it became their main plank. With times the thrust was changed from de-Islamising Pakistan's public culture and political outlooks and stunting the development of its nationhood to a full-blown attempt at hiving off Pakistan. In the latter drive they not only applied all their habitual tricks for fostering disaffection and using malcontents from within the enemy camp but also emulated many of the tactics that their enemy had used successfully for breaking out of their grips before and during the Pakistan struggle. More remarkably, they did not hesitate even to make use of the East Pakistani unease about their province's inadequate defence against India to their advantage.

### **14. Political Ineptitude in the Face of Subversion**

It is not difficult to see, albeit with the benefits of hindsight, that in failing to decipher the Indian prime target and tactics, Pakistan did not only fail to guard against the threats but also made it possible for India to achieve its aim of separating East Pakistan. That India wanted ill of Pakistan was widely believed in Pakistani governing circles. Yet, after Jinnah and Liaquat Ali, few among them acted with real understanding of where and how India was seeking to land its killer blow. In the light of Indian military occupation of Kashmir they saw the gun aimed at Lahore but entirely missed the Indian machination in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. The Liaquat-Nehru Pact, which ended the military threat that India had mounted against East Pakistan in 1950, further convinced those in Pakistan who wanted to be convinced that India's military eyes were set firmly on the heart of Pakistan, not on its limb. Not only they missed the use it made of the Pact by sending more high Hindu subversive under the guise of returning refugees, driven by the feared military threat the post Jinnah-Liaquat Ali leadership sought protection under the US wings and came to formulate the novel doctrine that the defence of Pakistan rested on the defence of West Pakistan. Despite Jinnah's clear warning and many early signs, they wholly failed to appreciate the fact that India's priority was not the military destruction of West Pakistan but the creation of disaffection in East Pakistan and through it to cause the disunion of East and West Pakistan first. To compound it further, they proceeded to treat the subversive activities in East Pakistan as mere law

and order problem and tried to curb them in the age-old British administrative fashion.

Acting on the same gentlemanly British tradition, neither the country's constitution nor the political institutions were designed with any sanguinity to guard the political arena from becoming the playground of the externally induced subversives. On the contrary, the power politics of the leading politicians as well the suspension of political process by the military made the task of the subversives easier. President Ayub, the principal author of the ill conceived defence doctrine, carried out his 'revolution' in the name of arresting the mindless power politics of the politicians, but the new constitution he introduced in 1962 did little to meet the subversive challenge; it reflected his own keenness to keep himself in power. Similarly, his efforts to foster national integration showed little appreciation of the need to deprive India the psychological and educational breeding grounds for husbanding subversives. His cabinet did not only include secret separatists such as Muhammad Ibrahim, even some of those whom he entrusted to carry forward his national integration programme included secret India worshippers like Dr Kabir Choudhury and Nazimuddin Hashim.

When with the Agartala conspiracy the Indian involvement became too apparent to ignore the holders of power in Pakistan continued to treat it as no more than mischief making and thought they could secure co-operation of Mujib with favours or force. What was more remarkable, even when the army was sent out to crush the separatists they failed to take the possibility of an Indian military intervention into account; instead their wild rush helped create conditions for such an intervention.

The serial Pakistani failure to read the Indian objectives and tactics was in essence an intellectual failure, made worse by the situational dynamics and the political culture of Pakistan, for which not only the active political classes but also, and perhaps more fundamentally, the country's intellectuals would have to bear the responsibility. During the Pakistan movement, the Indian nationalists and their Western backers had sanctimoniously decried the Muslims seeking Pakistan as communalists, as if they were the only people in the world to define their nationhood in terms of their distinct religious values, identity, culture and civilization. That it was not an irrational bigotry but a bold and honourable refusal to go under the Brahmanical yoke went deliberately unacknowledged. Both the vehemence and the artifice of this condemnation reflected in the fact that the word communal had, and still has, a unique Indian provenance. Although they felt the sting, few Muslims seem to have understood the fact that 'Superior contempt is the distinctively Hindu method of persecution'<sup>674</sup> and the stigmatization of the contesting enemy is an age-old Brahmanical weapon.<sup>675</sup>

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<sup>674</sup> R.C. Mitra, *The Decline of Buddhism in India*, Kalikata, 1954: 137

<sup>675</sup> C. Jaffrelot 1996: 6

While those in Pakistan who were robust enough to defy the stigma remained preoccupied in refuting the communalist slur and other high Hindu intellectual cants and in doing so some of them even called the Indian rulers Chanakyan or Kautilyan, few, if any, devoted their intellectual skills for studying Brahmanism, not to speak of its hegemonic mind and mien. Had they done so, they would have found that even the success of the Vedic Aryan against the autochthons was not so much due to their military prowess, but because of the diplomatic use of the self-seeking turn-coat *adharyas* from within the enemy camp. Had they read with care the account of what Ajatsatru's Brahman minister Washwakar did to defeat the anti-Brahmanical Vijji confederacy or Chanakya did for supplanting the anti-Brahmanical Nandas with the Magadhan *adharyas* Chandragupta Maurya as the front-man; or at the very least read Kautilya's *Arthashastra* thoroughly, they would have found that in the Brahmanical statecraft sly use of malcontents from the enemy camp had always been a strategic priority over upfront military assaults. Indeed, historically the political triumphs of Brahmanism over its challengers had come primarily by virtue of the Brahmins' installation of them behind any and every throne by adopting the stratagem of *Betashi-Vritthi* and then defeating their outlying enemies by adhering to the Rig-Vedic/Kautilyan 'offensive strategy' of using malcontents for weakening the enemy before resorting to military force.

In addition, as the constitution making processes in Pakistan show, there had been little appreciation of the need to guard the country's political process from externally induced derailment or subversion. In spite of the Pakistani governing elite's newfound enchantment with all things American, there was no heed to the earthly wisdom, which ran through Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* (1835), that a state's character, ability and destiny was not shaped exclusively by its people, but to a significant extent by its neighbours and enemies as well. Although America was made of British colonies and most of its founding fathers were of British descent, in framing the US constitution they were guided by the existential need of their polity rather than by the blind imitation of the British constitution. Compared to this the general lack of independent practical constitutional thinking among Pakistani political classes was, and still is, remarkably striking. The intellectual blinkers were made worse by the pretenders of political power in Pakistan with their sultanistic proclivity in which Ayub, Mujib or Bhutto were hardly any different.

Alongside the above, something else happened. With the rapid expansion of higher education, the up and coming academics who went to British and American universities were not only knocked over by one or the other Western visions of human destiny far removed from that of Islam but also found their teachers unsympathetic, even hostile, to the very idea of a Muslim nationhood. In addition, they also saw the West's adulation of the 'non-violent' Gandhi and the 'atheist', 'Fabian socialist' Nehru and its enchantment with everything Indian without recognizing either the West's material attraction towards India or its tacit hostility towards Islam and Muslims<sup>676</sup> and felt terribly wanting being a Muslim Pakistani.

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<sup>676</sup> E. Said, *Orientalism*, London, 1978

Many of them returned home with their intellect jaded, if not always turned against their nation. The off-shoot of all this was a progressive decline in the number of intellectuals equipped and willing to stand by the foundational imperatives of Pakistan and help stir the country on a healthy track and a corresponding rise in the number of malcontents with an uninformed, fancied view of India and its rulers. Obviously the deleterious effect of it became more pronounced in East Pakistan.

## 15. The Future

Few, except the Indian sponsored *adhuryas*, would now question the fact that Bangladesh has left its Muslim inhabitants geo-politically corralled with a flaccid state ill suited to guarantee their continued freedom, economic well-being and cultural attainment.<sup>677</sup> Given the hoax perpetuated in the name of liberation, it is no surprise that many impulsive separatists started to have second thoughts while the armed conflict in East Pakistan was still raging. While still in Kalikata some of the leading exponents of Bengali nationalism began to realize the need to 'redefine our separate identity in the light of our own (Muslim) history and tradition'.<sup>678</sup> After the birth of Bangladesh some even felt:

Let us cry 'Halt', have second thoughts and reshape our policy in the light of our experience based on 'friendship' with India. ... If they stick to their dream of *Akhand Bharat Mata* (United Mother India), the people of Bangladesh may start thinking in terms of *Akhanda* (united) Pakistan.<sup>679</sup>

Possibly Mujib, certainly President Ziaur Rahman did think on this line. Major Jalil, another veteran of Bangladesh war, died prematurely in Islamabad while canvassing opinion in Pakistan for a rapprochement between the two erstwhile wings of united Pakistan.

Given the option, not many in Bangladesh would disapprove of such rapprochement, even though there may be difference of opinion about its precise nature; it is in their enlightened self-interest. Those who understand Bengali Muslims' 'rhythm of sentiments'<sup>680</sup> would have no difficulty in predicting that with time such desire would inevitably gain in strength. Pakistan may have been broken up, but the reinvigoration of 'the Pakistan project' remains a historical necessity for the Bangladeshi Muslims. Since one should not expect Indian policy makers to abandon their own project, it is imperative that the political classes in both Pakistan and Bangladesh should try and understand the Brahmanical mind and mien and be on their guard against their new ploys.□

<sup>677</sup> Z. Abedin 1995; M.A.M. Chowdhury 1996b

<sup>678</sup> M.R.A. Mukul, *Ami Vijoy Dekechi* (I Have Seen Victory), Dhaka, 1984: 88

<sup>679</sup> Anon, *Second Thoughts on Bangladesh*, (ed. M. Rahman), London, 1979: 115-16

<sup>680</sup> M. Hussain in *Bengali Literary Review*, Autumn issue, Karachi, 1972

# Kashmir: the Problem & the Solution

*Dr Syed M. Inayatullah Andrabi*

## 1. Background

The renewed struggle by Kashmiris against occupation by India has left no ambiguity over the issue of Kashmir. The facts are clear; every one knows that there is a dispute over Kashmir between India and Pakistan, that the UN Security Council passed a resolution in 1949 outlining a solution by a 'plebiscite' that was accepted by India as well as Pakistan. Under the Resolution, both countries agreed to: 1) cease fire, 2) and hold a plebiscite to allow the people of Jammu and Kashmir to decide which country – India or Pakistan – they wanted to join. The fighting by the two armies did cease but the nightmare for the people began. They could not go across the cease-fire line; they could not meet their relatives or go to the Punjab and the Frontier Province of Pakistan as they had done for a hundred years to escape the harsh winters and in search of livelihood.

The Muslims of Kashmir had family ties with Kashmiris in Pakistan and their trade was also mostly with Pakistan. Both were disrupted. The Kashmiris thought that the disruption would be temporary; after all, India and Pakistan had both accepted the UN endorsed plan for a plebiscite. Months of waiting prolonged into years and then decades but there were no plebiscite – just excuses and delays. Pakistan had a duty to liberate Kashmir because Kashmir is a predominantly Muslim state. It did try in 1965 but India decided to expand the war beyond the confines of Kashmir. But neither country could sustain an all out war very long and the UN intervened to arrange another cease-fire. The stalemate that resulted was favourable to Pakistan but its erstwhile ally – the United States – had abandoned it. The Soviet Union – the friend and ally of India – mediated a settlement called the Tashkent Declaration. It did not deal with the question of self-determination and merely restored the Cease-Fire Line that had been patrolled and supervised by the UN observers since 1949. The leader of Pakistan at the time – General Ayub Khan – became very unpopular because the people expected him to win a decisive victory in Kashmir. He was neither able to secure a victory nor to use the stalemate that favoured Pakistan to

pursue its case for self-determination in Kashmir. He was forced to resign in consequence of extensive demonstration against his rule.

The next war in 1971 was started by India. Its objective was the secession of East Pakistan. America as well as the Soviet Union supported the Indian objective (of secession of East Pakistan) as well as the use of war to secure that objective. East Pakistan was invaded and conquered by the Indian Army with 93,000 prisoners of war in Indian hands. The people of Kashmir had hoped that Pakistan would launch an attack in Kashmir to make countervailing gains. They were shocked when it did not. It was true that East Pakistan – separated by a 1000 miles of Indian territory from West Pakistan - was difficult to defend but the incompetence with which diplomacy as well as war were handled was a huge disappointment. It is pointless saying whether it was the ineptitude of the Pakistani leadership or the imbalance of power that made a military solution of Kashmir so difficult, but the defeat of Pakistan in 1971 War and the secession of East Pakistan did erode the confidence of Kashmiris in Pakistan's capability and political will.

## 2. Impact of War in Afghanistan

Nothing lasts forever; the tide did turn in favour of the Muslims in general and Pakistan in particular towards the end of the decade. The Muslims did successfully resist Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. The Government of Pakistan and the people had a direct role in that war and success in making the Soviets withdraw from Afghanistan created new hope and optimism in Pakistan and Kashmir that they could drive India out of Kashmir. A struggle that started in 1989 has continued ever since. What is the basic message that emanates from the Kashmir situation? What is the fundamental truth underlying the fifteen years of tumult and insurrection? Do the people love coming into streets, braving bullets, killing and getting killed?

Life is the dearest thing that any one possesses; family often the next on the list. Just living is worthwhile and of value disregarding the high-minded compulsions of community or national life. Why should the people of Kashmir take the route that put their lives at risk and forsake life's pleasures? Thousands (perhaps close to 100,000) of them have been killed, countless women dishonoured, houses burnt, people displaced, businesses shattered; why after all should this happen? What makes a people, so to speak, opt for it - choose a course where this is bound to happen? There is an answer to it. It is a short answer but one that sums up the crux of the matter. That single sentence answer is: *the Kashmiri people have never accepted India's sovereignty over Kashmir and they want to put an end to Indian rule over them.*

The facts are so self-evident that a Kashmiri is irritated having to explain let alone justify why he fights and resists Indian presence in Kashmir. There is nothing to explain; things are so manifest and self-explanatory. In the past, before resistance became a permanent feature of his life, a Kashmiri abroad would have to put in some effort to explain what constitutes the issue of Kashmir. There are many papers



and books, countless speeches; the debate over the Kashmir problem has been endless. But nothing constitutes a more eloquent or fuller display of the entire problem as the concrete situation on the ground that expresses the whole truth. All one needs is to look at is the concrete situation without bias or prejudice.

One may ask: how come then that India has been ruling Kashmir through a democratic set-up? *The answer is that the whole set-up is a farce - a total sham. Democratic institutions are only a smoke screen; the real power is in the hands of the Indian intelligence and the military forces.* The Chief Minister, his Cabinet, the State Assembly - all are the props of a puppet show. India cannot rule Kashmir if the state operated under the rule of law and true democratic dispensation. India rules by complete disregard to the rule of law. Any one can be picked up from his house, or from work, going from one place to another and disappear. Taking the life or honour of a Kashmiri is not a crime; it is legitimate action in crushing the rebellion. India does not care if its rule is considered occupation. For the Indian soldier it is a matter of pride to have the life of a people in their hand - to kill any one he like whenever he likes with impunity.

### 3. Peace Process in Kashmir

The Kashmiri liberation struggle entered a crucial phase with the initiation of a dialogue process between India and Pakistan. Viewed in its overall context, the joint declaration by President Musharraf and Prime Minister Vajpayee made on the eve of SAARC Summit and a 'composite dialogue' that has since started between the Congress Administration and Islamabad may turn out to be historic or it could be another damp squib. It is too early to make any prediction but it is wise not to discard it as 'tactical' move by India even though that is what it might turn out to be. However, the talk of 'give and take', 'multiple options', of compromises and flexibility' worry the people of Kashmir. It is a cause of anxiety and apprehension that India and Pakistan may treat the Kashmir dispute as a land dispute. No, it is an issue of principle. It deals with hopes and aspirations of a people; their dignity and honour; their life and liberty; their conscience and convictions.

It is often said that India and Pakistan, once they enter into a dialogue, should show flexibility. That is quite natural; a dialogue cannot proceed without some sort of flexibility. However, it is not clear what this would mean when it comes to resolving their dispute over Kashmir. If the issue was Siachin, an uninhabited glacier, one could understand what would be the implication of 'flexibility' in resolving the issue. When the third element in the dispute is an inanimate entity that does not have its own aspirations or agenda, flexibility or 'give and take' have territorial connotation. Kashmir, obviously, is different. Here, it is a question of a people who have to determine their political destiny. In the dialogue process between India and Pakistan, Kashmir occupies an autonomous position - a position that is independent of what India and Pakistan say; it too has something to say. A dialogue on Kashmir must reflect this right from the start. The dominant theme in the political discourse surrounding the dialogue process should be the finding out of the real aspirations of

Kashmiri people, and it is with that clearly spelt-out that India and Pakistan could start the process of resolving the problem.

The negotiations would come to nothing if India and Pakistan start linking huge stakes with their respective views. In that event they would seek a 'favourable solution' and associate success with their point of view prevailing. If that happened, the dialogue would be unproductive, even counter-productive. For example, if India approached the dialogue process by making loud noises (as it has been doing to its domestic as well as in foreign audiences) that India will break up if Kashmir is ceded, and that Kashmir is the cornerstone of its secular fabric, the result of the dialogue would be increased bitterness - a political break-down not a break through.

Such approach has brought the objectives of India under suspicion. Against the backdrop of such objectives, the interlocutors of India would be condemned as traitors - ready for a 'sell out'. It would destabilise Pakistan even further and perhaps lead to a change in its leadership. It appears at this time that the representatives of Kashmiris would not be invited to participate in the parleys at the outset. There would be little fall out on them but they would certainly become even more distant from Pakistan. Kashmiris could internationalise their struggle in manners as yet not contemplated. The bloodletting in Kashmir may reach scales unprecedented and yet unexpected.

The fact is that the Indian stance has no basis. India does not have a principle of national solidarity that defines it as a 'nation'. The caste system that the Constitution bans but the people suffer in silence denies dignity to the majority of people in India. Its structure of internal oppression prevents the crystallisation of a wholesome political personality and a national identity. Its insistence that Indian rule over Muslim majority Kashmir underlines its secular identity actually withdraws recognition to Pakistan where the Muslim majority did secure national self-determination. For five decades it has been trying to de-link Pakistan and Kashmir, its arguments have actually underlined and reinforced the link.

India reviles Pakistan and justifies its ruthless crushing of Kashmiri struggle for self-determination insisting that both are undeserving of sovereignty because their national identity is a 'religious identity'. Pakistan is indeed the product of the Muslims exercising their right of self-determination; what is India the product of? Imperial succession? Which Empire? The British Empire? How? Why? By asserting its right to have political control over all of the erstwhile British Empire in India, it de-legitimises itself; imperial succession is not the validation of the polity of a nation state. If India does not recognise that the creation of Pakistan by the Muslims exercising their right of self-determination avoided a civil war in South Asia, it puts its imperial designs on display and courts the threat of a perpetual war that it avoided in 1947.

If India continues to harbour imperial intentions, it would suffer the same fate as all the other empires; it would disintegrate. War and repression are not tolerable in any

part of the world as viable instruments for establishing or expanding empires. India has been fighting insurrection in seventeen different areas in its vast empire. All of these are not for national self-determination; some of these are against the apartheid and oppression. It is only by conceding national self-determination that it would deal with its social atrophy and obtain some semblance of national cohesion. India has to restructure itself on the basis of national self-determination if it is to avoid a political collapse. India has to seek friendly relations with its neighbours if it is avoid being a tool in the hands of imperialists from afar that have designs on different parts of Asia.

The people of India need and deserve peace as much as India's neighbours. By suppressing the movement for self-determination in Kashmir with wanton use of force, it denies itself any prospect of peace within or with Pakistan. Continued hiatus over Kashmir would be the death of India. By going back on its promise to hold a plebiscite it does not only defy international law, it defines itself as an 'outlaw' state that denies the universal principle of 'national self-determination'. It is by such defiance that India has made itself an international pariah and a regional scourge.

#### **4. Indian Secularism and Pakistan's Two-Nation Theory**

India is quite wrong in its assertion that its rule over Muslim majority Kashmir underlines its secularism. *It proves the exact opposite because India rules it by force not by consent.* But a secular identity is important for India; it cannot be anything other than a secular country because the Hindu religion that sanctions apartheid of the caste system cannot provide the basis for national solidarity. That it rules Muslim majority Kashmir by powerful military presence and resort to repression even genocide proves that India's secularism is a farce. It has brought under the microscope other inequities and injustices that India has been able to sweep under the carpet. The fear of India that it would 'break up' if the Kashmiris opted for Pakistan is scare mongering that has worked with the much of the world. The prospect of dreadful instability and perpetual conflict in a country of billion plus is scary. But India should look for more sensible ways for underpinning what it calls its 'secular-composite fabric'. Use of brute force to suppress Kashmiri freedom movement does not prove India is secular; it proves that India is cruel and lawless

Similarly, Pakistan also should not consider Kashmir's accession as validation and proof of its foundational principle – the Two Nation Theory. The theory, which is doctrinally well founded and practically so well proven, does not need a proof. Islam continued to be the organizing principle of the state right from the time the Muslims established the first state under the leadership of the Prophet Mohammed (SAAW) in Medina in the 7<sup>th</sup> century. That continued without challenge until as late as the dismemberment of the Ottoman caliphate in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Pakistan (with the many languages that its people speak) did not invent a new principle of solidarity as the foundation of a state. Its emergence is the manifestation of the same facts and truths on which Kashmir's accession with it now hinges.

The principle was already there, in theory as well as practice. Pakistan followed it faithfully and built its national solidarity upon it. If the Kashmiri people follow the same principle, they would also benefit. Whether they do or not, it would not weaken the principle or this particular embodiment of it that exists in the shape of Pakistan. If the Kashmiri people made a compromise, it would seriously hurt their vital interests. But no dominos would fall. For the Kashmiri people it would be like coming out of one darkness (Dogra rule) into another (Indian rule). They might understand that they are unable to change the *status quo* but they will never stop aspiring to be free from Indian rule. After all, the secession of East Pakistan did not have a snow-balling effect on the rest of the country: Pakistan did not disintegrate further despite the assistance the foreign enemies of Pakistan give to ethnic and nationalistic forces in various provinces. The enemies of Pakistan have not given up but they have been repeatedly frustrated. If the elections to the National Assembly of the 2002 are taken to be an indication, the ethnic forces did not increase phenomenally. On the contrary, these forces are on a sharp decline.

## 5. Objectives & Principles

Diplomacy is not an art in which Pakistan excels. Its people are alert and its leaders often the exact opposite. For any dialogue to lead to peace and justice for all, the aspirations of the people, the universal principles and rights of peoples must be centre stage. Sometimes, when politicians are politicking, it appears they are unaware or unmindful of the aspirations of the people of Kashmir. Despite being self-evident, it is necessary to reiterate, for the benefit of India and Pakistan, that the people of Kashmir feel a deep sense of historically built-up deprivation. Kashmir has witnessed long spells of tyrannical rule, the latest being the Dogra rule that lasted until 1947. The vile nature of that rule is thoroughly documented and it is unnecessary to recount its gory details. Suffice to say that the Muslims of Kashmir suffered greatly under these tyrannical regimes. As the colonial empires started to wither away, the subjugated people everywhere began to dream of a future of freedom in a post-colonial dispensation. Kashmir was no exception.

The earliest political formations, which started to take shape in Kashmir in the late 1920's, had clear political agendas. There were movements everywhere. The people in British India were organizing themselves and debating their post-colonial future. Muslim imagination had got a boost with the idea of Pakistan. Democratic choices were being made: the overwhelming majority of Indian Muslims formally voted for Pakistan. Special referendums were held to ascertain the wishes of the people of Sylhet (to join East Pakistan) and in the North West Frontier Province that too voted for Pakistan. After the long night of deprivation and suffering the Kashmiris were also eagerly looking for a dawn of democratic choice. The Dogra monarchy had to end anyway; Kashmiris were hoping to choose a future. But unfortunately things did not move that way. If they had, there would have been no need for these words of anguish. The Kashmiris expected tears but of joy. What they got were tears shed and dried, shed and dried, again and again until life was no different to death; the distinction between hope and despondency disappeared.

The Dogra rule ended, but what replaced it was once again another tyrannical rule. The dream of a free and conscious choice eluded them once again. The historically built-up sense of deprivation deepened even further. The Kashmiri people have been denied, by sheer fraud and force, the opportunity to freely choose their political future. In practical terms, that is the reality and the substance of the Kashmir issue. *Allow the people to determine their political future the issue would be resolved.* This is what the UN Security Council Resolutions say. That is the solution. That is the only way forward: to allow Kashmiris express themselves. It is vital that the most oppressed and deprived of the world should also experience the ecstasy of direct choice - casting their vote in a free and fair referendum. It would indeed be cruel to deny the Kashmiri people direct vote, their wish must be ascertained directly.<sup>681</sup>

## 6. The Problem

After a review of the situation, it is important to return to the backdrop that defines the Kashmiri struggle for freedom in the context of history and gives it meaning and import. What, in essence, is the problem in Kashmir? The Kashmiris are a Muslim people. They are often poor but very proud. They are one of the most deprived people and still they retain their pride. They are certainly the most oppressed of South Asia and yet they are proud of their Kashmiri heritage. No people in South Asia have suffered tyrannical foreign rule longer than the people of Kashmir and yet they stay unbowed, proud, and robust in defence of their entity. They retain their optimism and their cheerfulness under the direst of conditions. It is perhaps because they inhabit one of the most beautiful landscapes on earth. The horrors of oppressive misrule notwithstanding, they are grateful to the Creator for the bounties they are blessed with. Among the bounties they are grateful for, the most important one is their faith – Islam.

Islamic doctrine being creative of a social order and, therefore, of a civilization and a polity, this faith attaches great importance to the defence of physical assets and regards them as absolutely indispensable. The faith of Islam attaches value to its people, their material resources, their lands and territories, their heritage and history. Kashmir being a Muslim land, it constitutes an important physical asset of Islam. Reclaiming the lost assets of Islam is the common duty for every Muslim man and woman, regardless of his/her colour, race or place of birth.

## 7. Peripheral Problems

The Kashmir problem, that has remained unresolved for more than half a century (since 1949) has given rise to a number of peripheral problems. The question of violation of 'human rights' is one example, which has cropped up during the last

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<sup>681</sup> On a personal note, I would like to place emphasis on a direct reference being made to the Kashmiri people to ascertain their wishes. Every adult Kashmiri man and woman needs to take part in making the choice and celebrate the end of tyranny and the arrival of freedom like their brothers and sisters in Sylhet and the Frontier Province of Pakistan.

fifteen years of the freedom struggle. It is a real and genuine problem but a shift of focus would make Kashmir appear an exclusively a human rights problem. The result would be that the real problem - denial of freedom to Kashmiris to choose their destiny – would continue to be ignored particularly on international forums. The strategy of ‘buying time’ (postponing the settlement of the main problem by showing readiness to be flexible on peripheral problems) may be good strategy for India but not for Pakistan and Kashmir. ‘Buying time’ has been the main plank of the Indian strategy. It makes deals and signs agreements parts of which (that it likes) it implements and the parts it does not like, it makes the subject of interpretation, dispute or controversy.

With so much experience of dealing with India, it is amazing how often the Muslim leaders of Pakistan and the Kashmiris have lost sight of the basic problem and start dealing with obfuscations of India on mere promise of parleys. In the 1930s, Hindu leaders created proxy elements in Kashmir, who in the name of Kashmiri nationalism opposed the project of Pakistan. They aligned themselves with the Brahmin leaders of the Congress Party and paved the way for India’s armed invasion of Kashmir on October 27, 1947. This was a huge blunder the destructive consequences of which the people of Kashmir are still suffering. If the Kashmiri people had risen early and decisively, it would have been less difficult to undo the blunder. There is a lesson to be learnt from that blunder. It is better to have no deal than to get a bad deal.

Sheikh Abdullah had been in the forefront of struggle against the vile rule of the Maharaja of Kashmir. He enjoyed the trust and confidence of the people of Kashmir because of his fiery speeches and bold actions. They failed to take notice that he was on the side of Hindu leaders of the Congress Party not on the side of the leaders of the biggest Muslim Party – the Muslim League. Secular nationalism was a phrase that served as a cover for a trap. As it turned out, the Congress leaders did not honour any of their promises – to Sikhs, to Untouchables or to Kashmiris. The people did notice the arrival of Indian troops but they were not ready to decry the judgment and decision of Sheikh Abdullah. In general ways, they regarded India as an aggressor and movements for Kashmir’s liberation from India, underground as well as open, always existed. However, India did manage to govern Kashmir through its proxy elements – Muslim in faith but ready to overlook the genocide, rape of women and routine use of torture to suppress the Muslim resistance.

The Muslim Fifth Column is as much responsible for the genocide, repression and agony the Kashmiri suffer as the Indian armed forces. They provide the fig leaf with which India paints a picture to the outside world of the insurrection being sporadic, foreign inspired and unpopular. Basic problems arise or become intractable in consequence of wrong or bad decisions. Because of bad faith, personal prejudice, inducement or falling into a trap, decisions are made that are fraught with evil consequences. The ill effects begin to unfold soon after the decision. It is wise to rectify errors early; the more time an evil decision gets to root, the more its consequences become hard to reverse.

## 8. Resistance Movement in Kashmir

With the emergence of the powerful movement of armed insurrection in 1989, things have changed. There is now an open rebellion in Kashmir against India's occupation. It seems that at long last a serious resistance movement has got underway to reverse the tide of India's ever-increasing and comprehensive control over the land and the people of Kashmir. However, much caution is needed. That 'rejection of Indian sovereignty' is the basic issue should not be lost sight of. India is an occupying power; it must be dealt with as such. Even at this stage, despite the fact that thousands have been killed, there are many in Pakistan and among the Kashmiris willing to consider solutions that leave the basic issue unresolved. Anything short of ending Indian rule would not solve the problem. It would not end the insurrection, or reduce casualties or ameliorate conditions. It would only prolong the agony of the people and actually defer the solution. India would buy time but time is not on its side.

All that has been written above should underscore one basic point: the struggle in Kashmir must not stop short of Kashmir's total liberation from India, that must remain *the* objective. The avenues that need to be explored and the measures and means that need to be adopted have to be numerous and must change with time and the prevailing situation. The intermediate objective, the strategies, and tactics in each field of endeavour – military or political, active or passive - must be subjected to constant debate, critical evaluation and review in order to ensure maximum efficiency. But as far the final objective is concerned, it should be one and must be strictly adhered to – without any rethinks, revisions or compromises.

Compromise, on the other hand, is not a nonsense notion; it is an integral part of all social life – in the conduct of the state as well the evolution of a civilization. It governs all relations from the limited sphere of personal matters to the wider domain of statecraft. The example our Prophet (SAWS) in signing the Treaty of *Hudaibiyah* constitutes a precedence the Muslims can profit by following. Compromises were made in the ways and means for achieving the objective but not in the objective itself. But when compromises are made on the objective, which has often been the case with political elites of Muslims, they are rightly condemned as traitors and their action is regarded as 'sell-out'. One has to bear in mind that a movement with ever-changing objectives is ultimately a movement without an objective, like a wandering person without a destination.

Another truth that needs to be understood is that the present condition of Kashmir (its being occupied by India and hence lost to Islam) is essentially a local manifestation of the global reality - the political powerlessness of Islam. It is this reality that is reflected elsewhere also by the fact of other important assets remaining lost to Islam. For example, Palestine and Al-Quds are also occupied – by the Zionists. The struggle for liberation in Kashmir that seeks to change the situation is geographically local but its impact would contribute to a change in the global reality. Liberating Kashmir from India's occupation, in normal conditions, even if the movement is confined to Kashmir, would play a part in the evolutionary changes that affect the balance of power in the world, change perceptions and

prospects. That is why it is so important to remain firm on the objective. Times change, so do prospects for success. Kashmir is influenced by the perceptions of it in the world particularly among Muslims in the World. Similarly, the situation in Kashmir influences the prospects of other legitimate struggles elsewhere in the world.

At this point in time, fifteen years of resistance (despite huge loss in life and property) has made more gains than losses. Despite the Kashmiri struggle for freedom being largely ignored by the world media - demonised, portrayed as 'terrorism' and 'proxy war' of Pakistan - it has hurt India more than it is realised. But that is not the point. The point is that time is now on the side of Kashmiris. If they remain firm in their objective, their struggle would bring them the 'freedom' they longed for so much. There is confusion – in Kashmir as well as Pakistan – about the objective of the struggle in Kashmir. It is not a land dispute. It is not a dispute between two brothers – one Hindu the other Muslim – who live on the same land. It is question of title and sovereign power. If the realities require the Kashmiri Muslims to compromise or abandon their claims, they need to change the realities first. *Abandoning a rightful claim does not solve the problem; it whets the appetite of those who imposed the unjust solutions in the first place.*

A compromise on the objective in Kashmir is to undermine the polity of Islam and dereliction of duty as Muslims. It must be understood that the balance of power or the nature of perceptions is fluid. Thus fluidity would serve those who are steadfast and persevere. Any faltering of resolve would prolong the war and increase losses. On the other hand, a success in Kashmir would register in the global power equation in favour of Islam. This is because the objectives, not the physical area of operation, determine the nature and extent of change. Ending the global powerlessness of Islam does not require Muslims to travel across the globe and locate the enemies of Islam and fight them. If the struggle in Kashmir is directed to objectives which cohere with the wider global objectives of Islam, success would change the reality of power, its perception, and the self confidence of Muslims every where. All this would happen even though the war is confined to a particular area and involves only a very small segment of the *Ummah*.

The vital point is the question of coherence that is most crucial. Objectives of the Kashmir movement must cohere with the wider global objectives of Islam. Except when sabotaged by organized secular-nationalist elites, all mass uprisings by Muslims have been in harmony and accord with the main objective of the time. In concrete terms, the wider global objectives of Islam in the present historical situation is the unity of *Ummah* that would result from a real change in the politico-military balance of power in favour of Islam. Muslims are now politically fragmented into nation-states and globally the balance of power is decisively tilted against Islam and Muslims. This situation has got to be reversed. A total end to India's occupation of Kashmir, and its union with Pakistan is an objective that is in consonance with the wider global objectives of Islam. It would strengthen the cardinal Islamic principle of Muslim solidarity. At the same time, it would defeat the *jahilia* notions and forces of nationalism.



It is not enough for Kashmiris to have a Muslim as their ruler. The struggle for freedom is about things much higher and exalted. If Kashmir was to emerge as yet another powerless and docile nation-state unable to play a substantive role in the world, it would compromise the objective of the resistance and the freedom movement. Adding to the heap of already existing impotent 'Muslim' nation-states unable to decide or achieve a worthwhile purpose forever at the mercy of the powerful non-Muslims and foreigners, is not the objective. The objectives and strategies of the freedom movement must cohere with the wider objectives of Islam. That must remain *the* guiding principle and overall objective of the freedom movement in Kashmir. .

## 9. The Solution

The total liberation of Jammu & Kashmir from Indian occupation is the objective. The question is: how can that be achieved? After all, the Indian army has not unintentionally strayed into territory of Kashmir that a random firefights would scare them away. There is little likelihood that the Indian leadership would have such a change of heart that it concedes that the Kashmiris are not a part of the Indian nation and decide to pack up and leave. India sent its forces into Kashmir on the basis of a document (it calls the instrument of accession) that does not exist or had been forged for the day. In the face of the rejection of Indian sovereignty by Kashmiris, India has merely been buying time. But delay is neither a wise nor a valid objective for India any more. Delay helps nobody; it does not reduce casualties or costs. On the contrary, delaying tactics have accumulated losses. But India continues to hope that it might make gains, or keep the part it occupies, if only it was harsher in its repression and persisted longer in its occupation.

There has been a wish rather than hope that India would some day see the logic of the 'good'. The logic is simple: a right step has inherent good in it, which shows up and multiplies over a period of historical time through generations. Likewise, a wrong step can only have evil consequences that accumulate and become obstacles in the path of a remedy. The earlier a wrong is undone, the less are the obstacles that have to be faced. The longer it takes to return to 'good', the more are the obstacles and the cost. If India decides to accumulate credit, it has to start with the 'logic of good', not the 'logic of a concession', which is merely changing the position of the obstacle. The 'logic of good' becomes operative on recognizing a principle that underpins the logic. In the case of Kashmir, that principle is the 'right of self-determination'. When India accepts that as the operative principle, credits would begin to flow to it.

Professor Alistair Lamb has written a book on Kashmir where he reveals the result of his research that the so-called 'instrument of accession' was a forgery. India sent its forces into Kashmir with well thought objectives and far reaching ambitions. Depriving India of Kashmir will not lead to the break up of India but it would indeed be a defeat of its hegemonic ambitions and imperialist designs. It is unrealistic to think that India will ever give up Kashmir voluntarily through negotiations or mediation. But that does not mean that Kashmir would forever be a part of India. It only means that India would have to be forced out of Kashmir,

disgraced and humiliated, like all the aggressors throughout human history. *How easily or how quickly would that happen is not the question; how certain is that outcome is the question.*

In matters of honour and dignity, the peoples trampled underfoot for centuries have eventually asserted their will and triumphed against forces of coercion and repression. The verdict of history is that time is always on the side of those with high ideals and righteous objectives. A people struggling to redeem their honour and dignity always win; the degree of certainty is one hundred per cent. When an entire people pursue their objective single-mindedly, they achieve success more quickly. When they are prepared to make sacrifices to surmount difficulties they underline their sterling character, they redeem their honour before they secure their freedom. Normally one is prepared to face any amount of difficulty if one is reasonably certain about the result. The thought of difficulty does not become a deterrent for one who is struggling for a goal that is certain to be achieved. India's defeat in Kashmir is a certainty. But for this to happen, the right ingredients have to be in place. Every change has its own peculiar requirements, and once the right ingredients are there, constant human effort is there, it is only a matter of time - the time necessary for the completion of process - before the result appear, often precipitously.

## **10. Three Elements of the Solution**

There are three essential ingredients for the ultimate achievement of success in Kashmir's total liberation from India. Of these, the first two are absolutely essential, whereas the third one will facilitate the process. The ingredients are:

### **(1) Movement inside Kashmir**

A movement challenging India's occupation of Kashmir must be maintained. At the end of the day, it is the ground situation inside Kashmir that has pivotal importance. If there were no resistance, there would be little prospect for liberation. The intensity of resistance would wax and wane but it must continue to exist and be as vocal as possible. The resistance to occupation can take many forms and entail several methodologies but it must have clear goals. In Jammu and Kashmir, the most vital objective of resistance is two-fold: 1) that Kashmir continues to remain ungovernable for India, and 2) the fifth column and subversive forces stay intimidated and on the defensive. The occupation by India has been facilitated by its success in recruiting political proxies to spy on and subvert resistance and to promote the agenda of the occupier. The collaborators among the Muslims have undermined the resistance more than the India's forces of occupation. Their activities need to be kept under close scrutiny and under check.

### **(2) A Strong Pakistan**

A Pakistan that has the courage, the will and the capability to stand up to India, if necessary, in a military conflict, is absolutely essential for the freedom of Kashmir. It is important to understand what that means, because even in the high echelons of the Government of Pakistan the focus of Kashmir

policy is not clear. Presently, Pakistan's involvement in the conflict in Kashmir is based on a very fragile foundation. It says that it supports the Kashmiri's right of self-determination and their struggle to secure it. Thus, it presents its role in Kashmir to one of 'support' - as *one* commitment among its many international commitments. Pakistan says it is a rightful cause and a noble cause. Pakistan says that it has a special interest in Kashmir that is recognised by the UN by the resolutions of the Security Council. But it does not say that the Kashmiris are a part of the nation called Pakistan and that the struggle for the liberation of Kashmir is a Pakistani struggle and not merely of Kashmiris.

The stand of Pakistan creates a lot of problems for Pakistan; it has to sustain so many unsustainable positions - for example, the position that it is only providing moral and diplomatic support to the Mujahideen in Kashmir. All that the enemies of Pakistan have to do is to prove that Pakistan is providing 'more' than mere moral and diplomatic support and Pakistan is discredited as a liar. The stand adversely affects the authenticity and credibility of Pakistan's case on Kashmir and robs it of prospects of securing active international involvement and diplomatic support. That is how it was so easy for India to discredit the liberation struggle as 'terrorism' and force Pakistan to end its open support to the struggle that India called 'cross border terrorism'.

The stand of Pakistan provides additional material for a sterile debate of unviable options and themes that add to the already stagnant political discourse in Pakistan. After unanimity over Kashmir for several decades, some regional and ethnic groups - including some from Kashmir - are seeking to sideline Pakistan in Kashmir. It has disastrous implication that go to the very heart of the polity of Pakistan and questions its national solidarity. Building the case this way seriously limits Pakistan's options and the level of its involvement in Kashmir. India can use all its power to crush Kashmiris even though it is an occupying power but Pakistan cannot respond to the genocide of Muslims in Kashmir without risking an international war. It has not been properly understood that insurgency in Kashmir has removed many of the constraints on Pakistan and multiplied its options. Pakistan can vary and stiffen its response to make the cost to India of its occupation higher all the time. Pretending to be only supportive is neither the truth nor good diplomacy. It is outright stupidity.

Pakistan has to build its Kashmir case on firmer historical foundations. It has to be honest, prepared to pay price for being so, and it will find that steadfastness and honesty pays in the long run and that diplomatic success is impossible without both. Pakistan has to base its case for its involvement in Kashmir on its legitimate claim on Kashmir. It must assert that India has illegally occupied what is potentially a constituent part of Pakistan. It is so on the basis of the very principle that gave birth to India and Pakistan in the first place; that the dispute of Kashmir is nothing but a historic fraud against Pakistan at the very stage of its formation. This fraud, though jointly committed by the then would-be Indian rulers (Indian National Congress led

by Gandhi) and the colonial power, Britain, in 1947, has since been perpetuated, politically and militarily, by the state of India. It is ironic that apart from its *de facto* possession of Kashmir through armed aggression, India has no foundations for holding on to Kashmir. Yet, India has built up a strong case saying Kashmir is its integral part '*atoot ang*'.

In contrast with Pakistan, India's practical involvement in Kashmir is simply huge: there are hundreds of thousands (perhaps 700,000) Indian troops deployed in every corner of Kashmir killing and maiming Kashmiri Muslims, destroying their houses and dishonouring their women. In response to a few barren hilltops occupied by Pakistan in Kargil area, India launched a massive operation at high cost even though the hilltops were militarily insignificant and the operation was largely unsuccessful. Every Indian leader worth his or her salt made an appearance at Kargil and showered praise on the troops for 'teaching Pakistan a lesson'. When Pakistan goes to world capitals telling them there is a freedom movement in Kashmir, India dismisses the whole case by a single phrase 'Pakistan's interference' or 'cross-border terrorism'. Pakistan pleads innocence saying it is only providing moral and diplomatic support. This way it becomes an extremely unequal contest: Pakistan has adopted a self-imposed weak position and given India a chance to occupy moral high ground that has no justification or foundation.

Pakistan should straightway question the very legitimacy of India's presence in Kashmir. The present movement in Kashmir has demonstrated beyond doubt that it is India's military that commits war crimes. That is unacceptable; India has to vacate. Pakistan should base its Kashmir case on strong foundations and let the whole world including India know very unambiguously that it is going to pursue its Kashmir agenda to its logical end and at all costs, including facing an all-out India-imposed war, which Pakistan should prepare to win. This message is very important: There are well meaning people who do not take Pakistan's advocacy of Kashmir cause very seriously; they say when it comes to the crunch Pakistan will buckle. The Indian leaders think that way and say so. With that kind of self-assurance that Pakistan would crumble in a crunch, they take nothing that Pakistan says seriously. They take it for granted that whatever happens in Kashmir, India would be able to hold on to it. It resorts to genocide in Kashmir because it serves two purposes – it intimidates Pakistan as well the Indian Muslims. They are certain that Pakistan can be dissuaded from hurting India too much by threatening invasion. Pakistan's support has become the Achilles' heal of the Kashmiri freedom movement.

To give such strong message to the world that Kashmir is a life and death issue for Pakistan, it has to construct its case on very strong foundation: 1) Kashmir is in principle a part and parcel of Pakistan and its liberation is the first and foremost duty of Pakistan and its armed forces. 2) Pakistan's case is reinforced by India going back on its promise to hold a plebiscite in Jammu and Kashmir – a commitment it made to the world on the UN forum. 3) That India refuses to hold a referendum or plebiscite shows that it knows what the people want –

they want to be a part of Pakistan. 4) The insurrection in Kashmir is the product of Indian betrayal. It could end as soon as India agrees to abide by its promise to allow a plebiscite to be held.

Insurrection in Kashmir reinforces the claim of Pakistan. It is unparalleled and disgraceful incompetence that a people that can sustain an insurrection over 15 years cannot support it with diplomacy. Pakistan must claim that Kashmir is rightfully a constituent part of it. Pakistan – as a fact and the idea - emerged as a result of several Muslim communities coming together to form a large unit. Even at the point of conception, Kashmir was included as a constituent unit (letter K in Pakistan). There is no reason why Kashmir should not have been made a part of Pakistan in its Constitution. That India refuses to hold the plebiscite shows that it knows that its people want to be a part of Pakistan. When Pakistan relates to Kashmir this way, the talk of war will not sound unnatural. After all, war *per se*, is not something unusual or strange to human civilization. Every sovereign country has a ministry of defence, maintains armed forces and has defence budgets. This is because every individual, society, country or civilization has some cherished values and interests which are vital to its survival, which it values more than life and is prepared to fight for it.

Sovereign countries have armed forces maintained in readiness to fight, not to fight every day of the year but to dissuade anyone eager to or careless enough to hurt it. People that are not sovereign and have no army to defend them can be hurt with impunity. Hurting a sovereign people is attended by cost. That is the point of being sovereign and maintaining armed forces in readiness to fight. India occupies Kashmir because it is prepared to pay the price of occupation. Pakistan is unable to liberate Kashmir because it is not willing to pay the price that would attend its liberation. Those unwilling to pay the price for freedom do not save their freedom; they end up losing their sovereignty as well as honour. In fact, the crucial question always is whether a particular objective is worth a war, once it is regarded to be, war becomes legitimate. The defence of Lahore is worth a war with India, which I believe is the thinking in Pakistan. Why is Kashmir not worth fighting a war over? Considering that Pakistan has a meaning, and that the meaning came before the word itself, what is the difference between Lahore and Kashmir? If there is, then Pakistan has no meaning, it is an empty 8-letter word, mere noise.

### **C. The Re-organization of India**

India as it exists now, is the manifestation of the hegemonic vision that was developed in the later half of nineteenth century by the forces of resurgent Hinduism. In its original version, it encompassed the whole of the British Indian Empire. But Indian nationalism has no history whatsoever; it derives its inspiration from the British success in building a country by a combination of conquest and cunning. The agenda of India pursued by 'nationalist parties' such as the BJP and Congress, ever since 1947 includes, among other colonial projects in their neighbourhood, the dismantling of Pakistan. Since this

involves a combination of subversion and invasion, as long as there is a country called India, a real threat of war - even a nuclear war – would continue to exist. Seeking the reorganization of India into multiple sovereign states based on genuine national identities (as opposed to an artificial ‘Indian’ identity) is an objective that is right in principle, as it is good for its many peoples. It is founded on the universal principle of ‘national self-determination’ for all those with unique identity and sense of destiny. India defines itself by a land mass and not by the objectives and aspirations of the people. India denies its people the right to decide their identity and their destiny. If India were reorganised as nation states like the rest of the world, its social and political fabric would be completely transformed and the objective of internal harmony as well as peace with its neighbours would be achieved without much effort.

All the states in South Asia are the product of the exercise of ‘national self-determination’ but India is an anachronism. It is an imperial state that is forever making trouble for its neighbours. However, it has not succeeded in suppressing the movements of self-determination by diverting attention of the people outwards. On the contrary, it has underlined the imperial nature of the state structure by betraying peoples and resiling on promises and commitments it made to them from time to time. It betrayed the Sikhs, going back on the promise of a sovereign state and crushing their Movement of Khalistan even desecrating and destroying their holiest shrine, the Golden Temple of Amritsar in June 1984. It betrayed tribal peoples of Assam particularly those of Nagaland and oppressed Dalits systematically outlawing caste discrimination on the one hand and sharpening caste divisions intensifying oppression on the other. The people of India, for their own sake, need to organise politically along ethnic and caste lines to crystallise their national identities and create a new structure of balance of power in which militarist agenda can get replaced by social and economic agenda<sup>682</sup>.

It goes without saying that if India were reorganised on *sans* imperial lines, on the foundation of the principle of ‘national self-determination’ it would facilitate the liberation of Kashmir. Furthermore, this can also avoid the prospect of Kashmir’s liberation leading to an Indo-Pakistan war. One has to bear in mind that the Indian nationalist psyche is deeply haunted by the memories of Muslim rule over of India. They see *Tughlaks* and *Mughals* marching towards their territory even now, and since there are no such real marchers, they demolish mosques or kill Muslims or think of nuking Pakistan. Indian leaders repeatedly say they are facing threats, someone is going to take over their country, they never make it clear who is going to do that. Who after all is interested in a land where millions sleep on footpaths? But the world does not know that. What the ruling castes of India see nobody else can see -

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<sup>682</sup> These points have been discussed fully in an article by Dr Syed Inyatullah Andrabi titled ‘India’s Nuclear Gamble: Underlying Motivations and Options for Future’ published by the Institute of Kashmir Affairs Rawalpindi.

the *Tughlaks* and the *Mughals*. In all probability, therefore, when the Kashmiri struggle for freedom is close to success, India's nationalist leaders may, in their desperation, attack Pakistan. A reorganized India would save the world from that prospect.

### 11. Certainty of Success

If the above three ingredients are put in place in consequence of a focused, sustained, and strategic effort, the day is not far when Kashmir would be free from the rule of India. Having outlined the essential pre-requisites for Jammu and Kashmir to be free from Indian rule, it is necessary to strike a note of caution. The Kashmir freedom movement has come a long way. There have been sacrifices of enormous magnitude by the people of Kashmir. India and Pakistan are talking about lasting peace, and a tension-free sub continent. But peace does not come about merely by a wish; concrete steps are required to be taken for it to obtain and be lasting. The bus of peace may be missed again if the real aspirations and wishes of Kashmiri people are not properly ascertained or if they are not given due consideration.

It cannot be overemphasised that the Kashmir issue, substantially, is a matter relating to 'honour and dignity' of a people. History bears witness that this matters far more in the lives of individuals and nations than matters of bread and butter, even life and death. If the Kashmiri people are betrayed once again and their 'will' is not ascertained, or it is ignored or sabotaged, there would never be lasting peace. There might be some sort of peace, for some people and for some period of time, but it would not last. Lasting peace can only be achieved on the basis of a just solution, not at the cost of it.

### 12. Betrayal of Kashmiris

When a people as a whole feel betrayed, cheated and let down, they will devise their own ways for rectifying the wrong. They may be defeated, cheated or betrayed again and again but their struggle will go on. History teaches that matters relating to honour and dignity have an incredible potential to inspire the right men and women endlessly without any constraint of time or space. If Kashmiri people are wronged once again, a new breed of combatants (ordinary mortals who do not accept their despicable situation as a *fait accompli* but rise up to change it) will emerge, who will take up the mission with renewed zeal sometimes employing new and more effective methods. No one can stop this from happening: history does not accept managers and tight controls; it has its own dynamics and its own rules.

On 13<sup>th</sup> July 1931 the Muslims of Kashmir rose in rebellion against Dogra rule. It was a spontaneous action that was ruthlessly put down. Many were martyred; many more were put in prison. The day is commemorated every year to honour those martyred on that day. Those fighting against India today are not necessarily linked by blood but they are linked by an injustice they struggle against. That link lives as long as that injustice thrives. As some die and some give up, there are many more who join the ranks of the resistance forming new groups to challenge India's occupation of Kashmir. This present phase started in 1989 but the movement never

died once it started in 1947. Indian rulers arrested and killed the persons, but they did not, indeed could not, arrest or kill their yearning for *Azadi* – freedom.

I was studying for Ph.D. in the beautiful Indian city of Pune when a young Kashmiri, Shiekh Tajammul-Islam, advocate by profession, raised the slogan of 'Kashmir's freedom from India'. It was a period of political lull following Indira-Shaikh accord in 1975. Tajammul's call created a huge excitement and so many young souls like myself rallied around him. A young man, perhaps a teenager, somewhere fired a single shot in 1989, and the whole population of Kashmir came out on the streets chanting the slogans of '*azadi*' freedom from India. The point is, when it is a question of honour and dignity, truth and justice have an inherently huge potential to energise and galvanise human souls. It is this potential that creates popular movements. Those in power taking a narrow view of history, use brute force to crush the movement. If they succeed, the matter does not end. Control may be restored for a time by wanton use of force and/or some sort of a deal, but the situation would erupt again later with added ferocity. Those who are to participate in parleys and represent their peoples must remember that there is no compromise on matters of principle, honour or justice. Compromise can be made in timing and methods. It is the *objective* that makes a war noble or abominable.□



## Union of Pakistan & Afghanistan: Impossible or Inevitable

*Abidullah Jan*

### **Abstract**

The idea of Pak-Afghan Union may not appear viable or a pressing objective in the environment in which there is already so much happening on the international scene. As a vision, however, this idea has a sound basis in history and is supported by powerful under-currents of the unfolding events.

Before the advent of the Sikh and British rule, Afghanistan and Pakistan were one country under the Durrani Empire. The claim of Afghanistan on Pakistan is not based on common ethnicity of tribes on both sides of the Durand Line but on the boundaries of the erstwhile Durrani Empire.

Since the time of Jamaluddin Afghani, the Union of Pakistan and Afghanistan has been an essential feature of every post-imperial vision in the region. In Chaudhary Rahmat Ali's vision of Pakistan, the first A stands for Afghania (NWFP) and last A for Afghanistan.<sup>683</sup>

This chapter assesses the factors that make a Pak-Afghan Union inevitable despite the absence of any international efforts or by the people on either side of the Pak-Afghan border. Contrary to the 'fears' expressed in the media, the ground realities suggest that a union of the two countries would bring peace and prosperity to the entire region - South Asia including India and the Central Asian Republics that lie to the North of Afghanistan.

Contrary to hyped myths and current attempts at amalgamating Pakistan with India and finally dissolving its identity, Pakistan's ties with Afghanistan in the North are much stronger than with India in the South. Events, such as the border skirmishes with Afghanistan, are a proof of

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<sup>683</sup> In Rahmat Ali's vision, P in Pakistan stands for the Punjab, A for Afghania (NWFP) K for Kashmir, I for Iran, S for Sindh, T for Tukharistan (Central Asia), A for Afghanistan and N is the last letter of Baluchistan.

the deep-rooted closeness and historical relatedness rather than signs of antagonism and rivalry.

The ECO (Economic Cooperation Organisation) has already brought together the states that Chaudhary Rahmat Ali's vision entailed the union of to build a great country – a Muslim power. While his dream may remain a dream for some more time because of the absence of visionary leadership, the dire need of Afghanistan being transformed into a bridge between South and Central Asia is already being felt. What is not yet fully appreciated is that the only way to bring about such a transformation is by a natural Pak-Afghan union. The terms of the union are not important but the border between the two countries would disappear. It is only then that new Afghanistan would become a bridge instead of a barrier to Central Asia.

The people of Kashmir and Afghanistan continue to suffer and the region remains destabilized simply because they are still viewed as the 'property' of their erstwhile rulers and denied self-determination. All the socio-political problems of Pakistan and Afghanistan emerge from the same mentality — acceptance of serfdom of feudal lords, industrialists and ethnic zealots.

As long as Afghanistan was ruled by a king, he did talk about restoring the Durrani Empire. The search of ethnic underpinning of that imperial argument has proved to be sterile because neither Pakistan nor Afghanistan are ethnically homogeneous. In the modern times, nations define themselves; they are not defined by foreign ambitions or minorities that are allies of imperial interests.

Since the Durrani Empire included the present-day Pakistan and Afghanistan, the forces of history, the principle of national self-determination, and the aspiration for the unity of Muslim *Ummah* have all come into line. That the Afghans used Pakistan as a base to resist and defeat Soviet occupation has reinforced the bonds of blood, of religion, and of history. It would be impossible to re-impose rigid separation and sever those links.

Without anyone noticing, changes are taking place moving the two countries towards greater interdependence and unity. The force for unification is largely the result of a reaction to hostile forces that are working for the disintegration of Pakistan as well as Afghanistan. The base of such forces is India and Israel but it the United States that alone is a viable vehicle for the application of force at this time. As the use of military force in the Middle East proves to be unsuccessful, America is likely to disengage in Afghanistan. At that moment it would become apparent that seeking disintegration of Pakistan or Afghanistan was not in American interest and it was not a viable objective or a prudent strategy. A reversal of policy could then result in a union being endorsed instead of being opposed.

All those working in the name of Durrani Empire, Pashtun solidarity or Islamic solidarity complement each other and would come on the same platform - of a union of the two countries. That is why the dynamics are more important than policies of powers with influence at a particular point in time. *The Union of Pakistan and Afghanistan is the destiny of both, the policy of neither.*

## 1. Introduction

It is the first time in recent history that the policy architecture of Afghanistan as well as Pakistan is in the same hands. In Afghanistan, sovereign power fell into the hands

of America in consequence of its invasion and occupation. America and its allies maintain a military presence as a sovereign power as foreign troops come in and go out of the country without the permission, knowledge or control of the Government of Afghanistan. In fact, Afghanistan does not have a government – neither a machinery to collect taxes and administer the country nor a force to provide protection to its people or enforce its laws. The Afghans are employed by the military coalition as porters, interpreters and informers but their own military, the police and the courts have yet to establish their authority. The foreign military forces plan and conduct operations. More important, the country depends almost entirely on foreign aid for its budget.

In Pakistan, the situation is different and so is the methodology by which America secures compliance. Since Pakistan does collect its own taxes and maintains a big military apparatus, the compliance is secured by giving mission and tasks. The Americans also maintain a huge intelligence apparatus in Pakistan – they recruit spies and collect intelligence that they use to allocate tasks to the Pakistan Government. The difference between the methodologies could have been in appearance rather than in substance but it is not. When high officials of Pakistan say with pride that they are a ‘frontline state’ in the American War on Terror, even the cosmetic difference vanishes. The leaders of both countries take orders from America. Is it good or bad is not the point; the point is that both countries are under one rule for the first time in recent history.

Unlike Afghanistan, where the US forces invaded the country and made war to install Hamid Karzai in power, General Musharraf came to power in consequence of a coup d’etat. But neither of them came to power by complying with the law or the constitution. The legitimacy of both in power is questionable and is being questioned. Is that deliberate? Perhaps! Only when the underpinning of law and public approval is absent that a leader of a country can be coerced into acting in defiance of the public opinion. However, there is an active insurrection in Afghanistan that resists American control. The United States enjoys much more freedom of action in Pakistan to use the forces and resources of that country. The interest of the occupation forces, ironically, is working to reinforce the historical factors, the ties of religion and culture, interdependence of the two countries to exploit their natural resources, the value of their strategic position together, Pakistan’s nuclear capability and various other internal and external factors are all working to somehow push Pakistan and Afghanistan into altering their present status.

Afghanistan played the role of a buffer state between two imperial powers – Russia in the North and Great Britain in the South. The present borders of the country define the limit of profitable expansion by its imperial neighbours. With the creation of Pakistan and sovereign independence of Central Asian Republics (CARs) the successors of the British and the Soviet Empires – India and Russia – have been driven away from the borders of Afghanistan but it is still possible get some rewards from India or Russia if their expansionist ambitions revive. Merely because the

threat of such revival continues to exist, Pakistan as well Central Asian Republics are willing to pay a higher price for Afghanistan becoming a bridge than Russia and India are prepared to pay for it to remain a barrier and making trouble for its neighbours. Although it is impossible to predict the course of the future, the changes that have occurred already make it imperative for Afghanistan to find a new role other than a barrier or a buffer.

## 2. Forces of History

Pakistan and Afghanistan would not remain as two states on the world map in the same boundaries if Afghanistan chose a new and positive role for itself. There are two kinds of forces at work: visible and invisible. Almost all the visible forces – that are all foreign aided or inspired – are engaged in somehow disintegrating the two states – Afghanistan as well as Pakistan. But the invisible forces – that are largely internal - are bringing these countries towards an ultimate unification — towards the formation of a greater Afghanistan of sorts – in which malicious intentions or imperial designs play no part.

A deeper look reveals that the visible forces that are working for disintegrating Pakistan and Afghanistan are indirectly strengthening the position of invisible forces that compel the two states towards an unintended unification. At this time, the overt objective of these forces is 1) the disintegration of Afghanistan and 2) merger of Pakistan with India to make *Akhand Bharat*. USA and India sell both as the best security option for the region. The USA openly pursues the agenda of de-Islamisation often under the label of liberalism. However, their real agenda, which they pursue in the name of democracy is: denuclearisation, demilitarisation and secularisation. India pursues its agenda under the flag of SAFTA – South Asia Free Trade Area – a proposal adopted at the recent SAARC Summit. They are sure that the two prongs of the attack would so undermine the *raison d'être* of Pakistan that the country would collapse and find reunion with India akin to being saved. Pakistan is making efforts – that are yet inadequate and ineffective – to promote its solidarity with Muslim countries from the platform of OIC, ECO and soon as a member of ASEAN as well. But India believes that with American help, Pakistan would fall into its lap like a ripe apple.

While the unity of Afghanistan is being undermined from within by the warlords unwilling to accept the authority of Kabul, the cohesion of Pakistan is being undermined by its enemies that seek to subvert its polity. They have already started an attack on the *raison d'être* of Pakistan — the Two Nation Theory and its Islamic identity. The irony is that the Government of Pakistan facilitates the assault on the polity of Pakistan. In the name of purging school books of hatred, an American funded NGO - Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) – is re-writing history that presents the Two Nation Theory as obsolete. Even a recent Prime Minister of Pakistan made public statements to emphasize that the two-nation theory

“has become a one-nation theory.”<sup>684</sup> Initially it was assumed that the statement by Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali, in an interview he gave to an Indian journalist for the *Frontline Magazine*, was because of ignorance. But he did not correct the statement despite being ridiculed for it. The stories about the crowd with stitched India and Pakistani flags were prominently published in the Pakistani press to great delight of Indian visitors to an India-Pakistan Cricket match in Lahore. It is neither coincidence nor harmless fun.

### 3. Subversion of Education.

According to weekly *Independent*, a committee has been formed by the Federal Minister of Education to exclude all that created bad blood between India and Pakistan and promoted national emotions in the minds of students. The government departments concerned hired the services of secular-minded professors of universities and colleges for this purpose. The Committee approved changes in all the chapters from the syllabi of degree, intermediate, matriculation examinations and made recommendations for removal of ‘offensive material’ from all textbooks including those for primary and secondary education to high officials for approval.<sup>685</sup>

According to the report, the Committee excluded all the chapters from Pakistan Studies for many classes that create the feelings of hatred for India. Some of the excluded chapters are: the issue of division of assets at the time of the partition, carnage of Muslims during migration from India, rape of Muslim women and the attack of Indian Army on Junagadh and Kashmir. The sources said the Committee has also excluded all the chapters containing information regarding the fall of Dhaka. In the new syllabus, the government has approved that Mukti Bahni be referred to as “freedom fighters” and it is accepted that Pakistani soldiers raped Bengali women during the civil war in East Pakistan.

Across the border, India is also re-writing history – not to purge it of hatred, but to focus hate on Islam and Muslims. Their purpose is the exact opposite. The Muslim rule is still the Dark Age of India. Islam still a demonic cult but many things have been changed in the ‘revised’ view of history. In the past view (propagated by the Congress Party) all Communalism - Hindu as well as Muslim - was bad; it resulted in the partition of India. In the revised (BJP) view, it was only Muslim Communalism that was bad; it resulted in the partition of India. The anti-hate campaign (a good spin, is it not?) by Nayyar & Salim (of SDPI) religion is bad; it

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<sup>684</sup> Faizul Haque, “Two-nation theory not valid today,” *The Nation*, March 01, 2003.

<sup>685</sup> Kamran Rajput, “The government aims at gradually changing curricula for all classes,” *Weekly Independent*, Issue #, 39, Vol # 03, March 18-24, 2004

resulted in the partition of India. This campaign to revise history is not to purge the literature of hate; it is to sanitise history to portray Hindu as good and Muslim as evil. Its themes have been eagerly picked up by Israel and America in an effort to make Muslims feel ashamed - to kill Islam by contrition.

The BJP led campaign would not end with its losing power: it would intensify as the BJP is now free of worries of a ruling party. In any case, every spin - whether by those who call themselves secularists (present or past Congressites), Hindu Rashtra supporters (BJP, RSS and the entire Sangh Parivar), or mere liberals, all decry the Two Nation Theory and the partition. Those who call themselves secularists do not merely seek to separate the church from the state – the original thesis – but to demonise Islam and Muslims. Elsewhere, the purpose may well be to de-fang the serpent – resistance to Israeli occupation – that has caused so much death and destruction but in India the purpose is quite different. It is to promote Brahmin Imperialism and provide a benign rationale for its objective of *Akhand Bharat*. The secularism being promoted in Pakistan is founded on the Indian view of history. It has volunteers (from minorities) and even paid workers in Pakistan.

The truth is that the syllabi and textbooks in Pakistan have been reviewed by education professionals many times under the influence of UNESCO to make history devoid of focus and its content incoherent and its study without purpose. The textbooks in Pakistan failed to present a view of its history - of the aspirations of the people and actions of the Government. Far from imposing its will on the provinces, the Central Government has no idea what anti Pakistan themes are being pedalled from within the establishment. The revision of textbooks now being pursued by the government goes beyond maintaining incoherence of content, it is to make Pakistanis ashamed of their Muslim past and to present Pakistan as a story of failure – of foul objectives and vile conduct. No country ever makes its younger generation feel so ashamed of its place and role in the world in so calculated a way as has been done by the Government of Pakistan itself.

#### 4. Reaction to Subversion

In Afghanistan, on the other hand, where there is little education to subvert, there are also plans under way to divide Afghanistan into four different states to neutralise any prospects of its emergence as an “Islamic state”. The real sovereign power of Pakistan and Afghanistan has the same policy for both countries – to divide the society and reorganise the state on ethnic lines. While there is no country willing and able to exploit the division or internecine war in Afghanistan, India is getting ready to exploit successes that the forces of subversion achieved in Pakistan. The future security and survival as viable states is evidently at stake. But the irony is that it is the leaders of the two countries that are unwittingly acting as the instruments of the enemy. It is difficult to say if they really believe in the agenda of de-Islamisation. But one thing is certain; they are not the first in the Muslim world to do so. But secularisation is not the purpose or the objective of the USA or India. They see that

as a means to achieve demilitarisation and to maintain their hegemony/occupation – their real objectives.

Interestingly, all the efforts being made towards disintegrating the two states are focussing attention on the alternative. This is leading them to a realisation that the most plausible security alternative is the union of Pakistan and Afghanistan. The visible forces trying to destabilise and divide both countries are strengthening the invisible forces of trans-pseudo-national religious and cultural identity that are leading these countries towards the inevitable union. There is a silent phenomenon of history whereby great changes occur without anyone really working for them with a design complete with objectives and a strategy. It is the operation of this phenomenon that brings about the disintegration of once great empires, and old bonds re-assert themselves enabling nations to consolidate their unity, crystallise their personality and new countries emerge.

In Pakistan, the feeling that history is about to declare its new scheme is almost palpable. The agents of the foreign forces that want Pakistan to atrophy in pursuit of nationalist mirage and an ethnic destiny are active in the columns of the English language media. On the other end of the spectrum are organisations like Tanzeem-i-Islami led by Dr. Israr Ahmed. He has proposed a confederation between Pakistan and Afghanistan for countering Indian and other hegemonic designs.<sup>686</sup> However, his vision appears to be limited to formulating proposals for the purpose of debate only.

On the other end, the self-proclaimed 'liberals' like Najam Sethi of the *Friday Times* come up with inflammatory and scare-mongering write-ups. In its editorial of 2 February 2001 of *the Friday Times*, he shows how much contempt he has for the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP), Pakhtuns and Afghans. In his view, the idea of a multi-ethnic, multi-sectarian and democratic Pakistan seems to exclude the inhabitants of NWFP. By making disparaging remarks about Pakhtuns, the editorial is an example of how the forces of disintegration are actually not only promoting sectarianism, hatred, intolerance and xenophobia but also in their struggle for merging Pakistan with India they are indirectly paving the way for unification of Pakistan and Afghanistan.

The viability and hence the durability of Pakistan's borders are constantly questioned by Indian and Western analysts in the hope that a combination of disillusionment within and perception of heightened dangers from without would cause the collapse and disintegration of Pakistan. At home, media outlets like the *Friday Times* use the acronym, 'NWFP' throughout specific pieces of articles and editorials in a way as to relegate a constituent unit of the Pakistani Nation as an appendage of sorts. Perhaps in their vision of a multi-ethnic, multi-sectarian and democratic Pakistan, the 'NWFP' will merely be an appendage i.e. a buffer zone to

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<sup>686</sup> News report, daily *Frontier Post*, March 29,2000. See also Tanzeem-i-Islami web site [www.tanzeem.org](http://www.tanzeem.org)

protect a multi-ethnic, multi-sectarian and democratic Pakistan from violent and warlike Afghanistan.

### 5. Islamic, not Ethnic, Solidarity

At the moment, ethnic separatism is not a significant threat in the NWFP, where the Pakhtunistan movement is mostly moribund and, beyond that, tends to be seen less as a product of grievances of Pakhtuns than as a device exploited and fostered at times by external forces. At the same time, Pakhtuns nationalism is by no means a thing of the past. It is bound to become more powerful with Pakhtun and non-Pakhtun struggle in Afghanistan on the one hand and irresponsible attitude of the 'liberal' leaders and media pundits in Pakistan on the other. The new version of this movement, nevertheless, would be in favour of confederation with Afghanistan rather than dismemberment of Pakistan.

It is important to note that all this will not happen in the name of ethnicity. Lest someone consider it an ethnic ambition or imperial design of the Pashtun, it is important to highlight at the outset that the union of Pakistan and Afghanistan is inevitable not because of the operation of ethnic solidarity. Ethnicity has some role to play but in the broader perspective the motive force of history in this region has always been 'Islamic Solidarity'. Ethnicity is race and language. Languages change and evolve and races mix. Islam makes the common faith of Afghans and Pakistanis a principle of solidarity above that of race and language. That is a great blessing of Islam; it consolidates people of diverse races speaking many languages into brothers.

Unbeknownst to many in the new generation, Pakistan remains the manifestation of that blessing. The way the Muslims from all over the world came to Afghanistan to liberate it from Soviet occupation was a manifestation of that blessing. The way the Muslims are now focussing on the liberation of Iraq from American occupation, Palestine from Israeli occupation and Kashmir from Indian occupation is a manifestation of that blessing. Neither Pakistan nor parts of Pakistan ever going to merge with Afghanistan on the basis of ethnicity, nor can secularism and the *mantra* of calling Two-Nation theory outdated help merge Pakistan with India. On the basis of ethnicity alone, the Frontier Province should be three states. **Ethnicity does matter** (and we have provinces in Pakistan to cater for ethnic diversity and we have so many Muslim countries) **but destiny** (the role of Muslims on this planet) **matters more**. This is the most potent factor that brings Pakistan and Afghanistan ever closer together and makes the Durand Line defunct – a needless encumbrances with each passing day of US incursions into Pakistan's territory.

### 6. Afghans Disapprove the Durand Line

As will become evident later in this chapter, according to some sources, the British presented the document that defined the 'Durand Line' to the Amir Abdul Rahman Khan – King of Afghanistan - in 1893, which he signed. This document was in



English and Amir Abdul Rahman Khan did not understand the English language. That raises suspicion of forgery particularly because the Dari or Pashto translation of this document or agreement was never signed by Amir Abdul Rahman Khan. This suggests that the agreement is null and void. Other researchers have argued that the document was signed but it has since expired after a century in 1993. In either case, the legal position of the Durand Line as a border between Pakistan and Afghanistan is disputed. From the day Pakistan came into being, no government of Afghanistan has ratified the Durand Line as a permanent border and has demanded that Parts of NWFP and Baluchistan that were ceded by an Afghan ruler – not the people – to the British should be returned and merged into Afghanistan.

With the abolition of monarchy in Afghanistan, the demand for the return of Afghan territories has acquired ethnic overtones. However, Pakistan becoming an Islamic Republic has made sea change in ground realities. Afghanistan always wanted to be an Islamic Republic that it became under the Taliban rule. The Taliban wished a union of the two countries as both countries are 99 per cent Muslim. Reconstituting the borders on ethnic lines is neither practical nor permissible by their common religion. Even though the Taliban are no more ruling Afghanistan but it has continued to be an Islamic Republic. With American occupation continuing and Muslim Mujahideen who fought to liberate Afghanistan being hunted in both countries, the fact of occupation is being underlined and the fact of resistance is bound to be its inevitable consequence. It is not inconceivable that those who lead the resistance would lead both countries. That makes the union of the two countries not just conceivable but inevitable.

This chapter looks into various aspects that are leading Pakistan and Afghanistan to end up as a united country despite the absence of a visible movement towards this end. The dispute over the Durand Line is one important such factor.

### **7. Early History**

It is probable that there were well-developed civilizations in Afghanistan in prehistoric times, but the archaeological record is not conclusive or clear. Certainly cultures had flourished in the north and east before the Persian king Darius I (c.500 B.C.) conquered these areas. Later, Alexander the Great conquered (329–327 B.C.) the area on his way to India. After Alexander's death (323 B.C.) the region, at first, was a part of the Seleucid Empire. In the north, Bactria became independent, and the south was acquired by the Maurya dynasty. Bactria expanded southward but fell (mid-2d cent. B.C.) to the Parthians and rebellious tribes (notably the Saka). Buddhism was introduced from the east by the Yüechi, who founded the Kushan dynasty (early 2d cent. B.C.). Their capital was Peshawar. The Kushans declined (3d cent. A.D.) and were supplanted by the Sassanids, the Ephthalites, and the Turkish Tu-Kuie.

## 8. Muslim conquests

Eastern flank of Islam under the rule of Four Rightly Guided Caliphs of Islam spread to the borders of Afghanistan - under Caliph Othman (644-656) and Caliph Ali (656-661). Under the Umayyads (661-750), Islam spread to Afghanistan: Kabul (664), Punjab, Sindh and Central Asia: Transoxania, Merv (710), Samarkand (710). In 711 C.E., Muhammad Bin Qasim invaded and conquered Sindh and extended Muslim rule as far as Multan, where he settled 4000 Arab families.

The Muslim conquest of Afghanistan began in the 7th century. Several short-lived Muslim dynasties were founded, the most powerful of them had its capital at Ghazni. Mehmud Gazanavi, who conquered the lands from Khorasan in Iran to the Punjab in India early in the 11th Century, was the greatest of Afghanistan's rulers. Jenghiz Khan (c.1220) and Timur (late 14th Century) were subsequent conquerors of renown. Babur, a descendant of Timur, used Kabul as the base for his conquest of India and the establishment of the Moghul Empire in the 16th Century. In the 18th Century, the Persian King Nadir Shah extended his rule to North of the Hindu Kush. After his death (1747) his lieutenant, Ahmad Shah, an Afghan tribal leader, established a united state covering most of present-day Afghanistan. His dynasty, the Durrani, gave the Afghans the name that they themselves frequently use.

## 9. Abbasid Caliphate.

The Abbasid Caliphate (750-850) with its capital in Baghdad expanded to its farthest extent during the rule of Haroun al-Rashid (786-809). Its eastern limits included Herat in Afghanistan and Balkh, Bukhara, Merv, Samarkand and Transoxania in Central Asia. The Ghaznavids who ruled Kabul, Ghazni, Kandahar, Multan, Lahore and Kashmir all recognised the Abbasid Caliphate by 1090.<sup>687</sup>

## 10. Mehmud of Ghazni.

Mahmud of Ghazni (born 971, reigned 998-1030) was the first Turk to invade Iran and South Asia from the Northwest. His conquests stretched deep into Central Asia (Balkh). He ventured as far south as the State of Gujrat, attaching Punjab to his Central Asian empire. The western limit of his empire included Hamadan and Isfahan; Peshawar, Jhelum, Amritsar, Lahore, Multan in the east; and Gujrat in the south.<sup>688</sup>

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<sup>687</sup> The Times Atlas of World History, Fourth Edition, 1993, Times Books, a division of Harper-Collins Publishers, 77-85 Fulham Palace Road, Hammersmith, London, W6 8JB, page 133.

<sup>688</sup> Ibid. The Times Atlas, page 128, 129.



*Empire of Mehmud Ghaznavi*

The Ghaznavids recognised the Abbasid Caliphate and played the main part in the expansion of Islam into South Asia. The Ghaznavids were succeeded by Afghans from Ghor. The Ghurids Dynasty ruled India from 1148 to 1206. The last Ghurid ruler of Afghanistan brought the whole of northern India under Islamic rule.<sup>689</sup> The Delhi Sultanate (1206-1526) with its capital in Delhi followed under the leadership of four major dynasties - the Mamluks (Turkish slaves), Khiljis, Tughlaqs and Lodhis.<sup>690</sup> During this time there was an intermixing of Turkish, Persian and Afghan culture, for example the word Urdu is of Turkish origin meaning military camp.

## 11. Timur

A Barlas Turk (Turko-Mongol) warrior called Timur (the Earth Shaker) born in 1336 near Samarkand created a single unified empire that included Central Asia (Bukhara, Merv, Tashkent), Iraq; Iran, Afghanistan, and much of Pakistan (Peshawar, Taxila, Lahore, Multan, etc).<sup>691</sup> His capital was Samarkand. He added Delhi to his empire in 1398.

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<sup>689</sup> Williams, Jonathan. (1997). *Money - A History*. Published for the Trustees of the British Museum by British Museum Press, a division of the British Museum Company Ltd, 46 Bloomsbury, London, WC1B 3QQ. ISBN: 0 7141 0885 5, page 121.

<sup>690</sup> Bose, Sugata & Jalal, Ayesha. (1998). *Modern South Asia - History, Culture, Political Economy*, London: Routledge, pg. 28

<sup>691</sup> *Ibid.* Time Atlas, page 126-7.



*Empire of Emir Timur*

## 12. South Asia before Babur's Invasion

When Christians from Europe became interested in India, e.g. Christopher Columbus (1492), Vasco Da Gama (1497), the sub-continent, as with many continents, was made up of several nations of which one was Islamic: the Sultanate of Delhi ruled by the Afghan Lodhis since 1451. The Sultanate was a narrow strip that ran across North India stretching from Afghanistan in the west to Bihar and Bengal in the east; whilst its southern limit was Delhi. Other nations in the continent included Bengal, Multan, Rajput Confederacy, Arghun Kingdom of Sindh, Gujrat, Malwa, Khandesh, Gondwana, Orissa, Ahmadnagar, Berar, Bidar, Golconda and Vijayanagar.

## 13. The Mughal Empire

Six years after Da Gama's arrival in South Asia, a Sufi Dervish (also an adventurer, poet and writer) from Farghana in Uzbekistan in Central Asia called Zahiruddin Muhammad Babur - the Tiger/Leopard (a descendent of Timur) - invaded Afghanistan at the instigation of the governor of Punjab. In 1504, he seized power from the existing Muslim rulers - the Afghan Lodhis (1451-1526). The foundations and the first capital of the Mughal Empire was Kabul in Afghanistan. Babur then took Kandahar in 1522 and Lahore in 1524. For ten years, Babur divided his ambitions between Central Asia and South Asia.<sup>692</sup> Then in 1526 at the Battle of Panipat, Babur defeated the last Lodhi called Ibrahim who had ruled Delhi, Bihar and Punjab. Babur used guns, matchlocks and mortars, which had not been seen in South Asia before. With this victory, he gained control of Delhi and Agra. Having

<sup>692</sup> Berinstain, Valeri. (1998). *Mughal India - Splendours of the Peacock Throne*. Thames and Hudson, 30 Bloomsbury Street, London. WC1B 3QP. ISBN: 0-500-30083-6, page 21.



*Abdali's Empire*

secured the traditional invasion routes of the Khyber Pass in Afghanistan (North West Frontier) and Kashmir, he advanced deep into South Asia. Babur was an outsider and would pine for his Central Asian homeland.<sup>693</sup>

The objective of the Mughal Empire was to colonise the whole of South Asia, even if it meant compromising their duties as rulers in their religion Islam and making alliances with non-Muslims. They wanted to consolidate the vast subcontinent of different nations under a single unified administration. Their unfinished task was completed by the British rulers of India who virtually inherited their empire. That the British were able to conquer and rule all of South Asia with no more than 150,000 British military personnel while it took 400,000 French soldiers to colonise Algeria, is a tribute to 'good governance' of the imperial power that preceded them.

#### **14. Ahmad Shah Abdali**

The break-up of the Mughal Empire began with an invasion by Nadir Shah the Turk who in 1739 conquered Iran. He attacked Peshawar, Lahore and Delhi, looting Delhi's vast treasures before retiring to Kabul. In 1747, Afghanistan and today's Pakistan separated from the Mughal Empire under Ahmed Shah Abdali Durrani (an Afghan born in Multan). Between 1747 and 1769, Abdali invaded the North-west, Kashmir, Lahore (1752) nine times. In 1761, Abdali defeated the Marathas, but a

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<sup>693</sup> Ahmed, Akbar S. (1997). *Jinnah, Pakistan and Islamic Identity*. New York: Routledge. ISBN: 0-415-14966-5, pg. 37

mutiny in the Afghan Army forced him to withdraw, leaving a power vacuum for the East India Company to exploit.<sup>694</sup>

### 15. Beginning of International Problems

The reign of the Durrani line ended in 1818, and no predominant ruler emerged until Dost Muhammad became Emir in 1826. During his rule the status of Afghanistan became an international problem, as Britain and Russia contested for influence in Central Asia. With the aim of controlling access to the northern approaches to India, the British tried to replace Dost Muhammad with a former emir, subordinate to them. This policy caused the First Afghan War (1838–42) between the British and the Afghans. Dost Muhammad was at first deposed but, after an Afghan revolt in Kabul, was restored. In 1857, Dost Muhammad signed an alliance with the British. He died in 1863 and was succeeded, after familial infighting, by his third son, Sher Ali.

As the Russians acquired territory bordering on the Amu Darya, Sher Ali and the British quarrelled, and the Second Afghan War began (1878). Sher Ali died in 1879. His successor, Yakub Khan ceded the Khyber Pass and other areas to the British. After a British envoy was murdered, the British occupied Kabul. Eventually Abd-ar-Rahman Khan was recognized (1880) as Emir. In the following years, Afghanistan's borders were more precisely defined. Border agreements were reached with Russia (1885 and 1895), with British India (the Durand Treaty of 1893, which the sitting King was forced to sign in person), and Persia (1905). The Anglo-Russian agreement of 1907 guaranteed the independence of Afghanistan but recognised British right to direct its foreign affairs. Abd-ar-Rahman Khan died in 1901 and was succeeded by his son Habibullah. Despite British pressure, Afghanistan remained neutral in World War I. Habibullah was assassinated in 1919. His successor, Amanullah, in an attempt to free himself of the British control, invaded India (1919 - Third Afghan War). The War was ended by the Treaty of Rawalpindi, which gave Afghanistan full control over its foreign relations.

### 16. Dispute over the Durand Line

Afghanistan's southern border was drawn by Sir Mortimer Durand, the colonial government of India's foreign secretary, expressly to divide the Pashtun tribe's homeland in half, thereby establishing a buffer state on India's northwest frontier. The document was to be ratified by the legislative body in Afghanistan. However, it never happened. Moreover, the text of the Treaty is clear in identifying the Emir and not the people or government of Afghanistan as party to the document. Following the signing of this Treaty, the Durand line was not demarcated in any areas with the exception of Chaman-Spin Baldak and the Torkham region. On the map, however, the areas of Chaman, Pishin, Chaghai, Waziristan, Buland Khail, Koram,

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<sup>694</sup> Eastern Eye - Independence Magazine (1947-1997); published by Ethnic Media Group. 148 Cambridge Heath Road, London E1 5QJ. page. 9.

ParaChinar, Afraidi, Sawat, Bajawar, Chilas and Chitral, parts of the Afghan sovereign territory, were annexed to the British India.

Neither the people of Afghanistan nor the people of above region have had at any time agreed to this arrangement. When the Pakhtoons who found themselves on the Indian side of the Durand line failed to integrate themselves peaceably under the *Raj*, the North-West Frontier Province was sliced off from the Punjab to establish a second, inner buffer. These two tribal belts were incorporated formally within the boundaries of Pakistan when that nation separated from a newly independent India under the 1947 Partition Plan.

When the British left India in 1947, the Government of Afghanistan was of the view that the Afghan territory up to River Sulej, or at least the area up to the natural border, the River Indus, should have been returned to Afghanistan. However, the NWFP had voted overwhelmingly in favour of joining Pakistan in a referendum held before the day of independence – 14 August 1947. But the people were asked to choose between India and Pakistan, not Afghanistan and Pakistan. The validity of a decision by the people in a popular referendum is much superior to any imperial argument of ownership. Afghanistan has never asked for a referendum to let its people choose between Afghanistan and Pakistan. It knows that the referendum would have to be held on both sides of the Durand Line. And people do change their mind when the situation changes.

Ludwig W. Adamec of the US Department of Near Eastern Studies, who has done a thorough study of Afghan history and has written extensively on Afghan issues, in an article in 1998 titled "Greater Afghanistan, A Missed Chance", wrote that the areas previously under Afghanistan rule "were not given the right to vote for independence or union with Afghanistan - the choice was rather for union with Pakistan or India." He wrote in a well-publicized article:

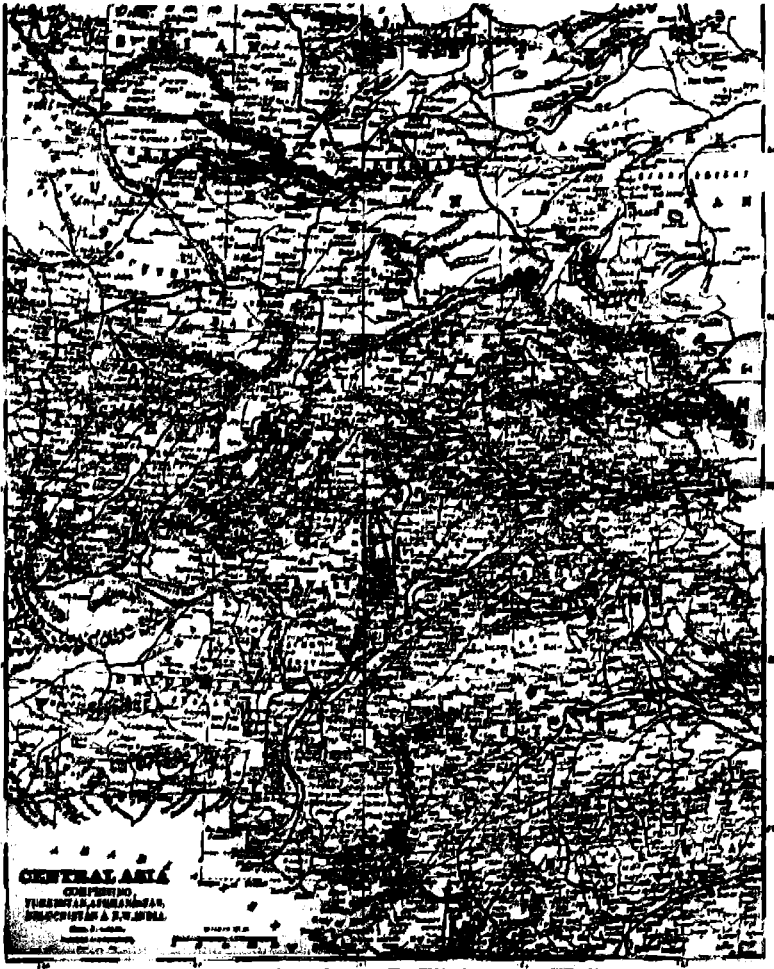
"The British Foreign Office sought legal advice in the matter in case the frontier dispute was taken for arbitration to an international tribunal. Although Afghan nationalists would have liked to integrate all of the North-West Frontier Province of India and Baluchistan into "historical" Afghanistan, London confined this issue to "the tribal area lying between the outer boundary of the Province and the line recognized by Article 2 of the Anglo-Afghan Treaty of 1921"[ Ludwig W. Adamec, *Afghanistan, 1900-1923: A Diplomatic History* California Univ. Press 1967. This volume contains copies of the Anglo-Afghan agreements and treaties]. The area in question included the five Tribal Agencies: Malakand, Khaibar, Kurram, North Waziristan, and South Waziristan.<sup>695</sup>

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<sup>695</sup> Ludwig W. Adamec, "Greater Afghanistan, a missed chance," written in Tucson (Arizona), January 1998. Published by Online Centre for Afghan Studies, 2001.

In fact, the British agreed with the Russians that neither of them could dominate the Afghans the way they wanted, so they tried something else. They formed an ostensibly independent country. Sir Thomas Holdich wrote in 1901, “We have contributed much to give a national unity to that nebulous community which we call Afghanistan...by drawing a boundary all round it and elevating it to the position of a buffer state between England and Russia.”<sup>696</sup>

The Durand line was more of a good line of defence for the British Empire in India rather than a line drawn to separate warring peoples. In fact, the people and goods moved freely from one side to the other and neither country tried to control that



<sup>696</sup> Thomas Holdich 1901, *The Indian Borderland*, (London: Methuen), p366, quoted in Griffiths *op cit*, p 36.



movement. From time to time, usually under pressure or inducement from India and Russia, the Afghan King did challenge the legality of the Durand Line as border to make trouble.

However, the claim that the Line disrupted movement and contacts is largely illusory. However, social and political changes astride the Durand Line - in Pakistan and Afghanistan – have had impact on the people. They have become more different and do not know which change is good and which is bad. But failure to respect tribal territorial claims and to accommodate existing regional social, linguistic and cultural networks has been destabilizing for Afghanistan and Pakistan. Pakhtoons in particular are unhappy at being divided by an unwanted border.

The verdict of history is more clear. The map of 1892 (above) shows that the area of NWFP and Baluchistan were a part of Afghanistan in that year. Therefore, Afghans have never accepted separation of some of their territories by force. A resolution adopted soon after the creation of Pakistan during the General Assembly session of the National Assembly of Afghanistan (7<sup>th</sup> Shura) states, “Previous treaties which are aimed at separating the eastern provinces of Afghanistan were forcefully imposed on Afghan rulers. Thus, they are no longer considered valid.<sup>697</sup> More importantly, Amir Abdur Rehman Khan of Afghanistan was not acting as an independent head of state while signing the Durand agreement with British. He was on British subsidy, a kind of payroll, and a clause in the agreement hints to this reality. The Durand Line Treaty states:

Further, in order to mark their sense of the friendly spirit in which His Highness the Amir has entered into these negotiations, the Government of India undertake to increase by the sum of six lakhs of rupees a year the subsidy of twelve lakhs now granted to His Highness.<sup>698</sup>

In 1901, Abdur Rahman's son, Habibullah, succeeded him. Lord Curzon entered into the same treaty with him for continuing his subsidy and quite clearly suggesting that the Durand Line is not an international frontier. He was assassinated in February 1919 and his son Amanullah succeeded him. In May 1919, Amanullah began the War of Independence, generally called the Third Anglo-Afghan War. Afghan forces crossed the Durand Line. Pakhtoons on both sides of the Durand Line rallied to the cause of unification. But their power was of no match to the British military strength who used fighter aircraft that the Afghans did not have.

After World War I, the British began deploying Hawker Hart bombers along the frontier “to chastise rebellious Pathans,” familiar behavior for those of us acquainted with policies of the US, Israel and their allies. In 1920 after one border incursion, the

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<sup>697</sup> Daily *Anis*, Issue No., 87, July 3, 1949.

<sup>698</sup> Durand Line Treaty annexed at the end.

British flew bombing raids over Jalalabad, Dacca, Kabul, and other cities inside Afghanistan. Six tons of bombs were dropped on Jalalabad, and the raid over Dacca lasted from morning to evening, causing 600 casualties. The bombing of Kabul was carried out on May 24, British Empire Day, and just to show who was boss, the Amir's Palace was a target. An armistice was signed in November 1921. British soldiers "penetrated the valleys, extracted fines and pledges for good behavior and, when neither were forthcoming, burned crops and villages." Major General Harold Lewis wrote in his diary, "I am afraid that they will undergo most awful hardships this and next year, until they have got their crops going again."<sup>699</sup>

The Treaty of Rawalpindi that followed gave the Afghans control over their foreign affairs but the Afghan territory remained a part of British India. Afterwards, the Afghans remained embroiled in a Civil War in which the British supported General Nadir Khan. It ended with 19-year-old Zahir Shah being appointed the king. He had stormy relations with Pakistan and was close to India. But he did recognize that India was not the successor of the British Empire in the region, America was. He tried to cultivate good relations with America and got help in building good roads links to Pakistan. Lack of visionary leadership in Pakistan and American impatience combined to force Afghanistan into the Soviet lap.

As before, reliance on Russia ended in disaster as Zahir Shah was ousted by his cousin and Prime Minister Sardar Daoud Khan, on the instigation of the Communists. What followed is a long chapter of bloodshed that continues. The Russian Communists were defeated but Afghan Communists were not ousted. Internecine war continued after the departure of Soviet troops. Afghans were left to wander around the world and to fend for themselves in a war ravaged land as the American walked away. Order was restored by the Taliban but the Americans returned as invaders and another chapter of bloodshed and internecine war has started.

Most Afghans believe that the Americans are largely responsible for the Communist take over of Afghanistan. They believe that unequal treaties imposed on Afghanistan left it landlocked and weak as the British drew lines on the Afghan map from the standpoint of a strong line of defence for themselves while cutting across tribal boundaries and separating peoples from their land and territory. Afghanistan, they felt, never got the position of strength where it could dictate terms or enforce a desired settlement to regain its lost territories.

The Afghan government did not display much wisdom in articulating its objectives or policies. Sardar Daoud sought military and economic assistance from the USA to press its territorial claims against Pakistan. But Pakistan was already its ally; it was also much bigger and more influential in the Muslim World. Afghan overtures were

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<sup>699</sup> Lawrence James 2000, *Raj: The Making and Unmaking of British India* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin), page 475-477.

spurned and many Afghans hold that against America and blame it for Afghanistan being pushed into the lap of the Soviet Union and becoming dependent on it. The Afghans did not understand that international law and probity prohibits a country from aiding another to pursue its dispute by war. Disputes have to be pursued by other means first and war must only be the last resort. It appears the Soviet Union did not discourage Afghanistan from pursuing its dispute with Pakistan peacefully but encouraged it to continue the game as an erstwhile buffer state. They got them addicted to many things from the Soviet Union from essentials like food and energy to the ideology of Communism due to their close interaction.

When Sardar Daoud became the Prime Minister for the second time in 1973, he revived the issue of lost territories. In 1979, the Communist Government of Afghanistan formally repudiated the Durand Line. But for the next 23 years Afghanistan was beset by a cruel war and wanton bloodshed. The issue of Durand Line became secondary but recent events show it would need minor encouragement to resurface. During the decade long resistance followed by another decade of internecine war, the Afghans used Pakistan's territory as a base. The Durand Line virtually melted away as a border. The Afghans did not only move into the tribal areas of Pakistan, they moved freely all the way south to Karachi. For the first time, the Government of Pakistan displayed it had a vision - of a union of the two countries. It understood that permanent and positive changes result from free contact between peoples. When contacts are restricted to politicians, the results of the interaction are defined by the prejudices of the few, not the enthralling experience of the many. During the Taliban period of rule the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan virtually disappeared. After the US occupation of Afghanistan in the wake of 9/11, and Pakistan's sending troops up to Durand Line, the Line is under the spotlight and it is an issue once more.

### **17. The Indivisible People and Land**

Henry Mortimer Durand, Foreign Secretary of the Government of British India sought to draw a line along the hilltops that was a good line of defence on the map. But it separated Afghans from Afghans, separating people from their land, and restricting free movement for 110 years but it could not divide an indivisible people who are once again determined to impose their will and make the Durand Line null and void as a border. It is true that their resolute determination fills the hearts of rulers in Islamabad and Kabul with awe rather than excitement. It is true that the enemies of Islam are alarmed by the prospect of the merger of the two most strategic countries of the world. It is no wonder that they are just as determined to put obstacles in its way and focus on the break up of Afghanistan and Pakistan. The Afghans living astride the Durand Line are delirious with excitement but they have no clear objective or plan. The enemy has a plan. It is the enemy plan the response to which is bound to lead to the unification of these two countries.

While concluding a recent article on the border dispute between Afghanistan and Pakistan, Mohan Guruswamy of *Deccan Chronicle* wrote: "It is now only a question

of time before the demand for the reunification of all their people becomes a rallying call for the Pashtun nation. Even the internal dynamics within Afghanistan demand it. There is much unfinished business here.”<sup>700</sup> We must remember that the same Indian analysts were highlighting importance of the Durand Line during the time of the Taliban, when they feared that Pakistan and Afghanistan have virtually merged into a single state.<sup>701</sup>

The forces working for the disintegration of Pakistan believes that revival of the Durand Line issue will cause only separation of NWFP and Baluchistan from Pakistan. They forget that the post 1947 situation has considerably altered the socio-cultural set up of the area that constitutes the territory of Pakistan. A look at the following map of India, drawn by Shepherd in 1923, shows that the areas well beyond river Sutlej, including Kashmir were part of Afghanistan. Similarly, Sindh remained part of Afghanistan under Ahmad Shah Abdali. India for most of the time



The Edinbrough Geographical Institute, John. H. and Co. Constables Hand Atlas of India.

<sup>700</sup> Mohan Guruswamy, “Scratch Across Pashtun Hearts,” *Deccan Chronicle*, July 18, 2003.

<sup>701</sup> See for example W. P. S. Sidhu’s article, “Why the Durand Line is important,” in *Indian Express*, November 16, 1999. Sidhu is MacArthur Scholar at the Centre for International Studies, University of Oxford.

remained limited to its core of Maratha states.

All throughout recent history the territory of Pakistan and Afghanistan have a part of the same country. In fact, today's Afghanistan is that part of the country that remained unconquered by the British. Afghanistan remained unbowed and unconquered in the hey days of the super powers of the 19th Century – Great Britain and Russia – while the part that is called Pakistan today was conquered and absorbed into the British Empire. The irony is that it fell a prey to Communist subversion in late 20<sup>th</sup> Century when Pakistan helped it regain its sovereignty. Now the sovereignty of both countries stands compromised. Both countries are ruled by a foreign power that threatens their Islamic identity. Both have experience of facing formidable challenges. Pakistan's struggle for sovereignty was waged against an internal and an external enemy. The situation that Afghanistan faces is new but Pakistan has plenty of experience of subversion from within and invasion from without. Pakistan won in 1947 but lost in 1971. Now both the countries have to regain their sovereignty. Sooner or later, they are bound to realize they can face the danger better together and assert their common will to be free from external subjugation and living by Islam.

The Pakhtun aspiration for consolidating their land into one state is now buttressed by a more powerful aspiration to be free of foreign influences. It is the two aspirations having come into line that binds the people of Pakistan and Afghanistan and make the Durand Line an irrelevance. The fury of the Pakhtuns owing to the US invasion and occupation of Afghanistan is directed not only at the western powers, but also at the Government of Pakistan that is backing America in its war on Islam misleadingly named as 'war on terror'. It is wrong to assume that anger is just confined to the NWFP. From Chitral in the far north to the stews of Karachi on the edge of the Arabian Sea, the war in Afghanistan is stirring already potent religious, national and ethnic resentments.

The people are angry with the corrupt elite that rule many Muslim countries and have been timid in opposition to invasion and occupation of Muslim lands. But the people are outraged that their corrupt rulers are shifting the blame to those who resist occupation. Advocacy of 'liberal' and 'secular' approaches is nothing but justifying submission to aggression and occupation. The distinction made using the labels of 'liberal Islam', 'secular Islam' or 'moderate Islam' are meaningless and fraudulent. There is only one Islam. The reaction of an individual – whether Muslim or Non-Muslim - depends on the severity of the injury or injustice he suffers. If Muslims are more violent to day it is because their states are unable or unwilling to unite and respond effectively to invasion and occupation. The people are forced to organize resistance as non-state entities. Afghanistan was liberated from Soviet occupation by non-state entities. Why are the very same entities now resisting American occupation called 'terrorists'?

The 'liberal' Muslims would be opposed to the unification of the two countries as they would be to any project that advances the solidarity of Muslims. But their number is very small and they are in no position to stem the tide to thwart the forces of unification. At the moment, the intelligentsia rage against the craven bowing of the national leadership to American pressure in both countries. Although the anti-government elements do not get much exposure, it is evident that the forces yearning for true independence are increasing and getting stronger.

Both Pakistan and Afghanistan have faced such outbreaks of rage in the past. The lines that divide ethnic groups, rich and poor, Islamists and secularists, Sunni and Shia Muslims, have seldom threatened to close ranks and confront the occupiers. But that may be happening. The attempts to thwart solidarity of the people, such as the bombing in Quetta and Karachi to kill Shi'ite, have been made to weaken the glue that binds Pakistan's constituent parts. But they have held fast together. With a protracted war in Afghanistan, and creeping anarchy in Pakistan the situation is out of control. It would not be too long before it is realized that only by unification they can assemble the strength needed to confront the real and common enemy.

## **18. Recent Border Tension**

The assessment of outsiders that Afghans do not love Pakistanis any more is correct. However, this loss of trust is limited to the government level because instead of sincerely assisting Afghans in stabilising their country, Pakistan has played into the US hands to serve its agenda in Afghanistan. As far as the common people are concerned, there is as much trust among them as there ever was. Afghans associated with the Northern Alliance complain because the Pakistani government propped up the Taliban. The Pashtun are angry that the Taliban were abandoned so readily as persons of a different mindset came to power in Washington.

Any one who has dealt with the US not on the basis of clear objectives or principles but on the basis of earning their pleasure has always come to grief. The speed with which the US change their objectives and strategy makes it impossible for any one trying to earn US pleasure to carry the public with him. For a while, an unpopular leader suits the US, as he cannot refuse to comply with American direction on the grounds of offending public opinion that is already outraged. But he is soon powerless to deliver anything; he becomes a burden ready to be dumped. Pakistan's policy on Afghanistan is in tatters. Pakistan fully supported the US in its war on the Taliban. It failed to get the 'moderate' Taliban into the post-war equation. With political turbulence in its settled districts and tribal areas rising, Pakistan faces the prospect of a further polarization following what is seen as the failure of incoherent and Washington-dictated internal and external policies.

The puppet Afghan regime is not much of a puppet when it comes to Pakistan. It has asked the US to settle the issue of Durand Line; a treaty it says expired in 1993. Afghan officials have reportedly asked the United States to use its influence to help renegotiate its border. Pakistan has already rejected this demand saying that the

Durand Line is a settled issue and that it did not have any desire to re-open it. The issue has already caused several skirmishes between the two countries that led to the formation of a tripartite commission to resolve the issue. However, the tripartite commission comprised of officials from Pakistan, Afghanistan and the United States failed to come up with a unanimous decision to resolve the border row, which led to a request by Afghan officials to the US government for its assistance. Washington has already made it clear to both Pakistan and Afghanistan that it has no desire to get involved in re-negotiating a deal made more than 100 years ago.<sup>702</sup>

Interestingly, what the British Empire faced on the Northern Frontiers of India, the Americans are facing on the Eastern frontiers of Afghanistan. The situation is almost identical, only directions are different. It would be naïve to assume that the US is not considering moves to expand the Afghan borders to include all the tribal areas of Pakistan, at the very least, for establishing Afghanistan's national security. That's how the British created buffer zones in the northwest; that is how Israel seeks to secure its borders with Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Egypt. Pakistani leadership would be living in fool's paradise if it believes that the US would not take any steps that would jeopardize its stability or its territorial integrity. M.B. Naqvi summarized this situation in his column in Deccan Herald. He wrote:

...if you posit that US and Pakistan are old friends and allies there should be no threat from a basically America-run Afghan government. Is that really so? No clear answer emerges. There are Pakistani commentators who hold that, looking in a historic perspective, the US is doing to Pakistan now what it used to do to India during the cold war: use Pakistan to pressurise India. The US may be doing the same to Pakistan through Afghanistan today.<sup>703</sup>

However, Pakistan would be lucky if the American tactics are limited only to pressurising it. The reality is that America was not troubled as much about the Taliban as it is about Pakistan. It trusts General Musharraf but it cannot ignore the fears expressed by American Jews and by Israel, reinforced by the Indian propaganda. The Neo-Cons, who dominate policy making for the Middle East and South Asia, never tire of pointing towards the danger of Pakistani nuclear weapons falling into the hands of the 'fundamentalists'. No matter how much General Musharraf tries to assure his American friends, the battle cry of Zionist lobbies would be to focus on the 'danger of Pakistan' as it did on the 'danger of Iraq'. The danger of nuclear weapons falling into the hands of 'fundamentalists' once raised will forever lurks in American mind. It appears that General Musharraf uses the fear of MMA coming to power to consolidate his own position as indispensable secular bulwark. The more he uses the stratagem, the more it is likely to backfire. Making

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<sup>702</sup> Asia-Pacific Daily Report, "[Afghanistan seeks US help to renegotiate its border with Pakistan](#)," Centre of Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance, August 29, 2003. See also: "[America feels entangled in Durand Line dispute](#)," *Daily Dawn*, August 28, 2003.

<sup>703</sup> M. B. Naqvi, "US Role in Pak-Afghan Conflict: An Elaborate Charade," *Deccan Herald*, July 18, 2003.

the US wary of the ‘fundamentalists’ take over in Pakistan is likely to make America more determined to denuclearise Pakistan.

The Americans do not see themselves as an imperial power. They have never tried to rule a foreign country although they have troops in more countries than the British ever had. But with the rise of Zionists and Neo-Cons in America, it is more ready to occupy and hold territories. Even if it were forced to withdraw from Iraq, it would continue to try to keep vital resources – particularly oil – under its control. America is wily nily an imperial power. But it is likely to prefer pulling strings rather than act overtly. There is no oil in Pakistan or Afghanistan. To the Americans, establishing a base in Afghanistan is a step towards neutralizing the threat of Pakistan. Unlike the British who might have wanted to establish a buffer zone, the American are likely to want to hand over both Pakistan and Afghanistan into ‘reliable’ hands. There is no indication that is what they are planning to do. But if the cost of staying in Afghanistan became high or politically unbearable, such a move could occur almost precipitously. Being prepared for such an eventuality would facilitate the unification of Afghanistan and Pakistan; plans to dismember the two countries that appear so menacing would start to look absurd and ridiculous.

It should not be ignored that recent border skirmishes must be due green light by Washington to either Kabul or Islamabad. The same thing happened before the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and the same pattern of prior knowledge followed the course of events before 9/11. The US had anticipated the war in Afghanistan well before the Afghan government’s invitation to the Soviet Union, which was dubbed as Soviet invasion. In fact, in the words of National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski, the Carter Administration did what it could to “draw the Russians into the Afghan trap.” Six months before the Afghan government’s request to Soviet Union for military assistance, the first covert CIA aid to the Mujahideen had been authorized.

Brzezinski admitted in a 1998 interview that, “I wrote a note to the President in which I explained to him that in my opinion, this aid would result in military intervention by the Soviets...we didn’t push the Russians to intervene, but we consciously increased the probability that they would do so.”<sup>704</sup> So, the devastation of Afghanistan was the result of US policy. It is not inconceivable that the recent Pak-Afghan tension is part of an American scheme to exploit the situation for a more direct role in Pakistan’s internal affairs — turning its indirect control into a direct one.

## 19. Advocates of Disintegration

The advocates of disintegration have long been engaged in discussing division of Pakistan and Afghanistan in various ways. They justify their scheme in the name of fighting terrorism and Islamic extremism, terms that are designed to inspire

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<sup>704</sup> Interview with Brzezinski by Vincent Javert in *Le Nouvel Observateur*, 15-21 Jan. 1998, p. 76, cited in John Cooley 1999, *Unholy Wars*, (Sterling: Pluto Press), p 19-20.



irrational fear and to justify unjust policies, just as 'communism' was used during the Cold War. In the name of 'fighting terrorism,' the US got together with Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and India to sponsor a second round of UN Security Council sanctions on the Taliban. The vote was 13-0, with China and Malaysia dissenting, but abstaining. Nobody wanted to appear 'soft on terrorism.' The US ambassador Nancy Soderberg called the vote "a strong stand against terrorism and for the maintenance of international peace and security." The Canadian ambassador said he voted for the resolution 'because of the strong anti-terrorist message it sent.' The Dutch ambassador agreed that 'it was important that the Council should send a political signal and send it with one voice.' In secret, Britain, Canada, and the Netherlands were against the sanctions, because "the only outcome of the sanctions would be to make the already appalling humanitarian situation in Afghanistan even worse."<sup>705</sup>

Now imagine the same hype gaining momentum with the objective to reshape the geography of South Asia in the name of combating international terrorism. The news stories and all analysis would revolve around the assumption that the entire terrorism network has been managed by forces stationed in Pakistan under the umbrella of safety provided by the Government of Pakistan. These terrorist forces, it would be alleged, have taken the shelter in Islamic identity in order to implement their dangerous designs of dominating South Asia and make it an Islamic territory. It would be alleged that the ISI is supporting these groups in order to keep the US engaged in Afghanistan. There are write ups on the Internet and subtle indications in many op-ed pieces that underline that disintegration of Pakistan is the only way to cause the collapse of terrorist networks altogether. In many such proposals, the whole NWFP is visualised to be transformed into a buffer zone, accountable to "the international comity of nations" so as to cut ISI's access to the terrorists in Afghanistan.

Similarly there have been plans to divide Afghanistan into four units. If the ethnic concept is implemented, practically it would result in the country being divided into four main regions - Tajik, Hazara, Uzbek and Pashtun. This delineation has been incorporated in the Dushanbe Plan, a strategy the US developed when it sent its forces into Afghanistan from the Central Asian republics.<sup>706</sup> Due to prolonged US stay in Afghanistan and its continued failure to bring peace and stability according to its own vision, the US might be tempted to pave the way for such partition.<sup>707</sup> This

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<sup>705</sup> Ewen MacAskill 22 Dec. 2000, "Britain Fought to Block UN Sanctions Against Taliban," *The Guardian*.

<sup>706</sup> Syed Saleem Shahzad, "Pakistan Fears the Great Afghan Divide," *Asia Times*, September 29, 2003.

<sup>707</sup> "The United States is overtly trying to divide Afghanistan along Pakhtoon and non-Pakhtoon lines and it is covertly trying for fragmentation of Pakistan." Dawn Report, "US trying to divide Afghanistan, claims scholar," November 09, 2002.

plan makes sense, when it is already on cards for too long and when the objectives of occupation have already been achieved.<sup>708</sup>

## ***20. Greater Afghanistan or Great Pakistan***

All these plans of dividing Afghanistan and Pakistan notwithstanding, historical, social, economic, political and even security factors indicate that formation of Greater Afghanistan is inevitable. However, what the Afghans view as greater Afghanistan is not very dissimilar to the vision of a great Pakistan to most Pakistanis. Interestingly, all the forces aimed at causing disintegration are releasing forces that would hasten moves towards unification of Pakistan and Afghanistan. Pakistan's policy since its inception has been focused on maintaining a situation that could help it avoid controversy over the Durand Line. It has been trying to force a fusion of communities along this line and a separation from those on the other side of the line. It has been sensitive to their being identified as Pakhtun as if by merely calling their province Pakhtunistan or Pakhtunkhwa it would secede. Even though there are more Pakhtun in Pakistan than in Afghanistan and Pakistani Pakhtuns are better educated and more affluent, Pakistan has always been nervous about its Pakhtun population. It has allowed itself to be continually blackmailed by ethnic zealots, not only in the NWFP but also in Sindh and Baluchistan.

The question arises, why is Afghanistan not wary of Pakistan claiming Pakhtun majority area to be included in Pakistan. There are reasons for it. One, Pakistan calls itself an Islamic Republic but does not conduct itself like one. Two, tribal bonds are brotherly and feudal bonds are exploitory; feudal Punjab and Sindh are wary of tribal Frontier and Baluchistan. Three, India did succeed in sowing suspicion and discord between East and West Pakistan and used it to invade and separate East Pakistan. But what is the answer? Would Pakistan and Afghanistan's forever remain condemned to instability and seeking security by dependence on outside forces that have not hesitated to occupy their countries and devastate their peoples? Is it not better to unite and form whatever the majority like to call it - Greater Afghanistan or Great Pakistan? For its security, Pakistan has depended throughout its existence on major power wielders. This dependence is getting so perilous that Pakistan has to sacrifice its *raison d'être* and Islamic identity to maintain itself in favour with them and even court its nemesis.

Cooperation with the US during the anti-Soviet war was justified in the name of Islam and the US kept on feeding Pakistan because it was fighting its war. In the post 9/11 environments, Pakistan has to fight the US wars for domination and colonization if it has to remain in Washington's good books. It has to get approval from Washington as to what kind of Islam it can follow. Pakistan has to live under perpetual dictatorship under the pretext of "assurance against possible Talibanisation

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<sup>708</sup> "Washington and Moscow has reached an understanding to divide Afghanistan along ethnic lines, The Frontier Post learnt on Wednesday." Fakh-ur-Rehman, "Plan to Divide Afghanistan," The Frontier Post, November 01, 2001.

of the governance system"?<sup>709</sup> According to the same report the U.S. will accept "limited Islamisation" in Pakistan. It is the US that would approve the teachings of Islam that it deems to be 'Islamic' and reject those it sees to 'un-Islamic'. It would be something to laugh about if it was not true. But it is! And it is not funny!

It means Pakistan's security and survival is conditional upon the pleasure of Washington. If it could please it, it will live; otherwise, there is no guarantee of its existence. Internally, except the opportunist politicians, people from almost all segments of the society are against the US sponsored rule, which keeps the state unstable and its leaders on probation. Pakistan's deepening involvement in the hoax US war on terrorism against its own citizens further alienates its government from the public. Externally, the arms gap with India is widening. Furthermore, India's alliance with Israel makes the situation even worse for Pakistan.

As early as October 1995, Sandy Gordon predicted that in the 21st century,

India is poised to emerge... as a far more important and influential power in the Indian Ocean region, and even globally, than it was in the latter part of the 20th. Some of the constraining factors in India's rise to power, particularly domestic and regional South Asian instability, are still present and will continue to snap at India's heels for some years to come. But the end of the Cold War has also enabled India to jettison some of the more burdensome foreign and economic policies that had constrained it in the past.... [whereas] Pakistan, which has long been India's only serious competitor in South Asia, has lost out seriously as a result of the end of the Cold War. While India suffers from internal instability, Pakistan's problems are potentially far more serious.<sup>710</sup>

The incidents of 9/11 in particular have changed the view that Gordon may be overstating India's ability to take advantage of the potential benefits to it of the Cold War's end. Today, Pakistan's diplomatic position both on the Afghan and Kashmir front is very weak in the sense that no one is ready to listen to its point of view. Just as the world is silent over Israel's nuclear and chemical programs and issuing warnings and deadlines to Iran, Pakistan pleas for addressing the ever-worsening human rights situation in Kashmir are falling on deaf ear. On top of it, enormous problems of rural poverty, disease, environmental degradation, and overpopulation remain largely un-addressed.

As a reward for Musharraf's services, Washington's decision to unclog the aid pipeline to Pakistan, however, scarcely begins to address Pakistan's security

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<sup>709</sup> Alam, Absar. "US okays MMA, Musharraf alliance," *The Nation*, June 02, 2003.

<sup>710</sup> Sandy Gordon, "South Asia After the Cold War: Winners and Losers," *Asian Survey* 35 (October 1995): 894-95. For an extended discussion of the themes in this article, see Gordon's recent study, *India's Rise to Power in the Twentieth Century and Beyond* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995). Gordon is a Fellow at the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University.

dilemma. After all, Pakistan is still not considered fit for F-16 and other major military sales. Furthermore, beyond Islamabad's present close relations with Washington, lies the greater security problem for Pakistan: the gradual drying up of any promising alliance prospects to serve Pakistan's requirement for great-power insurance against joint Indo-Israeli military might. Dream of an "Islamic bloc" solidly aligned behind Pakistan has failed utterly to materialize; and there are signs of etiolation as well in the fidelity to Pakistan even of China.

China's record from the Gulf War I to war on Serbia, Afghanistan and then Iraq shows that if the going get really rough, it will not care much for the consistency of support from Pakistan over the past forty years. In recent years, Beijing has retreated to a conspicuously neutral position on Kashmir, unquestionably an important litmus test of friendship from Islamabad's point of view, and China's steadily expanding rapprochement with India, as Sandy Gordon has observed, "has provided India with a significant peace dividend in the context of its competition with Pakistan."<sup>711</sup>

On the Afghan front, Pakistan has completely lost the trust of the public in the NWFP and Baluchistan, not to speak of the tribal areas. The geopolitical situation in Afghanistan on the other hand is, by any standard, extremely unstable. US and its allies have a very large stake in the stability of Karzai's puppet regime. Pakistan, at least as much as any of the other external contenders, considers Afghanistan's stability and its leaders' pro-Pakistan orientation to be matters of the most vital state interest. However, other than using its armed forces on the directions from Washington, Pakistan is totally marginalized at the moment.

The viable option for addressing Pakistan's vulnerable political geography and its military-demographic-economic weakness relative to India lies in Pakistan's Union with Afghanistan. Irrespective of the present situation in which both Pakistan and Afghanistan are fully or partially occupied by the US, Pakistan and Afghanistan may apply the central argument of Huntington's thesis, the "kin-country rallying" for mobilizing of interstate support systems or alliances on religious or civilizational grounds, on the first available opportunity.

In this regard, Pakistan's past (the secession of Muslim East Bengal) and its present (in regard to Afghanistan, for instance) clearly suggest that merely relying on a trans-state Islamic bond has very definite limits. Every state has its own policies and every state finds itself at odds not only with numerous groups within, but also with other states with which it is allied. Therefore, a symbolic Pak-Afghan Union would not work. It has to be a merger of these states into one greater Afghanistan within its former frontiers that include all the territory presently within Pakistan borders.

An obvious example that paves the way for the confederation with Afghanistan is February 2, 2002 editorial of *The Friday Times*, where it writes:

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<sup>711</sup> Gordon, "South Asia After the Cold War," 881.

“ the supergenerals... may have been thinking of some such strategic notion when he [Musharraf] recently said that Pakistan had to be friends with the Taliban because they were comprised of ethnic Pakhtuns who formed the main ethnic community of our own NWFP that borders Afghanistan. This leads us to postulate the supergenerals' strategic thinking that a strong Pakhtun state in Afghanistan would suit Pakistan immeasurably more than a weak Pakhtun or non-Pakhtun state. Is that right? No, it isn't....a weak non-Pakhtun dominated state in Afghanistan has never posed any threat to Pakistan because it has neither had any ideological bearings or religious extra-national ambitions nor any ethnic or sub-nationalist stirrings. On the other hand, whenever there has been a strong Pakhtun dominated state in Afghanistan, its government has been compelled by the logic of its own composition to pander to ethnic nationalism by supporting Pakhtun separatism (refusal to accept the Durand Line) or try and export religious fundamentalism (Talibanism) to the NWFP and Balochistan... This would suggest that a strong Taliban state in Afghanistan, which combines the worst elements of ethnic Pakhtun nationalism and religious exclusivism, would eventually pose a threat to the territorial integrity and political solidarity of multi-ethnic, multi-sectarian, democratic Pakistan.”

Such bigoted views are completely at odds with the reality on the ground and founding concepts of Pakistan. There is no need to shed light on the obvious anti-Pakistan feelings in the hearts of Persian speaking Afghans. Attitude and policies of pro-Indian Northern Alliance and its leaders are good examples for those who understand. With regard to Pakhtuns and NWFP, it is worth quoting what Ch. Rahmat Ali - the man who formulated the name and concept of Pakistan, said about 'NWFP' and the Pakhtoon people in his book “*Pakistan: The Fatherland of Pak Nation*” 1940:

North West Frontier Province - is semantically non-descript and socially wrongful. It is non-descript because it merely indicates their geographical situation as a province of old 'British India' [which no longer exists]. It is wrongful because it suppresses the social entity of these people. In fact, it suppresses that entity so completely that when composing the name 'Pakistan' for our homelands, I had to call the North West Frontier Province the Afghan Province.

Essentially what Rahmat Ali is saying is that the NWFP is a gross distortion because it is the British term for the North Western region of their Indian empire that no longer exists. Also, NWFP is not a Frontier as far as the indigenous population, the Pakhtun, are concerned. Rahmat Ali wrote, "It must be remembered that the Pathans are a great, gifted, and Pan-Islamic people. This is borne out by History which records that they were the first to accept Islam and lay the foundations of its twelve-century rule in India; that they were the last to stop the fight against the British and the first to resume that fight on the Afghan and Baloch frontiers; and that they are the people one of whom, the writer, however unworthy, was blessed by Allah to create the Ideal of Pakistan itself and start the fight for the realisation of that Ideal - the Ideal which so inspired all Muslims as to make them join the fight and establish this Fatherland which is the home and heritage of all Paks".

Finally, in his book, Ch. Rahmat Ali advocates a family re-union of our Asian and Indian homelands i.e. Pakistan, Afghanistan and Central Asia. The views expressed by people associated with domestic secular-liberal movement and people advocating South Asian regional cooperation are indirectly paving the way for this reunion. The UN sanctions on Afghanistan, western attitude towards the Taliban and Pakistan, and now the seemingly indefinite occupation of Afghanistan, are advertised as measures to prevent the disintegration of Pakistan and Afghanistan even though that is their objective. But it may lead to their Union and create enthusiasm for further federation with the neighbouring and ancestral Muslim homelands of Central Asia, Iran, etc. Commenting on the issue of pan-Islamic federation, Robert G Wirsing writes:

“This idea has gestated in Pakistani minds that both its vulnerable political geography and its military-demographic-economic weakness relative to India could be compensated for, at least to an extent, by expanding and deepening its ties to the many coreligionist states of the Islamic world... [However] the pan-Islamic option, for all its bluster and for all its promise, is for most practical purposes (and certainly for Pakistan's basic security requirements) a fiction.”<sup>712</sup>

It might appear that under the present circumstances, Pakistan is coming up short of reliable Islamic allies. However, the attitude of the ‘liberal’ elite in Pakistan, and policies and actions of the western nations suggest that the same forces are indirectly leading to developing a mindset among Pakistanis and Afghans that they are the same people facing common problems and sharing a common destiny that reinforces the trans-state Islamic bonds between them. Besides the undeniable civilizational, political and security need for Pakistan’s reunion with Afghanistan, there is plenty of evidence that the rallying of Muslims to pan-Islamic causes has become a matter of some significance in the South Asian environment, particularly in a situation where the western powers are bent upon prematurely turning India into super power of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

According to a report by Jyoti Malhotra, the British are now talking of a ‘partnership of equals’ between Britain and India in the new century.<sup>713</sup> To directly challenge the Indian and western efforts, Pakistan would be well advised to move towards substantive initiatives such as the notion of a ‘Community of Power’ to be evolved between Iran and Pakistan to begin with and gradually fanning out into Afghanistan and other Muslim states to form the eastern flank to the heart of Islam as it had been before it was broken up through the Mongol invasions beginning in 1221; then through infighting by the Afghans, Moghuls and Safavids; and finally by the colonial legacy of the McMahon, Durand and Goldsmid Borders. Greater Afghanistan would play a pivotal role in the whole set up.

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<sup>712</sup> Robert G Wirsing, *Asian Affairs, an American Review*, Washington; Summer 1996  
<sup>713</sup> published in the *Indian Express*, November 20<sup>th</sup>, 1999.

## 21. Conclusion

India is not a nation and the apparently strong glue of secularism is not enough to stick its parts for too long under the rule of Brahmin minority, let alone absorbing Pakistan into it. In contrast, Pakistan and Afghanistan have a common religion that is also the principle of national solidarity (polity) of both countries.

Since the partition of 1947, it has been the overriding ambition of India to destabilise and dissolve Pakistan and bring the territory back under its rule. Not only that India has not abandoned its imperial ambitions many in Pakistan have joined the chorus of saying good bye to the Two Nation Theory, embracing secularism, introducing common currency and turning Pakistan and India into the pre-partition British India.

On the Northern front, in the wake of the destruction of Twin Towers in New York, Afghanistan was invaded and is occupied by the US. Reports suggest that this invasion was planned long before the events of 9/11. Insider accounts published in the British, French and Indian media have revealed that US officials threatened war against Afghanistan during the summer of 2001.<sup>714</sup> These reports include the prediction, made in July, that “if the military action went ahead, it would take place before the snows started falling in Afghanistan, by the middle of October at the latest.” The Bush administration began its bombing strikes on the hapless, poverty-stricken country on October 7, and the ground attacks by US Special Forces began on October 19.

There is no reason to think that September 11 was merely a fortuitous occurrence. Every other detail of the war in Afghanistan was carefully prepared. Now, after four years of occupation, Afghans have yet to see the much promised democracy and development. Humiliation and torture, death and destruction, nevertheless continue unabated. Incursions by the US forces into Pakistani territory have become routine.

The American media has conducted a systematic cover-up of the real economic and strategic interests that underlie the war against Afghanistan, in order to sustain the pretence that the war emerged overnight, full-blown, in response to the terrorist attacks of September 11.

Despite the comparative silence over the situation in Afghanistan, America has no stomach for prolonged occupation of the country where they keep bombing hapless people into submission on dubious report of the presence of Taliban. Pakistanis and

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<sup>714</sup> On June 26 of this year, the magazine *India Reacts* reported more details of the cooperative efforts of the US, India, Russia and Iran against the Taliban regime. “India and Iran will ‘facilitate’ US and Russian plans for ‘limited military action’ against the Taliban if the contemplated tough new economic sanctions don’t bend Afghanistan’s fundamentalist regime,” the magazine said. The BBC’s George Arney reported September 18 that American officials had told former Pakistani Foreign Secretary Niaz Naik in mid-July of plans for military action against the Taliban regime.

Afghans face a crisis; the opportunists within and the enemy without proclaim fondness and love for their countries they are both being killed in their tight embrace. Karzai and Musharraf say they are fighting extremism and hope the pretence would prolong their rule. But it is creating anger and anxiety in equal measure and the masses yearn for true liberation from the yoke of direct and indirect occupation of their countries.

Contrary to the intentionally produced over-currents in favour of taking Pakistan into the Indian fold, and of dismembering Afghanistan before the US leaves the country, the unintended under-currents and consequences of the over currents are more in favour of leading Pakistan and Afghanistan into the fold of an inevitable union which will be in the interest of its neighbours, particularly Iran and Central Asian Republics.

To reach this destiny in an orderly manner, it is time that both Governments — of Afghanistan and of Pakistan - follow their people, discard the border and declare a Union. □



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**Syed Ali Geelani**, Chairman All Parties Hurriyet Conference (APHC), Srinagar. *'In 1989, the Kashmiris decided they do not want sympathy for the barbarity they put up with; they want support for their freedom struggle. They want to be known for their resolve not their misfortune.'*



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