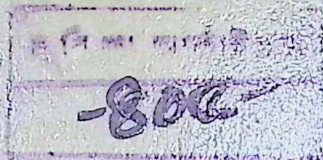


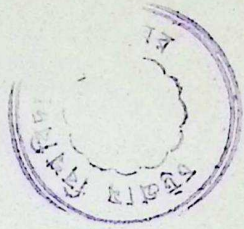
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BANGLADESH

CONTEMPORARY EVENTS
AND DOCUMENTS



PEOPLES' REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH



BANGLADESH
CONTEMPORARY EVENTS AND DOCUMENTS





Foreword

The emergence of Bangladesh as an independent nation is a major event in contemporary history. There is, therefore, a great deal of interest all over the world about the background of the Bangladesh movement.

This short work is an account of the main political events which took place in Bangladesh from March 1969 to April 1971 when the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh was formed. It also contains the important political documents of the period.

The book covers a phase, perhaps the most dramatic part of a great movement which has its deep roots in our history, culture, politics and economics. Analysis and comments have been avoided to allow facts to speak for themselves.

This book would, I hope, serve as a useful guide to events leading to the Revolution in Bangladesh.

KHANDAKER MOSHTAQUE AHMED
*Minister for Foreign, Law & Parliamentary Affairs,
Govt. of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.*

Preface

This is only a compilation of the main events that took place in Bangladesh from March 1969 to April 1971. This has been done in a hurry and at a time when the people of Bangladesh are engaged in a bloody liberation war. The pace of political events during the last two and a half years has been very fast in Pakistan. There is a constant demand from different organizations as well as individuals to supply the background of the present Bangladesh war of liberation. It was felt that at least the immediate events leading upto the present situation and the documents bearing on them should be presented in a suitable form to meet this need.

This is neither an analytical study nor an attempt to answer the so-called *White Paper* of Pakistan Government. Rather, it is a chronological documentation of facts. The comments offered are meant only to serve as links connecting the narrative. We are, however, aware that these reflect our own commitment to the cause of liberation of Bangladesh for which no apology is necessary.

Because of the unusual situation, it was difficult to procure all the documents. There are, therefore, unavoidable omissions here and there. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's speeches had to be translated from Newspaper reports and recordings. For an account of the events and the discussions that took place between the Awami League leaders and others including Yahya Khan, we have used some extracts from the press statements of Awami League leaders. This division remains thankful to

Mr. Maudud Ahmed, Barrister-at-law for his untiring efforts to arrange these documents.

If this short publication serves even only a limited purpose of introducing the events leading to a free Bangladesh our efforts may be considered successful.

EXTERNAL PUBLICITY DIVISION,
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

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Colonisation

LAHORE RESOLUTION

The concept of Pakistan was stated finally in a resolution passed at the annual conference of the All India Muslim League held in Lahore in 1940. This resolution laid down the principles that constituted the basis of Pakistan. The resolution envisaged the creation of autonomous and sovereign states consisting of the Muslim majority areas in India in keeping with the wishes of the people of the region known as Bangladesh. It reads: "That geographically contiguous units be demarcated into regions which should be constituted with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary that the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority as in the North-Western and Eastern zones of India should be grouped to constitute "Independent States in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign".

At the time of independence, however, the provision in the Lahore Resolution relating to the creation of autonomous and sovereign states was completely ignored. Instead, power was handed over to a group of West Pakistanis who in course of time came to equate Pakistan with West Pakistan. Thus began a long era of oppression and exploitation. The 23 years of Pakistan saw many attempts to annihilate the language, literature, culture of East Bengal and to annex its economy for the benefit of West Pakistan.

The first onslaught to kill the culture and tradition of the Bengalis who formed the majority in Pakistan came in 1948 when Mr. Jinnah wanted to impose Urdu as the

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only State Language of Pakistan, although all the five constituent provinces of Pakistan had their own distinct languages and Urdu was the mother tongue of a handful of people. The language break-up of the people in Pakistan was as follows :

MOTHER TONGUE

		Pak.	E. P.	W. P.
Bengali	...	55.48	98.42	0.12
Punjabi	...	29.02	0.02	66.39
Pushto	...	3.70	0.01	8.47
Sindhi	...	5.51	0.01	12.59
Baluchi	...	1.09	—	2.49
Urdu	...	3.65	0.61	7.57

(Pakistan Year Book 1969)

However, the Bengalis resisted the attempt to bypass the claim of their language as a State language and after a long struggle and considerable bloodshed Bengali was accepted as one of the State Languages in the Constitution of 1956.

CULTURAL SUPPRESSION

Attempts were also made to suppress our literature. Time and again the books of Tagore and his songs were banned and even the study of Nazrul Islam's work was officially discouraged. Attempts were made to destroy Bengali language by introducing Roman Script in it. Writers, painters, artists and other intellectuals were denied freedom of expression. Hundreds of scholars were persecuted whenever there was any movement for intellectual freedom. A language unknown to the people, a culture of 12 hundred miles away, was to be imposed upon Bangladesh. The idea was to crush the cultural roots of the people who were a nation by themselves, a nation right from the beginning. The National Reconstruction Bureau, the Pakistan Council, the Iqbal Academy, the Writers' Guild and similar organisations were created for the encouragement of obscuration of values and the corruption of intellectuals.

Politically the same conspiracy worked. Never were Bengalis allowed to occupy the real corridors of power. Although in

a majority, they never had representation in the power structure of the country on the basis of population. On the contrary, for many years Bengalis were virtually reduced to the status of a minority in the first two Constituent Assemblies. The principle of parity, according to which the Eastern and Western zones of Pakistan were to be represented equally in the National Assembly as well as in the services, and the two wings of the country were to have the same rate of development, was accepted by the Bengalis in the interest of national integrity, although it was grossly unfair to them. The principle, however, was never implemented except in the Legislative sphere which led to the Bengalis' surrender of political power to West Pakistan.

POLITICAL SUPPRESSION

The first Constitution of Pakistan was framed in 1956 following the elections in 1954 in East Bengal which witnessed the rejection of the ruling Muslim League. It was swept over by the United Front which captured 97% of the seats with the Awami League as its chief constituent. The first country-wide elections were due in February 1959, but before that could happen the reactionary forces succeeded in frustrating the emergence of a democratic system. In October 1958, under the leadership of General Ayub Khan the vested interests of West Pakistan usurped power by promulgating Martial Law. The National Assembly was dissolved and the constitution was abrogated.

Pakistan was under Martial Law from October 1958 to March 1962. Later on Ayub invented a mechanism to perpetuate the rule of autocracy by promulgating a constitution in 1962. This constitution only ensured an army-backed one man rule in Pakistan for further seven years. Ayub's eleven year rule was a period of intensified exploitation and corruption. The twenty-two families that flourished in Pakistan controlled almost 72% of Pakistan's total private capital during Ayub's regime. The resources of East Pakistan were carefully channelised for the prosperity of West Pakistan where deserts were turned into

green fields by massive irrigational projects, the rough and hilly lands were levelled and beautiful broad roads were laid on them ; the rugged land of Islamabad became the seat of an expensive new capital.

In order to suppress Bangladesh and the poor people of West Pakistan several standard devices were exercised by the West Pakistani vested interests. Islam, Kashmir and anti-Indian postures, based purely on communalism, were used as a means of distorting the basic economic issues and diverting attention from the intolerable suffering of the people.

In September 1965, came the unwanted war with India. Bangladesh was kept defenceless and isolated from the rest of the world for 3 weeks. Defence ate up 60% of Pakistan's income and the major portion of its defence expenses is borne by East Bengal. After the Indo-Pakistan conflict the Bengalis were compelled to bear the main burden of replenishing the losses caused by a fruitless war.

The implications and direct consequences of the war brought a new realisation to the people of Bangladesh. To the feeling of neglect was added a sense of utter insecurity. Our friendly ties with India which were of unquestionable mutual benefit were unnecessarily ruptured.

The exploitation in the economic sphere was equally motivated and ruthless.

ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION

In economic terms, Bangladesh, though it constituted 56% of the population of Pakistan, was turned into a colony. Jute, the golden fibre, cultivated by the toiling masses of Bangladesh was her main export which earned from 50 to 70% of the nation's foreign exchange. East Bengal's foreign exchange earnings went into building industries in West Pakistan to the utter neglect of her own development. The soil of Bangladesh provided the market for 47% of the total consumer and finished goods of West Pakistan Industries.

The 23 years of independence in Pakistan were years of callous exploitation of Bangladesh. The Per Capita income in West Pakistan increased more speedily than in East Bengal. 60% of our national budget was devoted to defence of which hardly 10% was spent in Bangladesh. A policy of keeping Bengali youths out of the Defence sources was pursued. Bengali representation in the armed forces never exceeded 9% with men and officers while Punjab's share in them was 72%. The major development projects in West Pakistan including the famous Tarbella and Mangla projects were built outside the National budget. The billions of dollars of aid received by the country was spent mostly on projects located in West Pakistan ; 90% of the total bank deposits were controlled and utilised by the West Pakistanis and almost 85% of the total capital of Pakistan was concentrated in Karachi. 72% of the total private investment was monopolised by 22 families of West Pakistan.

The economic system that was created by the West Pakistan vested interests, established an intolerable structure of injustice. About 2 dozen families acquired control over 60% of the nation's industrial assets and 80% of the total bank advances were concentrated in only 3% of the total number of accounts. The tax structure in existence was one of the most regressive in the world, whereas oppressive indirect taxes were imposed on such essential commodities as would only hit the common man. Tax holidays, huge subsidies in the form of bonus vouchers, credit and grants of foreign exchange at an artificially low official rate had created special favourable conditions for the growth of monopolies and cartels.

Out of the total revenue expenditure of the Government, only rupees 15 thousand million was spent in Bangladesh as against over rupees 50 thousand million in West Pakistan. Of the total development expenditure during the same period (Upto 1968) rupees 30,410 million was spent in Bangladesh as against over rupees 60,890 million in West Pakistan ; West Pakistan had imported goods worth more than rupees 30 thousand as against its own foreign exchange earnings of rupees 13

thousand million and thus imports into West Pakistan were three times the value of imports into Bangladesh.

It was made possible for West Pakistan to import goods worth rupees 20 thousand million in excess of its export earnings by allocating it rupees 5 thousand million of the foreign exchange earned by Bangladesh and by allowing the former to utilise over 80% of all foreign aid and loan received.

The tables shown below will give some idea of the extent of exploitation that prevailed in Pakistan prior to March 25, 1971.

TABLE I

The price structure of certain essential commodities and gold.

	<i>Bangladesh</i>			<i>West Pakistan</i>		
Coarse rice	...	Rs.	40-50	Rs.	18-28	Per md.
Wheat	...	Rs.	20-25	Rs.	10-15	„
Mustard Oil	...	Rs.	5.00	Rs.	2.50	Per seer.
Gold	...	Rs.	160-65	Rs.	145-150	Per tola

TABLE II

Administration

Key Policy making Posts in Central Services upto 1968-69 [%]

	<i>from Bangladesh</i>	<i>from West Pakistan</i>
	%	%
Secretary	14	86
Joint Secretary	6	94
Deputy Secretary	18	82
Other Officers	20	80

TABLE III
National Finance Corporations.

<i>Name of Corporation</i>	<i>Total loans disbursed as at 31.3.1969 (in millions of rupees)</i>	
	<i>Bangladesh</i>	<i>West Pakistan</i>
IDBP—Industrial Development Bank of Pakistan	661	962
PICIC—Pakistan Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation	739	1,474
HBFC—House Building Finance Corporation	189	285
ADBP—Agricultural Development Bank of Pakistan	300	705

(Government Sponsored Corporations ; 1968-69 Ministry of Finance, Government of Pakistan)

TABLE IV
Defence Expenditure
(in millions of rupees)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total Expenditure</i>	<i>Defence Expenditure</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
1949-50	856	625	73
1959-60	1,847	1,044	55
1965-66	4,498	2,886	64
1966-67	3,776	2,294	60

(Pakistan Budgets : 1968-69, Ministry of Finance)

TABLE V
Per Capita Income

Year	Total Income		Difference		Per Capita Income		Disparity
	B.D.	W.P.	B.D.	W.P.	B.D.	W.P.	
1949-50 (GNP)	12360	12106	+254		287	338	18%
1959-60 (GDP)	14489	17253	-2764		278	366	31%
1967-68	20235	28652	-8417		302	530	75%

(i) Third Five-Year Plan of Pakistan

(ii) Economic Survey of East Pakistan

TABLE VI
Education (1965-66)

<i>Institution</i>	<i>No. in Bangladesh</i>	<i>No. in W. Pakistan</i>
Secondary Vocational School (polytechnic & Commercial)	17	34
Teacher's Training Institute	59	87
University	4	6
Affiliated Colleges;		
(a) Engineering	1	7
(b) Medical	7	9
(c) Law	5	8
(d) Commercial	2	5
(e) Agricultural	1	4

(SOURCE : 20 Years of Pakistan in Statistics, C.S.O.)

TABLE VII
Health (1966)

	<i>No. in Bangladesh</i>	<i>No. in West Pakistan</i>
(a) Hospitals	76	393
(b) Dispensaries	489	1,754
(c) Beds in Hospitals & Dispensaries	6,984	26,200
(d) Population/Bed ratio	9,000 : 1	2,000 : 1

(SOURCE : 20 years of Pakistan in Statistics, C.S.O.)



TABLE VIII
Development Expenditure in East and West Pakistan.

(In Millions of Rupees)										
Period	Development Plan Expenditure				Outside Plan Expenditure		Total Develop- ment Expenditure (1+4+5)	Total Expenditure	Development Expenditure in Regions as Percent of all Pakistan Total	
	Total	Public	Private	Works Programme	4	5				
1950/51—1954/55	1,000	700	300	—	—	—	1,000	2,710	20%	
1955/56—1959/60	2,700	1,970	730	—	—	—	2,700	5,240	26%	
1960/61—1964/65	9,250	6,250	3,000	—	450	—	9,700	14,040	32%	
1965/66—1969/70	16,560	11,060	5,500	—	—	—	16,560	21,410	36%	
WEST PAKISTAN										
1950/51—1954/55	4,000	2,000	2,000	Indus Basin Works Programme			4,000	11,290	80%	
1955/56—1959/60	7,570	4,640	2,930	—	—	—	7,570	16,550	74%	
1960/61—1964/65	18,400	7,700	10,700	2,110	200	—	20,710	33,550	68%	
1965/66—1969/70	26,100	10,100	16,000	3,600	—	—	29,700	51,950	64%	

NOTE: Public sector development expenditure of the Provincial Government plus that of Central Government on projects Located in the Province; mainly based on Planning Commission estimates. Private development expenditure as estimated by Planning Committee.

SOURCE: *Report of Advisory Panels for the Fourth Five-year Plan, Volume I. Planning Commission, Government of Pakistan, July 1971.*

TABLE IX
East Pakistan's Share of Exports and Imports.

(In Millions of Rupees)

Year	FOREIGN IMPORTS			FOREIGN EXPORTS		
	E. Pakistan	Pakistan	Percentage Share of E. Pakistan (1+2)	E. Pakistan	Pakistan	Percentage share of E. Pakistan (4+5)
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1948-49	282	1,459	19.3%	429	958	44.8%
1949-50	385	1,297	29.7%	629	1,194	52.7%
1950-51	453	1,620	28.0%	1,211	2,554	47.4%
1951-52	763	2,237	34.1%	1,087	2,009	54.1%
1952-53	366	1,384	26.4%	642	1,510	42.5%
1953-54	294	1,118	26.3%	645	1,286	50.2%
1954-55	320	1,103	29.0%	732	1,223	59.8%
1955-56	361	1,325	27.2%	1,041	1,784	58.4%
1956-57	819	2,335	35.1%	909	1,608	56.5%
1957-58	736	2,050	35.9%	988	1,422	69.5%
1958-59	554	1,578	35.1%	881	1,325	66.5%
1959-60	665	2,461	26.6%	1,080	1,843	58.6%
1960-61	1,014	3,188	31.8%	1,259	1,799	70.0%
1961-62	873	3,109	28.1%	1,301	1,843	70.5%
1962-63	1,019	3,819	26.7%	1,249	2,247	55.6%
1963-64	1,489	4,430	33.6%	1,224	2,299	53.2%
1964-65	1,702	5,374	31.7%	1,268	2,408	52.7%
1965-66	1,328	4,208	31.6%	1,514	2,718	55.7%
1966-67	1,567	5,192	30.2%	1,575	2,913	54.1%
1967-68	1,327	4,655	28.5%	1,484	3,348	44.3%
1968-69	1,850	4,897	37.8%	1,543	3,305	46.7%
1969-70	1,813	5,098	35.6%	1,670	3,337	50.0%
Preplan 1948/49- 1954/55	2,863	10,218	28.0%	5,375	10,734	50.1%
1st Plan 1955/56- 1959/60	3,125	9,749	32.1%	4,899	7,982	61.4%
2nd Plan 1960/61- 1964/65	6,097	19,920	30.6%	6,301	10,596	69.5%
3rd Plan 1965/66- 1969/70	7,885	24,050	32.8%	7,786	15,621	49.8%

SOURCE : *Monthly Statistical Bulletin*, various issues, Central Statistical Office, Government of Pakistan.

TABLE X
West Pakistan's Regional and Foreign Exports

(In Millions of Rupees)

Year	Exports to E. Pakistan	Exports Abroad	Total	Exports to East Pakistan as a Percentage of West Pakistan's Total Exports (1+3)
	1	2	3	4
1949-50	229	565	794	28.8%
1950-51	211	1,342	1,553	13.6%
1951-52	161	922	1,083	14.9%
1952-53	117	867	984	11.9%
1953-54	370	641	971	38.1%
1954-55	293	491	784	37.4%
1955-56	319	742	1,061	30.1%
1956-57	510	698	1,726	29.5%
1957-58	690	434	1,124	61.4%
1958-59	660	444	1,104	59.8%
1959-60	543	763	1,306	42.3%
1960-61	801	540	1,341	60.5%
1961-62	832	543	1,375	60.6%
1962-63	918	998	1,916	47.9%
1963-64	844	1,075	1,919	44.0%
1964-65	857	1,151	2,008	42.8%
1965-66	1,190	1,204	2,393	49.7%
1966-67	1,305	1,338	2,643	49.4%
1967-68	1,217	1,864	3,081	39.6%
1968-69	1,342	1,762	3,104	43.2%

SOURCE : *Monthly Statistical Bulletin*, various issues, Central Statistical Office, Government of Pakistan.

Demand for a Right to Live

In the background of this tyranny and injustice Awami League in February, 1966 submitted a six-point formula before the nation. This formula guaranteed an effective autonomy for the federating units within the frame work of Pakistan and ensured the restoration of economic and political rights of the people under a democratic system. This had inspired the people and became the source of a vigorous movement to establish their right to live, The full text of the Six-point formula is produced below :

SHEIKH MUJIBUR RAHMAN'S PRESENTATION OF THE AWAMI LEAGUE'S SIX-POINT FORMULA, FEBRUARY, 1966.

I have placed before the country a 6-point programme as basic principles of a firm solution of the country's inter-wing political and economic problems.

I expected and in fact was ready to welcome criticism. But instead of criticizing the programme and pointing out its defects, if there be any, a class of people has started hurling abuses at and ascribing disruptionist motive to me. Normally I would have ignored those vilifications, firstly because these abusive voices are too familiar, these grimacing faces are too well-known, and these sallying patterns are too old to deserve any thing but such indifference, secondly because I have no manner of doubt that my 6-point programme has truly reflected the mind and correctly represented the demands of the seventy five million East Pakistanis of their right to live. Neither have I any doubt that all right-thinking patriotic elements of West Pakistan agree with me on these points.

This has been amply demonstrated by the newspaper writings and reports, statements and speeches by all section of the intelligentsia, students and workers. This countrywide tremendous support to the 6-point programme is spontaneous. It is spontaneous because these demands are no new points invented afresh by me or any individual but are in reality longstanding demands of the people and pledge of their leaders awaiting fulfilment for decades.

This being the case I am confident that the mischievous propaganda and motivated campaign carried on by the vested interests through their agents and protectors will fail to mislead our people.

They will surely not forget that whenever in the past any demand was made by East Pakistanis, however small, simple and reasonable it might be, these beneficiaries and agents of vested interests kicked up the self-same dust by raising the well-known cries of 'Islam in danger', 'Sovereign Bengal' etc.

It was the same set of people who discovered hidden hand of India, in our simplest demands for inclusion of Bengali as a State Language along with Urdu. These are the people who brazenly dubbed our Sher-e-Bangla as a traitor and incarcerated our beloved leader Suhrawardy on a fantastic charge of wrecking Pakistan with the help of foreign money. Nothing is too mean for them to achieve their selfish objective which is perpetuation of their exploitation of the people of East Pakistan.

I know our people are quite aware of these events not of very distant past.

But I also know that the mischief-making potentialities of these enemies of the people is inexhaustible; that their resources are unlimited; that they are a multi-colour variety of human species with sub-human conscience. It is this variety who will be found in large number in the camp of the ruling coterie in the name of unity, faith and discipline; they will be found in larger number in the opposition camp 'for the sake of Islam and democracy.'

But wherever they may be, in whatever colour, under whichever garb, they actually belong to one and the same camp, that is, the camp of the enemies of the people. They are thus solidly united in their attitude of denial towards East Pakistan. So, naturally they will leave no stone unturned to achieve their objective as they have done in the past.

Whenever it suited their purpose to think that the people of East Pakistan were secretly inclined towards communism they turned the stone of American aid and assistance by signing military pacts to fight communism and thereby save East Pakistan from secessionist design engineered by the communists.

If, on the other hand, it suited their convenience to imagine that East Pakistan was too much wedded to Western democracy and too much attached to U.S.A. they hastened to turn the stone of aid and assistance of communist China, to save East Pakistan from falling a prey to dollar imperialism.

So on this occasion also they will come to the field to fight 6-point programme just as they did to fight 21-point programme in the past. They have, in fact, already taken the field with varieties of weapons brandished by different heroes of numerous battle-fields. The target is the same; it is the 6-point. Therefore, it is quite in the fitness of things that President Ayub, Choudhury Mohammad Ali and Moulana Maududi, outwardly three avowed mutual enemies welding their respective weapons from three antipodal horizons, are aiming poisoned arrows on the same target of the 6-point.

I, therefore, deem it my duty to issue this booklet as an explanatory note to the 6-point programme and fervently appeal to the democratic forces in general, and the Awami Leaguers in particular, to spread out in the country and carry the message of the 6-point to every hearth and home. Now that the 6-point programme has been formally adopted by the

Awami League, it has undoubtedly become the national demand of the people, particularly the people of East Pakistan.

POINT 1

In this point I have recommended as follows :

The Constitution should provide for a Federation of Pakistan in its true sense on the basis of the Lahore Resolution, and Parliamentary form of Government with supremacy of Legislature directly elected on the basis of universal adult franchise.

It will be seen that this point consists in the following five ingredients, viz : (a) Pakistan shall be a Federation, (b) it shall be based on Lahore Resolution, (c) the Legislature must be supreme, (d) it must be directly elected and (e) election must be on the basis of universal adult franchise.

Let the opponents of 6-point programme speak out. Which of these five ingredients are they opposed to ? Let the people know who are federalists and who are unitarists. Those who are unitarists are definitely against Lahore Resolution. Conversely, those who are opposed to Lahore Resolution are definitely unitarists. So let it be decided once for all who own and who do not own the Lahore Resolution by which Pakistan was created and is rightly called the Pakistan Resolution. The people who disown Lahore Resolution disown Pakistan itself. It is evidently those people who did not raise their little finger in the struggle for Pakistan but subsequently jumped on it to grab power after it was created with the blood and tears of the people. These opportunists and jobhunters cannot naturally have any regard for or attachment to the sanctity of such an historic Resolution which brought about a revolution in the sub-continent and created Pakistan.

Even amongst those who swear by the Pakistan Resolution there are some pseudo-federalists. They pay lip-service to the Lahore Resolution but disregard it by speaking against the very fundamental principles of Federation and by introducing extra-political controversies.

This confusion has been further confounded by the powers that be by forcible addition of political aberrations like basically controlled democracy. It was against such further personal likes and dislikes, whims and caprices, hunger and thirst for power of individuals, that the Lahore Resolution was pledged as a guarantee by the creators of Pakistan under the able guidance of Quaid-i-Azam.

It will be sheer political dishonesty to deviate from Lahore Resolution after Pakistan was created by people's votes obtained on the basis of that Resolution. If it is now found necessary to so deviate for the sake of stability and integrity of Pakistan itself, the people will certainly agree to such changes or even complete reversal. But in any event it is the people who will decide and not any body else.

As far as the people of East Pakistan are concerned they in the 1954 general election overwhelmingly voted for a constitution based on the Lahore Resolution. If, however, any body has any doubt about their present attitude due to lapse of long twelve years, we are prepared to face another referendum on the issue. Until that is done by a specific referendum on universal adult suffrage the Lahore Resolution and all its corollaries remain the Magna Carta of the people of Pakistan and the rulers and the leaders are bound to give them Constitution based on that Resolution.

POINT 2

This point recommends as follows :

Federal Government shall deal with only two subjects, viz ; Defence and Foreign Affairs, and all other residuary subjects shall vest in the federating states.

Let us dispassionately discuss whether a two-subject Centre will be sufficiently strong to be a respectable Federation. It should be borne in mind that what makes a Federation strong is not a long list of subjects under it. A Federation becomes strong by the loyalty and affection in which it is held by the

people in peace and the allegiance they own and obedience they show it in war.

The happy and strong people represented through efficient and strong units which make the Federation, are the real source of its strength irrespective of the number of subjects dealt with by it. Indeed, a State which serves the base rather than the apex is really the strongest.

It is now a well established principle of political science that decentralization rather than centralization makes the work of a State efficient both in the administrative and in the developmental spheres.

It is also a well recognised principle of Federation that only those subjects should be in the Federal list which can be jointly managed more efficiently and profitably.

It is the same principle that is underlying the system of local self-government like District Councils and Municipalities. The very concept of Federation is based on the maximum of unity in diversity and union without over centralization.

It was on this principle that in 1946 the Cabinet Mission proposed an Indian Federation with only three subjects, viz ; Defence, Foreign Affairs and Communication. Both the Congress and the Muslim League accepted the Cabinet Plan. The fact that ultimately it did not materialize due to a hitch elsewhere is a different matter and quite irrelevant to the issue now before us. Now, the British Government by proposing the Plan and the Congress and the Muslim League by accepting it had all demonstrated their agreement on the feasibility of a Federation with only three subjects.

The only difference between the Cabinet Plan and my proposal is that I have given two subjects instead of three given in the Cabinet Plan. Even that difference is only apparent and not real as will be seen in my explanation to the point 3 given later on. That explanation will show that I too have given three subjects to the Centre and not two. Only

I have recommended Currency in place of Communication as had been earlier done in the famous 21-point programme.

I have omitted Communication for obvious reasons. The basic principle on which subjects are handed over to a Federation, as has been said earlier, is the oneness and indivisibility of the interest of the federating units in the subjects concerned. In the case of an undivided Indian Federation, Communication was really such a subject. In it all the federating units would have been commonly interested and could have been more efficiently and profitably run if jointly managed by the Federation. An unbroken Railway line and a non-stop through Railway train could have run from Khybar to Chittagong. This would have been so because of the geographical contiguity. Not so Pakistan.

Pakistan being comprised of two geographical units separated by over a thousand miles of foreign territory, cannot possibly have any unbroken line of communication between the two wings. The two wings being themselves two compact geographical areas, must have their own system of communication separately organised and managed. It can, therefore, never be a Federal subject. By transferring the Railways to the Provinces though after prolonged procrastination the present regime has reluctantly admitted the hard fact of geography.

The same will have to be done also in the case of Post and Telegraphs and all other branches of communication.

In this connection another point need be clarified. Here I have recommended designation of the federating units as 'states' instead of provinces as it now done. This very mention of the word 'state' is liable to be taken mischievously by the unitarists and pseudo-federalists. They will tell the unwary public: "Look, Mujib is wanting independent States". This would be viciously wrong. Everywhere in different Federations of the world federating units are called 'states' and not provinces.' U.S.A., USSR, Federal Germany, Federa-

tion of Malaysia and last of all our neighbour India all have designated their units as 'states' instead of Provinces'. Our next door neighbours like West Bengal and Assam are 'states of Indian Union and not provinces. That designation of Indian provinces has not rendered their Union loose or their Central Government weak. If Assam and West Bengal can have the dignity and honour of being called state without impairing the solidarity of Bharati Union why can't we have the same dignity and honour without impairing the solidarity of Pakistan Federation? Why are our rulers so allergic to our dignity?

POINT 3

In this point I have recommended either of the following two measures with regard to our Currency, Viz :

A. Two separate but freely convertible currencies for two wings may be introduced or,

B. One currency for the whole country may be maintained. In this case effective constitutional provisions are to be made to stop flight of capital from East to West Pakistan. Separate Banking Reserve is to be made and separate fiscal and monetary policy to be adopted for East Pakistan.

From the above it will be seen that I have not recommended the straightway taking of Currency out of the Federal list. If my recommendation contained in B above is accepted, currency remains a Central subject. In this case the only difference is that I have recommended the introduction of separate Reserve Banks for two wings in a Federal Reserve System as obtains in U.S.A.,

According to this arrangement the State Bank of Pakistan will have two Reserve Banks for two wings. The currency for East Pakistan shall be issued through the East Pakistan Reserve Bank and shall be marked 'East Pakistan' or simply 'Dacca'. Similarly West Pakistan currency shall be issued through West Pakistan Reserve Bank and shall be marked 'West Pakistan' or simply 'Lahore'.

This is the only way by which we can save East Pakistan from sure economic ruination by effectively stopping flight of capital from this wing to the other. The geographical separateness has made the two wings *ipso facto* two economic units. An economic convulsion either for the better or for the worse, in one wing has no corresponding convulsion in the other wing. So progress and development in the one does not in the least benefit the other.

These economic incidents are quite independent of each other in the two wings. Expenditure in one cannot create employment in the other. This economic independence and separateness of the two wings is correctly reflected in their respective price and wage structures including the price of land. This is what is known as the absence of mobility of labour and capital. This immobility of capital, however, does not prevent flight of capital. This is how it happens under the present dispensation.

We are supposed to belong to one indivisible economy. We have one currency. There is no distinguishing mark to show the currency circulation wing-wise. We are under only one Finance Ministry situated in and operating from West Pakistan presided over always by a West Pakistani Minister formulating financial, fiscal and monetary policies through the single Central Bank, that is, the State Bank of Pakistan, also located in West Pakistan issuing money minted, coined and printed in West Pakistan. This money after travelling and meandering in circulation throughout the country journeys back to and rests in accumulation in West Pakistan. Along with the head office of the Government Central Bank the head office of all the joint-Stock Banks, except one or two small ones of very recent origin, are also located in West Pakistan. The seat of the Government being located in West Pakistan, head office of the three Armed Forces, all Foreign Missions and almost all foreign and national trades and industries organisations are situated in that wing. As a result all money transactions done in East Pakistan are instantana-

neously transferred to West Pakistan. All share money of joint-stock companies, all deposits of Banks, their security money, all Government reserves, all earnings, profits and savings of trade and industry operating in East Pakistan move in a matter of seconds to West Pakistan.

Any one conversant with banking operation knows well that only barely ten per cent of the entire deposit need be kept ready for payment and the rest can be and generally is invested. Savings when invested become capital. This investment is naturally done in West Pakistan as West Pakistan's capital. This is how capital formation in West Pakistan has been so rapid. This again is how there has been total absence of capital formation in East Pakistan. As investment means employment, this incident has meant the employment of West Pakistan only. As capital formation is followed by rapid industrialization this has meant industrialization of West Pakistan alone.

This process will continue unless and until the prevailing one-way traffic of finance is effectively checked by stopping this flight of capital. This can be done and capital investment can be generated in East Pakistan only by creating a Reserve Bank for East Pakistan as suggested by me. It is the only way to save East Pakistan from economic extinction. This reform in our currency system while saving East Pakistan from economic collapse will keep currency a Central subject as a symbol of our unity and oneness.

If, however, our West Pakistani brothers think otherwise then my other alternative may be adopted. Under that arrangement Currency will, no doubt, be a provincial subject, but that will not weaken our Centre, neither will it affect the oneness of Pakistan. For this, even then we can have the same currency symbol by mutual discussion and agreement. And for the other, a federation can effectively work and be strong and stable without Currency as its subject.

The cabinet Mission recommended an Indian Federal Centre without Currency in the Federal list. Had it been thought

unworkable, British Government would not have recommended it, nor would the Congress and the Muslim League have accepted it.

POINT 4

In this point I have recommended that the power of taxation and revenue collection shall vest in the federating units and that the Federal Centre will have no such power. The Federation will share in the state taxes for meeting its required expenditure. The Consolidated Federal Fund shall come out of a levy of certain percentage of all state taxes.

It is this proposal that seems to have most annoyed the unitarists and pseudo-federalists. They are making a lot of noises and kicking up dust of confusion such as disintegration disruption. These are old bogies and shibboleths used by the vested interests against all reforms in all ages. They need not worry any Pakistani.

The fact is that a strong Federation can successfully work and is actually working without the power of taxation. It makes the Federation further strong. This is so because taxation is a duty and necessity rather than a right and power. Levying taxes and collecting them is a responsibility and a botheration. It is just like manually earning one's own livelihood. In our daily life we find people wanting to better employ themselves in finer and nobler work, lease out their properties to others at fixed rent leaving to them the arduous task of collecting small amounts from individual tenants and earning petty sums from day-to-day transactions.

The monarchs of the past used to, and land-lords of the present do, lease out their realms in *ijara* for tax collection. The Central authorities in all ages have tried to be spared of the botheration of tax collection for their own maintenance. It is only the *banya* mentality of the present day rulers that impels them to handle all money matters themselves. A little reflection will show that the right and power concerned do not rest in the act of tax collection but in the money so collected.

If a Central Government is constitutionally assured of the required amount why should it bother about the actual collection ? In the case of a Federation it is only the fiscal taxation in which it is interested. The rest of the purposes of taxation, viz : protective social, commercial and moral are the responsibilities of the federating units. This is what is done in U.S.A. and some other Federations. In the USSR even the fiscal taxation is not done by the Union. There is no Finance Minister and Finance Ministry in the Union Government of the Soviet Union. The Finance Ministries and Ministers are all with the federating Republics. They meet the requirements and serve the purposes of the Union Government. Have these arrangements weakened the Central authorities of USA and USSR ?

It was with this knowledge and experience of the working of a Federation that Cabinet Mission offered an Indian Federation without the power of taxation and it was for the same reason that the Congress and the Muslim League accepted the offer. It will, therefore, be seen that a Federation can be firmly provided with its fiscal finances without being burdened with the duty of tax collection. My proposal is precisely to this effect.

According to my recommendation the Constitution will provide that a certain percentage of the Revenue collections on all heads shall automatically be credited to the Federal Fund by the Reserve Banks on which amount the unit Governments shall have no control. Constitutional provisions may also be made empowering the Federation to raise funds to meet the increased Defence expenditure at the time of war including expansion of Federal jurisdiction in such emergencies.

It is, therefore, sheer bunkum to call the autonomists the disruptors of Pakistan. On the contrary, relieving the Federation of the burden of tax collection will have the following salutary effects, viz :

(a) the Federation will have more time to devote in matters of Defence and External Relations and to act as a unifying force.

(b) wastage due to overlapping, duplication and litigation etc. will be saved and money thus saved and officials thus relieved will be available for better and nobler utilisation.

(c) the tax and revenue collection will be cheaper and easier.

(d) economy of having a single authority for tax collection will have been achieved.

(e) it will pave the way for introducing and adopting the most modern taxation method, viz, single taxation.

POINT 5

In this point I have recommended that :

(1) there shall be two separate accounts for foreign exchange earnings of the two wings,

(2) earnings of East Pakistan shall be under the control of East Pakistan Government and that of West Pakistan under the control of West Pakistan Government,

(3) foreign exchange requirements of the Federal Government shall be met by the two wings either equally or in a ratio to be fixed,

(4) indigenous products shall move free of duty between two wings,

(5) the Constitution shall empower the unit Governments to establish trade and commercial relations with, set up trade missions in and enter into agreements with foreign countries.

Now, a panoramic glance at the economic history of Pakistan since its creation will show the following consistent incidents :

(a) East Pakistan has earned bulk of the annual foreign exchange of Pakistan.

(b) East Pakistan's earnings have been spent in West Pakistan in industrialising that wing and earning from those industries have been invested in West Pakistan as the earnings of that wing.

(c) East Pakistan's earnings are not being spent in East Pakistan on the plea of its inability to absorb them due to absence of capital formation.

(d) Import to East Pakistan is less than her export whereas import to West Pakistan is more than her export.

(e) Two-thirds of Pakistan's foreign exchange is earned by jute ; but that earning is utilised neither for the benefit of the jute-growers nor for East Pakistan,

(f) Almost all foreign aid and loans are secured against foreign exchange earned by East Pakistan ; but they are spent in West Pakistan on the same plea of non-absorbing capacity of East Pakistan. The irony is that interest on these loans and their instalments are being borne by East Pakistan.

Now, the cumulative effects of these economic incidents, all of which are artificial, are the following consequences, viz :

(i) East Pakistan has not been industrialised sufficiently.

(ii) the little industrialisation that has been done is by West Pakistanis or by people other than East Pakistanis with all the characteristics of foreign investments both in the matter of employment and profit-earning.

(iii) there is chronic inflation causing soaring high prices of commodities with all its concomitants like blackmarketing and profiteering bringing untold miseries to the life of the people.

(iv) jute-growers are not only not getting fair economic price of their produce but even the cost of production is denied to them resulting in their perpetual indebtedness and progressive impoverishment.

These are man-made iniquities and are, therefore, remediable. The obvious remedies are, firstly, to industrialise East Pakistan to produce wealth among and provide employment for East Pakistanis, secondly to check inflation by equalising import and export and thereby supplying commodities to the people at reasonable prices, thirdly, to nationalise

jute trade and thereby give fair price to the growers and ensure the state's earnings in foreign exchange. It was with this last object in view that Awami League Government set up Jute Marketing Corporation in 1957. It was subsequently reduced to nothing by the vested interests with the help of the Central Government.

Each and every one of these steps presupposes acceptance of the above proposals recommended by me.

POINT 6

In this point I have recommended setting up of a militia or a para-military force for East Pakistan. This is neither unreasonable nor new. We had pledged in the famous 21-point programme in 1954 that we would give arms and uniforms to our Ansars.

Neither is the proposal unprecedented and impracticable. There are instances where such para-military territorial forces are maintained in outlying regions. We ourselves have one such regiment from before Independence. It was the Eastern Rifles. After Pakistan it became East Pakistan Rifles. The present regime has taken this away from the hand of East Pakistan Government.

East Pakistan is the home of the majority of Pakistanis. To defend it is the political obligation as well as moral duty of the Government of Pakistan. Why then should it be necessary for East Pakistanis to demand it? Why do they not do it on their own initiative? How and with what conscience do they say that defence of East Pakistan lies in West Pakistan? Now will the arms, ammunitions and wealth in West Pakistan help East Pakistan when transport between the wings can be snapped in a matter of seconds? Has not the recent 17-day war proved our utter helplessness? How can one brag that some event in Warsaw saved East Pakistan? It is the defence policy of our Government that has reduced us to this position. In spite of all this we want a united

Defence of the country and to retain it as a Central subject. But at the same time we want that East Pakistan be made self-sufficient in the matter of Defence : that an Ordnance Factory, a Military Academy and the Navy Head quarters must be set in East Pakistan. These things were actually demanded in 1954. Nothing, however, has been done in the course of long twelve years. We do not yet know when these will be done.

So in the meantime we want to make our own Defence arrangement in a small way with unsophisticated weapons suited to our own field craft within easy reach of our limited resources. What is the objection ? Where does it lie ? It is not easy to comprehend. Neither it is understandable why a Fund separately raised for East Pakistan war purposes is promptly taken over by the Centre ?

CONCLUSION

Now, before concluding, I want to submit a few words to my West Pakistani brethren :

Firstly, they should not run away with the idea that whatever I have stated above I have done in the interest of East Pakistan only. It is not so. In each of my 6-point programme is inherent a corresponding benefit to my West Pakistani brethren. They are sure to derive equal benefit out of their implementation.

Secondly, when I speak of East Pakistan's wealth being flown to and concentrated in West Pakistan I only mean regional concentration. I do not, thereby, mean that the people of West Pakistan have exploited us. I know there are millions like us in West Pakistan who also are unfortunate victims of this economic exploitation. I also know that the entire wealth of the country is concentrated in the hands of a few families. This will continue till the capitalistic pattern of our society is not changed. But before

that this regional exploitation must cease. I, however, do not blame West Pakistanis for this regional exploitation.

Thirdly, it is the geographical situation and the unnatural system that is being pursued which are responsible for this injustice. Take only one instance :

Had the capital of Pakistan been located in East Pakistan instead of West Pakistan this regional exploitation would have occurred in the reverse way, 62 per cent of our Revenue that is being spent on our Defence Forces, 32 per cent of our Revenue that is being spent on our Central Administration would have all been spent in East Pakistan instead of West Pakistan. The well-known Public Finance maxim that "the expenditure of the Government is the income of the people and the income of Government is the expenditure of the people" would have worked in favour of East Pakistan instead of West Pakistan. This 94 per cent of our total Revenue which has been annually spent in West Pakistan and thus formed the income of West Pakistan, would have in that case been spent in and enriched East Pakistan. The seat of the Government being in West Pakistan all the three Headquarters of the Armed Forces and all Central institutions and Foreign Missions have got their head offices in West Pakistan as a matter of course. Consequently, all their spendings are done in that wing. All these spendings would have been in East Pakistan had the seat of the Government been here. East Pakistan would have been enriched and West Pakistan impoverished to that extent and in that proportion.

In that event you, the West Pakistanis, would have made the same demands for regional justice for which you are condemning us, the East Pakistanis, and ascribing all sorts of evil motives. In that case you would have realised that there was no other motive than the motive of self-preservation. In that context when West Pakistanis would have made such demands of regional justice do you know what would have been our attitude ? We, East Pakistanis, would have straight-

away accepted your demands instead of calling you bad names like provincial, narrowminded and disruptionist. We would have at once conceded that it was your right to demand justice and equality and it was your duty to do so. Nay, we would have gone further. We would not have waited for you to make these demands. Instead we would have met your requirements before you would have demanded them. We really believe in justice, equality and fairplay amongst brothers. A State is nothing if not a big family. Even in a family eating by one member does not fill the stomach of another. So, how and with what conscience do you call us selfish for demanding our share? What will others call you who are not only enjoying your own share but devouring the share of your brothers also? We are, however, demanding our share only, not yours too. We want to live with you as equal partners, not exploiters.

Fourthly, if we happen to have more than enough we can even sacrifice something for you from out of our share. We did so in the past. Do not you remember? Please recall:

(1) In the first Constituent Assembly we had 44 and you had 28 representatives. If we wanted we could most democratically have brought the Capital and Headquarters of the three Armed Forces to East Pakistan. We did not.

(2) Out of sheer brotherly feeling and sense of equality we elected 6 West Pakistanis to Constituent Assembly from East Pakistan by East Pakistani votes.

(3) By our majority we could have made Bengali our only State Language. We, however, demanded and got both Urdu and Bengali.

(4) By majority of votes we could have framed a Constitution favourable to East Pakistan,

(5) To remove any possible complex of domination we sacrificed our majority and accepted parity on your assurance that you would concede parity in all respects,

Fifthly, the above should be enough to convince West Pakistani brothers that we East Pakistanis are really consumed with a sense of brotherly equality towards you by which we want to live in honour and dignity. That we are capable of making sacrifices for you if you need, it has also been proved in the past. Had the Capital been in East Pakistan we would have on our own initiative set up a real Second Capital in West Pakistan, not merely a hoax of a Capital. We would never have taken advantage of that vantage position and would not have grabbed all the important offices ourselves. We would not have captured all the high and lucrative posts of West Pakistan like chairmanships of Cotton Board, P.I.D.C., Railway Board, P.C.S., Port Trust and WAPDA etc. We would not have thought of capturing the Governorship of your wing.

On the contrary, we would have equitably distributed the high offices between the people of the two wings, we would have made effective arrangements for spending Central Revenue equitably between East and West Pakistan, we would have extended regional and provincial autonomy instead of curtailing it. A leader who sincerely believes that the two wings of Pakistan are really two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, two rows of teeth, two hands and two legs of the body-politic of Pakistan, a leader who feels that to make Pakistan healthy and strong one must make each one of these pairs equally healthy & strong, a leader who earnestly believes that to weaken any one of the limbs is to weaken Pakistan as a whole, a leader who zealously holds that any one who deliberately or knowingly weakens any limb of Pakistan is an enemy of the country and a leader who is ready to take strong measures against such enemies, is the only person entitled to claim the national leadership of Pakistan.

Pakistan is a magnificent country with an uncommonly wide horizon. To be fit to become its leader one must possess a similarly magnificent heart with an uncommon breadth of vision.

Sixthly, let me humbly remind my West Pakistani brothers and sisters that when we demanded Bengali to be made one of the two State Languages of Pakistan you condemned it as a move to undo Pakistan. When again we demanded joint electorate particularly in the context of parity in representation demanded by you, you condemned our demand to have been inspired from across the border. Both of these two demands have now been accepted ; but there has been no undoing of Pakistan due to their acceptance.

Does it not put you to shame that every bit of reasonable demand of East Pakistan has got to be secured from you at tremendous cost and after bitter struggle as if snatched from unwilling foreign rulers as a reluctant concession ? Does it do you any credit ? Please put a stop to such attitude once for all. Please be brothers instead of rulers.

In conclusion, I fervently appeal to my countrymen to deeply ponder over the formula put forward by me. They will find that none of the items in my 6-point programme is either unjust, impractical or disruptive of the country's integrity. I hope I succeeded in showing that the acceptance of these points will not only not weaken Pakistan but will on the contrary make it stronger.

But the vested interests for obvious reasons will not agree. They have got their own way of judging things. To them only the continuation and the perpetuation of their exploitation mean stability of a Society and a State. To them any body who disturbs or threatens to disturb this process of exploitation is a traitor and a disrupter. This is neither new nor surprising.

Our great forebears like Fazlul Huq and Suhrawardy had to fall victims to such vitriolics. In taking up the cause of the exploited masses one must, therefore, be ready and prepared for such vilifications and incarcerations. To my lot have fallen many such trials and tribulations in the past. Through the

blessings of my superiors, comradeship of my colleagues and affectionate support of my countrymen God in His infinite mercy gave me courage and fortitude enough to withstand those oppressions. With this boundless affection of my countrymen as my asset I am fully prepared to make any sacrifice in their service. The life of an individual like myself is nothing compared to the salvation of the people of my country. I know of no nobler battle than to fight for the rights of the exploited millions.

This is the lesson I have learnt at the feet of my political master Suhrawardy. He is no longer in our midst to guide us. But I am determined to live upto that lesson and to keep his flag flying.

The country is passing through the darkest hour of her life. At such a difficult time Awami League Council has placed the heavy responsibility of its Presidentship on my already overburdened shoulder. But through Allah's mercy I am no shirker. I am not afraid of work. So I have with all humility accepted the great responsibility. I have great faith in my people. I also know that the darkest hour of night is just a harbinger of dawn. My beloved countrymen will only pray to Allah so that He may continue to give me mental strength and physical fitness to devote the rest of my life in fighting for restoration of their rights which have been forcibly snatched away.

The six-point formula was therefore a natural and constructive proposal for redefining the political and economic relationship between the centre and federating units. It reflected the hopes and aspirations of the oppressed people of Bangladesh where an invincible nationalism had grown out of two decades of exploitation by West Pakistan. Yet the Awami League's six point formula was not mainly a regional programme but one designed to put the economy and the political system of the entire nation on a rational and just basis. No other political party in Pakistan ever submitted a constructive blueprint like this before the country.

THE 11 POINT PROGRAMME OF THE CENTRAL STUDENT'S ACTION COMMITTEE

The mass movement that reached its climax in Bangladesh during February-March, 1969 had for its source a clear feeling of neglect. Exploitation in every sphere had reached its height. The situation was reflected in the formation of an 'All Party Students Action Committee' with an 11 point Programme. Almost all the important Awami League leaders including District and Subdivisional leaders were imprisoned at that time on political grounds. Prominent among these were Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Khandakar Moshtaque Ahmed, Tajuddin Ahmed, Mansoor Ali, Mizanur Rahman Choudhury, Molla Jalaluddin, Abdul Mannan, Zahoor Ahmad Choudhury, Shamsul Huq & others. Many other political workers and Trade Union leaders were still in prison and consequently this movement was primarily initiated and organised by the Students and the Industrial workers. The 11-point programme of the Students had a special significance in the context of the total movement. It became the rallying focus for the students, workers and peasants. However, it is interesting to note that the 11-point programme incorporated the spirit of the 6-points of the Awami League Formula. 11 point of the students Action Committee were :—

- (1) (a) Restoration of provincial colleges to their original status ;
- (b) extension in number of schools and colleges ;
- (c) night shift arrangements in Provincial colleges
- (d) 50 percent reduction in tuition fees ;
- (e) hostel charges to be subsidised by 50 per cent ;
- (f) Bengali to be the medium of instruction as well as of work in all office ;
- (g) increase in salaries of teachers ;
- (h) free and compulsory education upto class VIII

- (i) medical university to be set up and the Medical Council Ordinance to be withdrawn ;
 - (j) facilities of condensed course for polytechnic students ;
 - (k) train and bus fare concessions ;
 - (l) Job opportunity guarantee ;
 - (m) repeal of the University Ordinance (1961) and full autonomy for Universities ;
 - (n) scrapping the National Education Commission and Hamoodur Rahman Reports.
- (2) Parliamentary democracy on the basis of Universal Adult Franchise
 - (3) Federal government powers to be confined to Defence, Foreign policy and Currency ;
 - (4) Sub-Federation of Baluchistan, NWFP and Sind with regional autonomy for each unit.
 - (5) Nationalisation of Banks, Insurance Companies and all big Industries.
 - (6) Reduction in rates of taxes and revenues ;
 - (7) Fair wages and bonus for workers.
 - (8) Flood control measures for East Pakistan.
 - (9) Withdrawal of all emergency laws, security acts and other prohibitive orders.
 - (10) Withdrawal from SEATO, CENTO and Pakistan-US military pacts,
 - (11) and release of all political prisoners including those under the Agartala Conspiracy case.

The Pakistan which actually came into being contradicted one of the fundamental ideas of the Lahore Resolution. Soon after political power was vested in West Pakistani rulers, instead of autonomous and sovereign states a rigidly centralised state was created which became the instrument of oppression and exploitation of East Bengal.

The Second Martial Law

—A Promise with a Hidden Meaning

Between October 1968 and March 1969 an unprecedented mass upsurge took place all over Pakistan. The democratic forces from Khyber to Teknaf rose against General Ayub Khan and demanded an end to his military dictatorship. At the same time the Eastern region also demanded an end to the exploitation of man by man and of region, by region carried on under the auspices of his Government. Under the pressure of this powerful movement, in which all the political parties in the country participated, Ayub convened a Round Table Conference to resolve the constitutional crisis in Pakistan.

On February 26, 1969, the inaugural session of the Round Table Conference took place at Rawalpindi. All the leaders of the country excepting Z. A. Bhutto and Moulana Bhasani, attended it. The Second Session of the conference began on 10th of March, 1969.

Sheikh Mujibur Rahaman and Syed Nazrul Islam were the two Awami League delegates to the Round Table Conference. Khandaker Moshtaque Ahmed, an Awami League leader, at that time was the Chairman of the East Pakistan Democratic Action Committee (EPDAC) and he attended the Round Table Conference as a delegate in that capacity.

Although the Democratic Action Committee (DAC) was constituted with all the major political parties excepting NAP (Bhashani) the Awami League declined to attend the conference without Sheikh Mujibur Rahman who was at that time

in military custody and on trial for his alleged part in the so called 'Agartala Conspiracy Case'.* No conference for a political settlement could be successful without the Sheikh who became the symbol of Bengali nationalism. The demand for his release became so vocal and insistent throughout the country that Ayub had to withdraw the case against him and released him on February 22, 1969. The Sheikh addressed his first public meeting at Dacca Race Course on February 24, 1969 reiterating the demands embodied in the six-point programme of the Awami League and the 11-point programme of the Students Action Committee.

SHEIKH MUJIB'S SPEECH ON MARCH 10, 1969 AT THE ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE, RAWALPINDI

On March 10, 1969 Sheikh Mujib outlined his constitutional proposals in his speech at the inaugural session of the Round Table Conference. An extract of his speech reads as follows :

I would like at this time to confine myself to outlining the constitutional changes, which are necessary for the attainment of economic justice, between man and man and between region and region.

*The charge framed by the Government in this case was that the 35 accused persons conspired to secede East from West Pakistan by armed revolt. In this case inclusion of Sheikh's name was merely an afterthought. In the first list Sheikh's Mujib, who had already been in prison for about two years on political grounds, was not named, but later on the Government included his name for political convenience. To try offence like this, there was established law and procedures in the country. But apprehending that the case could not be proved, Ayub's Government established a special tribunal by promulgating an Ordinance and also changing some fundamental aspects of the procedure that would normally be applied in the ordinary court of law. The trial started in May 1968 and continued till February 1969 when it was withdrawn. The evidence that was produced on behalf of the Government could not prove the case and this was widely believed both by the lawyers and common people of the country. And this also helped in creating public opinion against the nefarious design of holding this trial. Considering the legal and political aspects of this case, the whole trial was nothing but mockery of justice.

The centralisation of economic management has steadily aggravated the existing economic injustices to the point of crisis. I need hardly dilate on the subject of the 22 families, who have already achieved considerable notoriety both at home and abroad on account of the concentration of wealth in their hands resulting from their ready access to the corridors of power.

Monopolies and cartels have been created and a capitalistic system has been promoted, in which the gulf between the privileged few and the suffering multitude of workers and peasants has been greatly widened. Gross injustices have also been inflicted on East Pakistan and the minority provinces of West Pakistan.

The existence of per-capita-income-disparity between East and West Pakistan is known to all. As early as 1959-60 the Chief Economist of the Planning Commission estimated that the real per capita income disparity between East and West Pakistan was 60%. The Mid-Plan Review made by the Planning Commission and other recent documents show that the disparity in real per capita income has been steadily increasing and therefore, would be much higher than 60% to-day. Underlying such disparity in general economic structure and infrastructure of the two regions, are equally severe disparities in the rates of employment, in facilities for education, and in medical and welfare services.

To give just a few examples, power generating capacity in West Pakistan is 5 to 6 times higher than in East Pakistan; the number of hospital beds in 1966 in West Pakistan was estimated to be 26,5000, while that in East Pakistan was estimated to be 6,900; between 1961-66 only 18 Polytechnic Institutes were established in East Pakistan as against 48 in West Pakistan.

Further, the disparity in the total availability of resources has been even higher. More than 80% of all foreign aid has been utilised in West Pakistan in addition to the net transfer of East Pakistan foreign exchange earnings to West Pakistan. This made it possible for West Pakistan over 20 years to import Rs. 3109 crores worth of goods against the total export earnings of Rs. 1337 crores while during the same period East Pakistan imported Rs. 1210 crores worth

of goods as against its total export earnings of Rs. 1650 crores.

All these facts underline the gross economic injustice which has been done to East Pakistan. There has been a failure to discharge the constitutional obligation to remove disparity between the provinces in the shortest possible time. The Annual Report on disparity for the year 1968 placed before the National Assembly records that disparity has continued to increase.

The centralisation of economic management has thus failed miserably to meet the objective of attaining economic justice. It has failed to meet the constitutional obligation to remove economic disparity between region and region. Instead, therefore, of persisting with a centralized economic management which has failed to deliver the goods, we should adopt a bold and imaginative solution to this challenging problem. The Federal Scheme of the Six-Point Programme, is in my view such a bold and imaginative solution.

It is in essence a scheme for entrusting the responsibility for economic management to the regions. This proposal is of the conviction that this alone can effectively meet the problems, which centralised economic management has failed to overcome. The unique geography of the country, resulting in lack of labour mobility, as well as the different levels of development obtaining in the different regions, requires that economic management should be de-centralised.

The specific proposals embodied in the Six-point programme with regard to currency, foreign trade, foreign exchange earnings and taxation are all designed to give full responsibility for economic management to the regional Governments. The proposals with regard to currency are designed to prevent flight of capital and to secure control over monetary policy.

The proposals regarding foreign trade and foreign exchange are designed to ensure that the resources of a region are available to that region and to ensure it to obtain the maximum amount of foreign exchange resources for development purposes. The proposal regarding taxation is designed to ensure control by the regional governments over fiscal policy, without in any way depriving the Federal Government of its revenue requirements.

The substance of these proposals are as follows :

(a) With regard to currency, measures should be adopted to prevent flight of capital from one region to another and to secure control over monetary policy by the regional governments. This can be done by adoption of two currencies or by having one currency with a separate Reserve Bank being set up in each region, to control monetary policy, with the State Bank retaining control over certain defined matters. Subject to the above arrangements, Currency would be a Federal subject.

(b) With regard to foreign trade and aid, the regional Governments should have power to negotiate trade and aid within the frame work of the foreign policy of the country, which shall be the responsibility of the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

(c) The foreign exchange earnings of each region should be maintained in an account in each Regional Reserve Bank and be under the control of the regional Governments; the Federal requirements of foreign exchange would be met by appropriations from the two regional accounts on the basis of an agreed ratio.

(n) With regard to taxation, it is proposed that the power of tax levy and collection should be left to the original Governments but the Federal Government should be empowered to realise its revenue requirements from levies on the original Governments. It should be clearly understood that it is not at all contemplated that the Federal Government be left at the mercy of the regional Governments for its revenue needs.

I would emphasize that there would be no difficulty in devising appropriate constitutional provisions whereby the Federal Government's revenue requirements could be met, consistent with the objective of ensuring control over fiscal policy by the regional Governments. The scheme also envisages that there would be just representation on a population basis of persons from each part of Pakistan in all Federal services, including Defence Services.

If these principles are accepted, the detailed provisions can be worked out by a Committee consisting of experts to be designated by both parties.

This scheme holds enormous promise of removing the cancer of economic injustice from the body politic of

Pakistan while at the same time removing the mistrust and frustration which centralised economic management has fostered over the years. I am confident that the people of West Pakistan would give their whole-hearted support to this scheme.

I urge the participants in this Conference to come forward with open minds and with large hearts in a spirit of fraternity and national solidarity, to adopt the Federal Scheme presented above, as the only means of overcoming what has been one of the most formidable problems confronting the country i.e. that of the attainment of economic justice. No source has fed the current crisis more than the sense of economic injustice. Let us remove it ; let us tackle problems at their source. Any attempt to avoid coming to grips with these basic problems will jeopardise our very survival.

Neither Almighty Allah nor history will forgive us if at this time of national crisis we fail to rise to the occasion to adopt bold solutions in order to resolve the formidable problems which have created a national crisis. This is a great opportunity, and one which may not present itself again, to face our national problems squarely. We must, therefore, strain every nerve to agree upon and implement the required solutions. Let us strive together to lift our beloved Pakistan out of the tragic situation in which she is placed and to lay the constitutional foundations for a real, living Federal Parliamentary Democracy, which will secure for the people of Pakistan full political, economic and social justice. Only thus can a strong and united Pakistan face the future with hope and confidence.

PRESIDENT AYUB KHAN'S SPEECH ON MARCH 12, 1969 AT THE CONCLUDING SESSION OF THE ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE, ROWALPINDI

On 13th March at the concluding speech of the Round Table Conference, President Ayub conceded two demands i.e., (a) a Federal Parliamentary system and (b) election on the basis of universal adult franchise. Ayub read out a written speech in the Conference :

Leaders of the Democratic Action Committee and Distinguished Delegates :

"I am extremely grateful to you that you responded to my invitation to attend this conference. I appreciate the candidness with which you have expressed your views on the grave national issues confronting the nation.

The agitation which started in the country in November last assumed menacing proportions and posed a threat to the life, liberty and property of the citizens and the security of the country.

On the 1st of February, 1969, in my broadcast to the nation, I said that I would welcome a meeting with responsible political leaders to discuss the situation prevailing in the country and to resolve the issues which were agitating the people's mind.

On the 4th of February, 1969, I sent a letter to Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan requesting him to nominate representatives of the opposition parties to participate in a conference on the 17th February, 1969. I made it clear that N. Nasrullah Khan could also suggest names of parties outside the Democratic Action Committee. The D.A.C. suggested a number of pre-conditions for the conference. Each one of these conditions was fulfilled.

On the 16th February the D.A.C. announced that the representatives of the D.A.C. will attend the conference. The D. A. C. suggested a two-day postponement. They also suggested that non-aligned leaders and representatives of the Pakistan People's Party and the National Awami Party (Maulana Bhashani Group) should also be invited to the conference. This was done.

The stage was set for conference to begin on the 19th of February. But unfortunately the non-aligned leaders of the two parties declined to participate in the conference, for various reasons.

The D. A. C. representatives arrived in Rawalpindi but were unable to come to the conference on the agreed date.

On the 21st of February, I announced to the nation that I shall not offer myself as a candidate in the next elections. I made this announcement after deep

thought in the hope that this would remove all doubts and misgivings from the minds of the opposition leaders and they would come to the conference table and address themselves to the problems facing the country.

The conference met briefly on the 26th February, 1969, and adjourned to re-assemble on the 10th of March 1969. The intervening period was used by the opposition leaders to discuss issues in the hope of evolving in agreed formula for the consideration of conference.

On the 10th of March, Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan presented before the conference a formula consisting of the following two points :

- (1) The country should have a federal parliamentary system of Government with regional autonomy.

- (2) The assemblies should be elected on the basis of direct adult franchise.

During the discussion which followed, it became clear that there was no agreement among the opposition parties over the definition of the federal parliamentary system or on measure of regional autonomy. Leaders of various opposition parties have given, during the last four days, their own specifications of the federal parliamentary system and the extent of regional autonomy. A number of additional demands have also been tabled. These include the dismemberment of One Unit and the transfer of all subjects to the provinces, except defence and foreign affairs and subject to certain conditions currency as well which would remain with the Central Government. It has also been demanded that the federal parliament should be elected on the basis of population and not on the existing basis of parity between East—West Pakistan.

Some leaders of the opposition have explained that by full regional autonomy they mean that the federal government should have no tax levying authority and that each federating state should have a separate external trade account and separate fiscal and monetary policies.

Other opposition leaders have suggested that the basis of parity, which has a long history to it, should not be disturbed and that the existing distribution of

powers between the centre and the provinces should remain intact until such time as the directly elected representatives of the people have had an opportunity of pronouncing a judgement on these matters.

During the course of these deliberations I have been seeking elucidation of certain points and I am grateful to all of you for your assistance and co-operation. I have given very careful thought to all that has been stated and have considered the various proposals which have been put before the conference.

The system which is embodied in the Constitution of 1962 was evolved keeping the larger interests of the country in view. The system worked for the last ten years and a great deal of progress was made by the country in all spheres. While saying this I am not unconscious of the criticism of the opposition leaders on this subject, but I do assert that the country has enjoyed political stability and a tremendous amount of prestige throughout the world during these years.

The judgement of history does not always obey contemporary trends. The final verdict on the last ten years has yet to be pronounced. I maintain that the 1962 constitution is adjusted to our needs and has in it the potentiality of growth and adaptability. Nevertheless, in view of the fact that those who are dissatisfied with the constitution have expressed their feelings very forcefully and on a very wide scale, I have treated their demonstrations as an expression of the popular will against certain aspects of the 1962 constitution.

It is not possible for me in this conference to identify the extent of the support of the people behind individual demands put forward by various leaders. Nor is it possible for me to assume that I possess the powers to accede to these demands without the approval of the people.

The firm conclusion which I have arrived at, after hearing the observations of political leaders in this conference and after consulting my colleagues in the Government and in my negotiating team is that the general consensus is in the following two points :—

(A) The representatives of the people should be elected on the basis of direct adult franchise.

(B) The country should be run under a parliamentary system.

The first point is precise and can be referred to the Assembly without any difficulty.

The Second point, however, needs specification before it can be turned into a bill. In the absence of agreement on specification all I can do is to move the Assembly, to make the necessary amendments in the existing constitution to convert it into a federal parliamentary system without disturbing the basis of parity or the distribution of subjects.

I have only one aim before me and that is to establish a tradition for the transfer of power in a peaceful and constitutional manner. It was with this view that I convened this conference and made the announcement on the 1st of February.

Gentlemen, I consider it my duty to tell you that in the circumstances prevailing and the time available to us the most appropriate procedure would be to leave the unresolved issues to be settled by the representatives of the people to be elected under the direct adult franchise. Once the new representatives of the people meet in a sovereign assembly they can deliberate on the specific problems and demands which have been raised in this conference and decide them on behalf of the people. I believe in a United Pakistan with a strong stable centre.

The stand of all the opposition parties and leaders being that the will of the people can be reflected only through their representatives chosen by a direct role, would it not be proper for us to wait till the will of the people is so ascertained, before doing anything which in a calmer political climate and a cooler political atmosphere, when pressures generated by violence are not at work, might appear to the newly elected representatives of the people to amount to the weakening of Pakistan. You will realise that making arrangements for the management of the affairs of Pakistan, keeping Pakistan as it is, is one thing, doing something which might amount to changing its nature is another.

I urge you, in the name of Pakistan, to accept my proposals. This is, to my mind, the best way to ensure

the independence, integrity and unity of the country and the continued existence of civil and constitutional rule in the country.

The prevailing law and order situation in the country should be a matter of concern to all of us. We must no longer waste our energies in mutual recriminations. Let us face the problems jointly and manfully. The forces which have been let loose must be brought to bay. A whole educational year has been lost.

Demands are mounting from all sides and there is little respect for reason or in the capacity of the country. The economic life is coming to a standstill. Industrial production has received a severe setback. If this state of affairs continues respect for authority and the fabric of law will be gravely endangered. These are problems for all of us and we must jointly face them so that normal life is restored in the country immediately. Let us resolve to offer collective resistance to forces of agitation and disruption.

Before I conclude I would like to add that Islam is the basis on which Pakistan was established. It is only right that we seek the solution of our social, economic and political problems through the principle of Islam.

These are the problems which I submit to the nation and to you for consideration. I know that people are anxiously awaiting the outcome of this conference and I pray that God will give us the courage and the vision to overcome the present crisis in a spirit of selflessness, patriotism and dedication. Ameen.

There was no assurance in the statement of President Ayub that the demands of Bangladesh would be met and this was seriously resented by the Sheikh ; and besides, the DAC failed to press the demands of East Bengal. For these two reasons Awami League formally dissociated itself from the DAC on the same day. Ayub requested Sheikh to produce a constitutional proposal incorporating the six points in concrete terms showing that it would at the same time ensure the integrity of Pakistan. In order to show that the six-point formula was the only scheme by which Pakistan could exist and could have the strength to continue as one country, the Sheikh drafted a

constitution which was placed with the Speaker of the National Assembly with a copy to Ayub Khan on March 20, 1969.

PRESIDENT AYUB KHAN'S LETTER TO GENERAL YAHYA KHAN DATED MARCH 24, 1969 HANDING OVER POWER TO THE LATTER

On March 24, 1969 Ayub Khan went back on his words. He called upon General Yahya Khan, the Commander-in-Chief of Pakistan Armed Forces illegally and unconstitutionally to take over the power and authority of the Government. The 1962 constitution then in force did not authorize President Ayub to transfer power to the Armed Forces. He committed this great act of betrayal by simply writing a personal letter to General Yahya Khan saying that he had made up his mind to transfer power to him on the ground that constitutional authority and civil administration had broken down in the country. This claim was totally baseless.

Ayub wrote :

(A) My dear General Yahya,

It is with profound regret that I have come to the conclusion that all Civil Administration and Constitutional authority in the country has become ineffective. If the situation continues to deteriorate at the present alarming rate, all economic life, indeed, civilized existence will become impossible.

I am left with no option but to step aside and leave it to the Defence Forces of Pakistan, which to-day represent the only effective and legal instrument, to take over full control of the affairs of this country. They are by the grace of God in a position to retrieve the situation and to save the country from utter chaos and total destruction. They alone can restore sanity and put the country back on the road to progress in a civil and constitutional manner.

The restoration and maintenance of full democracy according to the fundamental principles of our faith and the needs of our people must remain our ultimate goal. In that lies the salvation of our people who are

blessed with the highest qualities of dedication and vision and who are destined to play a glorious role in the world.

It is most tragic that while we were well on our way to happy and prosperous future, we were plunged into an abyss of senseless agitation. Whatever name may have been used to glorify it, time will show that this turmoil was deliberately created by well tutored and well-backed elements. They made it impossible for the Government to maintain any semblance of law and order or to protect the civil liberties, life and property of the people. Every single instrument of administration and every medium of expression of saner public opinion was subjected to inhuman pressure. Dedicated but defenceless Government functionaries were subjected to ruthless public criticism or blackmail. The result is that all social and ethical norms have been destroyed and instruments of Government have become in-operative and ineffective.

The economic life of the country has all but collapsed. Workers and labourers are being incited and urged to commit acts of lawlessness and brutality. While demands for higher wages, salaries and amenities are being extracted under threat of violence, production is going down. There has been serious fall in exports and I am afraid the country may soon find itself in the grip of serious inflation.

All this is the result of the reckless conduct of those who acting under the cover of a mass movement struck blow after blow at the very root of the country during the last few months. The pity is that a large number of innocent but gullible people became victims of their evil designs.

I have served my people to the best of my ability under all circumstances. Mistakes there must have been but what has been achieved and accomplished is not negligible. There are some who would like to undo all that I have done and even that which was done by the Governments before me. But the most tragic and heart-rending thought is that there are elements at work which would like to undo even what the Quaid-e-Azam had done namely the creation of Pakistan.

I have exhausted all possible civil and constitutional means to resolve the present crisis. I offered to meet all those regarded as the leaders of the people. Many of them came to a Conference recently but only after I had fulfilled all their pre-conditions. Some declined to come for reasons best known to them. I asked these people to evolve an agreed formula. They failed to do so in spite of days of deliberations. They finally agreed on two points and I accepted both of them. I then offered that the unagreed issues should all be referred to the representatives of the people after they had been elected on the basis of direct adult franchise. My argument was that the delegates in the Conference who had not been elected by the people could not arrogate to themselves the authority to decide all civil and constitutional issues including those on which even they are not agreed among themselves. I thought I would call the National Assembly to consider the two agreed points but it soon became obvious that this would be an exercise in futility. The members of the Assembly are no longer free agents and there is no likelihood of the agreed two points being faithfully adopted. Indeed, members are being threatened and compelled either to boycott the session or to move such amendments as would liquidate the Central Government, make the maintenance of the armed forces impossible, divide the economy of the country and break up Pakistan into little bits and pieces. Calling the Assembly in such chaotic conditions can only aggravate the situation. How can any one deliberate coolly and dispassionately fundamental problems under threat of instant violence?

It is beyond the capacity of the Civil Government to deal with the present complex situation and the Defence Forces must step in

It is your legal and constitutional responsibility to defend the country not only against external aggression but also to save it from internal disorder and chaos. The nation expects you to discharge this responsibility to preserve the security and integrity of the country of the country and to restore normal social, economic and administrative life. Let peace and happiness be brought back to this anguished land of 120 million people.

I believe you have the capacity, patriotism, dedication and imagination to deal with the formidable problems facing the country. You are the leader of a force which enjoys the respect and admiration of the world. Your colleagues in the Pakistan Air Force and in the Pakistan Navy are men of honour and I know that you will always have their full support. Together the armed forces of Pakistan must save Pakistan from disintegration.

I should be grateful if you would convey to every soldier, sailor and airman that I shall always be proud of having been associated with them as their Supreme Commander. They must know that in this grave hour they have to act as the custodians of Pakistan. Their conduct and actions must be inspired by the principles of Islam and by the conviction that they are serving the interests of their people.

It has been a great honour to have served the valiant and inspired people of Pakistan for so long a period. May God guide them to move toward greater prosperity and glory.

I must also record my great appreciation of your unswerving loyalty. I know that patriotism has been a constant source of inspiration for you all your life. I pray for your success and for the welfare and happiness of my people.

Khuda Hafiz,

Yours sincerely,
Sd/- M. A. Khan.

On 25th March, 1969, a proclamation of Martial Law was introduced by General Yahya Khan in which he declared that he had assumed all the powers of the Chief Martial Law administrator and commander of all the armed forces of Pakistan.

GENERAL YAHYA KHAN'S ADDRESS TO THE NATION ON MARCH 26, 1969

On 26th March, 1969, General Yahya addressed the nation over the radio during which he mentioned that he had no ambition other than creating conditions conducive to the establishment of the constitutional Government. He further declared that as soon as such conditions were achieved power

would be transferred to the elected representatives of the people who would be elected freely and impartially on the basis of adult franchise. He outlined how the further constitution would be framed by the elected representatives. The said broadcast of 26th March 1969 is produced below :—

Fellow Pakistanis,

1. You have already heard Field Marshal Mohammad Ayub Khan's speech which was broadcast yesterday and by now you must also have read his letter of 24 March which is addressed to me and has been published in the Press. As is evident from this letter, Field Marshal Mohammad Ayub Khan took all possible steps, in the last few weeks, to come to some arrangement whereby a peaceful and constitutional transfer of power could take place. As we all know, his efforts did not meet with success. He, therefore, called upon me to carry out my prime duty of protecting this country from utter destruction.

2. As proclaimed earlier, I have imposed Martial Law throughout Pakistan.

3. We, in the Armed Forces, had hoped that sanity would prevail and this extreme step would not be necessary, but the situation has deteriorated to such an extent that normal law enforcing methods have become totally ineffective and have almost completely broken down. Serious damage of life and property has occurred and a state of panic has paralysed life in the nation. Production has gone down to a dangerously low level and the economy generally has suffered an unprecedented set-back. Strikes and violence have become a daily routine and the country has been driven to the edge of an abyss. The nation has to be pulled back to safety and normal conditions have to be restored without delay. The Armed Forces could not remain idle spectators of this state of near anarchy. They have to do their duty and save the country from disaster. I have, therefore, taken this step.

4. My sole aim in imposing Martial law is to protect life, liberty and property of the people and put the administration back on the rails. My first and foremost task as the Chief Martial Law Administrator, therefore, is to bring back sanity and ensure that the admini-

stration resumes its normal functions to the satisfaction of the people. We have had enough of administrative laxity and chaos and I shall see to it that this is not repeated in any form or manner. Let every member of the administration take a serious note of this warning.

5. Fellow countrymen, I wish to make it absolutely clear to you that I have no ambition other than the creation of conditions conducive to the establishment of a constitutional government. It is my firm belief that a sound, clean and honest administration is a prerequisite for sane and constructive political life and for the smooth transfer of power to the representatives of the People elected freely and impartially on the basis of adult franchise. It will be the task of these elected representatives to give the country a workable constitution and find a solution of all other political, economic and social problems that have been agitating the minds of the people. I am, however, conscious of the genuine difficulties and pressing needs of various sections of our society including the student community, the labour and our peasants. Let me assure you that my administration will make every endeavour to resolve these difficulties.

6. A word about your brethren in the Armed Forces. You are well aware that they have always stood by the nation selflessly and gallantly. They have always responded to the call of duty with promptness and devotion. They have never regarded any sacrifice as too great to ensure and enhance the security and the glory of Pakistan. The Armed Forces belong to the people, they have no political ambitions and will not prop up any individual or party. At the same time I wish to make it equally clear that we have every intention of completing the mission that we have embarked upon to the nation's satisfaction.

7. We are passing through the most fateful period of our history. The recent events have dealt a serious blow to our national prestige and progress. The Martial Law Administration cannot and will not tolerate agitation and destructive activities of any kind. I urge every one of you to cooperate with my administration in bringing the country back to sanity. Let every one, whatever his calling may be return to his bit to repair the damage caused to the economy and well-being of Pakistan.

Towards Democracy—

The First General Election in

Pakistan

On November 28, 1969 President Yahya Khan addressed the nation, once again reaffirming his pledge to restore democratic institutions in the country. He announced that polling for general elections to the National Assembly of Pakistan would commence on 5th October, 1970 and that the election of the Provincial Assemblies would commence not later than 22nd October, 1970. In his speech he also announced the dissolution of West Pakistan as a single unit and the future administrative arrangements of the various units of West Pakistan.

THE OBJECTIVES AND DIRECTIVE PRINCIPLES AS LAID DOWN IN THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK ORDER, 1970

In pursuance of his broadcast, an Electoral Rolls Order 1970, was issued for the preparation of electoral rolls for the purpose of election of representatives on the basis of Adult Franchise. In order to provide a National Assembly for framing a constitution, a Legal Framework Order, 1970 was promulgated. This Order provides for a National Assembly in Pakistan and laid down certain fundamental principles which were obligatory for the elected representatives to observe in

framing the constitution for the country. Section 20 of the Order has the following :

The constitution shall be so framed as to embody the following fundamental principles :

- (1) Pakistan shall be a Federal Republic to be known as the Islamic republic of Pakistan in which the Provinces and other territories which are now and may hereinafter be included in Pakistan shall be so united in a Federation that the independence, the territorial integrity and the national solidarity of Pakistan are ensured and that the unity of the Federation is not in any manner impaired.
- (2) (a) Islamic ideology which is the basis for the creation of Pakistan shall be preserved ; and
(b) the Head of the State shall be a Muslim.
- (3) (a) Adherence to fundamental principles of democracy shall be ensured by providing direct and free periodical elections to the Federal and the Provincial legislatures on the basis of population and adult franchise ;
(b) the Fundamental Rights of the citizens shall be laid down and guaranteed ;
(c) the independence of the judiciary in the matter of dispensation of justice and enforcement of fundamental rights shall be secured.
- (4) All powers including legislative, administrative and financial, shall be so distributed between the Federal Government and Provinces that Provinces shall have maximum legislative, administrative and financial power but the Federal Government shall also have adequate powers including legislative, administrative, and financial powers, to discharge its responsibilities in relation to external affairs and to preserve the independence and territorial integrity of the country.

(5) It shall be ensured that—

- (a) the people of all areas in Pakistan shall be enabled to participate fully in all forms of national activities ; and
- (b) within a specified period, economic and all other disparities between the Provinces are removed by the adoption of statutory and other measures.

The directive principles for the future constitution were also incorporated in this order and they were as follows :

22. The Constitution shall set out directive principles of State Policy by which the State shall be guided in the matter of :

- (1) promoting Islamic way of life ;
- (2) observance of Islamic moral standards ;
- (3) providing facilities for the teaching of the Holy Quran and Islamiat to the Muslims of Pakistan ; and
- (4) ensuring that no law repugnant to the teachings and requirements of Islam, as set out in the Holy Quran and Sunnah, is made.

RESTRICTIONS IMPOSED ON THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY BY THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK ORDER, 1970

The most undemocratic of all was the provision in Section 25 of the Order. It says "the Constitution bill as passed by the National Assembly, shall be presented to the President for authentication. The National Assembly shall stand dissolved in the event that authentication is refused".

The power of interpretation and amendment of this order was also retained by the President himself. Section 27 (1) says, "In question of doubt as to the interpretation of any provision of this order it shall be resolved by a decision of the President

and such decision shall be final and not liable to be questioned in any Court". *Section 27 (2)* : says "The President, and not National Assembly, shall have the power to make any amendment in this Order".

These provisions of the Legal Framework order were undemocratic both in content and spirit. Despite all these restrictions imposed upon the authority of the peoples representatives, the Awami League decided to participate in the elections because of its firm belief in constitutional politics and in resolving national problems through constitutional means.

In September, 1970, however, floods engulfed Bangladesh once again and consequently the elections were shifted from October to December, 1970.

SHEIKH MUJIBUR RAHAMAN'S ELECTION BROADCAST

Before the elections the leaders of parties participating in them were allowed to address the nation through radio and television. The Sheikh presented his programme to the nation with the following words :

I must begin by offering Monajat for those heroic martyrs, who shed their blood and laid down their lives for the cause of the people. It is their sacrifices and that of countless thousands who have defied tyranny in movement after movement leading up to last year's historic mass upsurge, that has carried the People's struggle forward. Indeed even the fact that I am able to speak to you over the national radio and television network may be counted as one of the initial gains of the people's struggle since upto this time this privilege was monopolised by those in power.

Our struggle must go on. For the real goals lie ahead. Power has to be won by the people. The exploitation of man by man and of region by region, must be brought to an end. The powerful families which have ruled Pakistan for 23 years will do everything possible to prevent transfer of power to the people.

It is they who are actively conspiring to frustrate the holding of the general elections. And even after elections they will continue to obstruct every effort to end exploitation. They have money, they have influence, they have the capacity to use force against the people. History, however, testifies that a determined people can successfully resist and overcome such forces of oppression. The most solemn pledge Awami League can make to the people of Pakistan is that we shall stand by their side and indeed lead them in resisting the forces of oppression and exploitation. No people have secured freedom and justice unless they have been prepared to die for it. We, therefore, serve notice upon the forces of reaction in our society that we, along with the people of Pakistan will confront them and if democratic processes are obstructed, we shall resist them by every means possible.

Awami League was born in adversity and has grown in adversity. Under our great leader the late Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy, we came into existence to defy the attempt of the ruling party to form a party state. We thus began the struggle to establish democracy in Pakistan. This struggle continues till this day. Our party has faced on slaught after onslaught from the ruling group. Our leadership and our workers have spent the better part of their lives in jails. We have faced and overcome every form of repression. It is this that gives us the courage and confidence today to commit ourselves to the task of confronting the anti-democratic forces.

To overcome the crisis that engulfs the nation, we must resolve those issues which are its cause. The first is the deprivation of political freedom. The second is the sense of economic injustice felt by the overwhelming multitudes of our people. The third is the deep sense of injustice created by widening economic disparity between the regions. It is this that underlines the anguish and the anger of the Bengali people. The same sentiment is reflected among the down-trodden people of the neglected areas of West Pakistan.

Our manifesto sets out a comprehensive strategy for resolving these fundamental issues. A real living democracy must be established in which all the fundamental freedoms shall be constitutionally guaranteed. Our manifesto outlines a framework for the healthy

growth of political parties, trade unions and local self-Government. We do pledge to restore complete freedom of the press and academic freedom and to eradicate corruption which has grown like cancer in our society.

Economic System

The present economic system, which has established an intolerable structure of injustice, must be radically altered. Today barely two dozen families have acquired control over 60 per cent of the nation's industrial assets, 80 per cent of its banking assets and 75 per cent of its insurance assets. Eighty two per cent of the total bank advances are concentrated in only three per cent of the total accounts. The tax structure in existence is one of the most regressive in the world. Only two per cent of the GNP is being realised as direct taxes as against six per cent in other developing countries. While oppressive indirect taxes are imposed on such essential commodities as salt, protected market, tax holidays, huge subsidies in the form of bonus vouchers credits and grants of foreign exchange at the artificially low official rate have created specially favourable conditions for the growth of monopolies and cartels.

Feudal Lords

Despite nominal land reforms, feudal lords have retained princely estates. They enjoy vast privileges and their prosperity increases while the lot of the poor peasants becomes more and more desperate. In a bid for survival, there is movement of people from the villages to the cities. According to official estimates 1/5th of the total labour force or about 9 million people are unemployed. This alarming figure continues to grow. The industrial workers are suffering the full impact of the sharp rise in the cost of living. The cost of living is increasing more rapidly than the increase in money wages. The impact of the unending rise in the cost of living is also acutely felt by school and college teachers, low-paid officers and employees, particularly the fourth grade employees of Government.

Disparity

To turn now to the appalling record of economic disparity it is seen that during the last 20 years, out of

the total revenue expenditure of the Government only about Rs. 1500 million (that is only one-fifth of the total) was spent in Bengal as against over Rs. 50000 million in West Pakistan. Of the total development expenditure during the same period, Rs. 30410 million (that is only 1/3 of the total was spent in Bengal, as against over Rs. 67890 million in West Pakistan over 20 years. West Pakistan has imported goods worth more than Rs. 30000 million as against its own foreign exchange earnings of barely Rs. 13000 million. Imports into West Pakistan have been three times the value of the imports into Bengal. It was made possible for West Pakistan to import goods worth Rs. 20000 million in excess of its export earnings by allocating to it Rs. 5000 million of the foreign exchange earnings of Bengal and allowing it to utilise over 80 per cent of all foreign aid.

The record in the field of governmental services is just as deplorable after 22 years. Bengalis account for barely 15 p.c. in Central Government services and less than 10 p.c. in the defence services.

The total economic impact of such discrimination has been that the economy of Bengal is today in a state of imminent collapse. Near famine conditions are prevailing in the majority of the villages. Some 1.5 million tons of rice has had to be imported only to save the people from starvation.

Inflation

All this while inflation has been mounting. Those who are worse hit are the poor people of Bengal. The price of essential commodities has been 50 to 100 times higher in Bengal than in West Pakistan. The average price of coarse rice in Bengal is Rs. 45 to 50 per maund as against Rs. 20 to 25 per maund in West Pakistan and that of wheat is Rs. 30 to 35 per maund in East Bengal as against Rs. 15 to 20 per maund in West Pakistan. Mustard oil sells in Bengal at Rs. 5 per seer as against Rs. 2.50 per seer in West Pakistan. The gold price is Rs. 135 to 140 per tola in Karachi as against Rs. 160 to 165 per tola at Dacca. Even a customs barrier has been imposed against carrying gold from West Pakistan to Bengal.

This injustice is the product of the management of the economy for 23 years by the Central Government.

The Central Government is incapable of redressing such injustice. This is borne out by the Fourth Five-Year Plan. The Fourth Plan allocations are a confession of the failure of the Central Government, however, powerful it might be, to redress past injustices.

Six Points

The Awami League's Six Point Programme, which is embodied in the 11-point programme, presents a rational solution to this problem of regional injustice. With a central bureaucracy in which Bengalis account for barely 15 per cent and with the nature of the power structure being what it is, to expect justice from a centralised system of economic management would be to expect the impossible.

Attempts to secure larger allocations by political representatives of Bengal and the other under-developed areas would only aggravate regional tensions and threaten the viability of the federal government. The only feasible solution is the reordering of the constitutional structure by giving full regional autonomy to the federating units on the basis of our six point formula. Such autonomy in order to be effective must include the power of managing the economy. This is why we insist upon federating units having control over monetary and fiscal policy and foreign exchange earnings and other powers to negotiate foreign trade and aid. By giving to the federating units full control over its economic destiny, while entrusting to the federal government responsibility over foreign affairs and defence, and subject to certain safeguards, currency, we believe a just federal balance will be attained. Our federal scheme envisages the abolition of all-Pakistan services and its replacement by federal services in which the persons shall be recruited on the basis of population for all parts of Pakistan.

Militia

We also believe that the maintenance of a militia or para-military force by the federating units will effectively contribute towards national security. This federal scheme by removing the sources of doubt, distrust and discrimination will ensure a strong Pakistan.

This scheme will understandably be opposed by those in one region who would like to treat another region as a colony or a market. We believe, however, that this scheme will have the full support of the common people of Bengal and West Pakistan. Within this constitutional framework we believe it will be possible to bring about a social revolution through the democratic process and to create a socialist economic order, free from exploitation.

Rapid economic growth is an imperative necessity in order to meet the needs of our growing population. To achieve it, enormous effort and sacrifices are required of our people. Our people can be expected to respond to our call for making a big collective effort only if we can assure them that the burden of sacrifices as well as the fruits of economic prosperity shall be equitably shared among all sections of the people and all regions of the country. To ensure this certain radical changes must be made in the structure of our economy.

We believe that it is imperative to place key areas of the economy, including banking and insurance under public ownership through nationalization. Future development in these areas should take place in the public sector. In the new order workers should share in the equity capital and management of industrial enterprises.

The private sector also in its own sphere must make its full contribution to the economy. Monopolies and cartels must be totally eliminated. The tax structure must be made truly progressive and drastic restrictions must be imposed on the consumption of luxuries.

Cottage Industries

Extensive support and encouragement must be extended to small-scale and cottage industries. Such support should include ensuring regular supply of raw materials such as yarn and dye-stuffs to handloom weavers at reasonable prices. Marketing and credit facilities also be made available to them. Small-scale industries must be developed through co-operatives and dispersed throughout the countryside, reaching into the depths of the rural areas, so that desperately needed employment opportunities are extended to our rural masses.

Jute and Cotton

Jute has suffered from criminal neglect. A discriminatory exchange rate and parasitic middle men have denied the growers a fair price. Nationalisation of the jute trade and much greater emphasis on jute research aimed at improving quantity and yield per acre will enable jute to make its rightful contribution to our economy.

Cotton needs similar attention and, therefore, we believe that cotton trade should also be nationalised and measures adopted to improve quality and yield of our major cash crops, tea, sugarcane and tobacco still suffer from appallingly low yields due to neglect by previous governments.

In a resource-poor country every effort must be made to ensure rapid increase in productivity. A fair and stable price to the growers should also be ensured.

Agricultural Sector

Indeed our entire agricultural sector needs to be revolutionised. The jagirdari, zamindari and sardari system in West Pakistan must be abolished. The entire land system has to undergo a radical reorientation in the interest of the actual tillers of land. Ceilings must be imposed on land holdings. Land above such ceilings and government khas land must be redistributed to landless cultivators.

Agriculture must be modernised. The obstacle presented by the fragmentation and sub-division of land holdings must be overcome. An immediate step in the right direction would be taken to induce the tillers to group their holdings under multi-purpose co-operatives. Government could provide effective inducement for this purpose by funelling through such co-operatives vital inputs such as irrigation, embankment drainage deep tubewells, power pumps, fertiliser, improved seeds, agricultural implements and machinery credit and instruction in modern agricultural techniques.

As a measure of immediate relief to our peasants who are groaning under the burden of land revenue we would abolish land revenue in respect of such holdings. Ultimately we aim to abolish the present system of land revenue.

Three vital areas which form part of the infra-structure of the economy must be accorded the highest priority. The first is flood control.

Flood Control

A comprehensive flood control programme must be implemented on an emergency basis. Measures to prevent water-logging and salinity in West Pakistan must also be implemented at an accelerated pace.

Power

The next vital area is that of power. There must be massive expansion in power generation, and distribution. An extensive rural electrification must be launched to take electricity to the villages so as to make it possible for small-scale industries to be established. We aim to attain power generation capacity of 2500 megawatts in Bengal within a year. Every source of power must be harnessed to maximise power generation capacity. The Rooppur Nuclear Power Project and Jamalganj Coal Project must be immediately implemented. Natural gas must also be fully utilised.

Communication

The third vital area is that of transport and communications. The highest priority is accorded by us to the construction of a bridge over the River Jamuna to enable direct communications to and from North Bengal. Bridges should also be developed over different points on the River Indus in Sind and the Punjab and over the Buriganga, Sitalakha and Karnaphuli.

The development of ports, both sea-ports and inland river ports as also roads and railways must be accorded the highest priority.

Education

No investment is as vital for the healthy development of our society than investment in education. It is an alarming fact that the number of primary schools in Bengal has declined since 1947. Only 10 per cent of our population has attained literacy and the number of illiterates is increasing by over 1 million persons per year. Primary Education is denied to more than half of the nation's children. Only 18 per cent of our

boys and 6 per cent of our girls complete the first five years of elementary school. We believe that at least 4 per cent of the gross national product should be committed to education. The salary of college and school teachers and in particular school teachers, must be substantially increased. Illiteracy must be eradicated by adoption of extraordinary methods.

A crash programme must be launched to extend free compulsory primary education to all children within five years. Secondary education should be made readily accessible to all sections of our people. New universities including medical and technical universities must be rapidly established. Poverty should not be allowed to deprive meritorious boys and girls of the opportunity to pursue higher education. Immediate steps should be taken to ensure that Bengali and Urdu should replace English in all walks of life while every effort should be made to encourage the development of regional languages.

Turning to the problem of the cities we find low-income groups living in sub-human conditions. The so-called improvement trust has been busy developing luxurious residential areas for the wealthy. While the poor have been left to fend for themselves future urban development concentrate on providing for the needs of the poor majority of city dwellers. Low cost urban housing must be accorded the highest priority.

In the field of health even a minimum measure of medical relief is denied to over 90 p.c. of our population. Immediate measures should be undertaken to establish a rural medical centre at every union and a hospital at every thana headquarters. National service in the rural areas should be introduced for medical graduates and para-medical personnel must be trained in large number to staff the rural health centres.

Workers

Industrial workers play as vital a role in the economy as in the people's struggle. Their basic rights to form trade unions to bargain collectively and to strike must be guaranteed. A living wage and the basic amenities such as housing, education and medical care for themselves and their children must be assured. All labour laws which restrict the basic rights of workers must be

replaced. By ensuring that workers are given a stake in the industry they can be expected to make their full contribution towards increasing industrial productivity. Productivity in all sections of the economy must be increased to the maximum extent possible if we are to meet the needs of our society.

The wage structure throughout the economy must be altered in keeping with the dictates of Justice. Price stabilisation measures must be adopted to protect the real wages of the workers and low paid employees against spiralling inflation.

Minority

We firmly believe in the equality of all citizens. The members of the minority community should know that we have always stood against every form of communalism. They shall enjoy equal rights with all other citizens and shall enjoy equal protection of the laws. Every effort must be made to develop our tribal areas so that these areas can be fully integrated with other areas and the tribal people are able to enjoy equal opportunities with other citizens in all walks of life. Our brothers in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, in the off-shore islands and the coastal areas, require special assistance to develop their latent resources, in order to enable them to play their rightful part in our national life.

Muhajirs

Muhajirs should be integrated into the national life so that they may become assimilated with the local people and thus enjoy equal rights and opportunities with them in all walks of life.

I must repudiate once and for all the false propaganda that Islam is endangered by the Six-point formula or our economic programme. Nothing which promotes justice between region and region and man and man can be opposed to Islam. We have affirmed our commitment to the constitutional principle that no law should be enacted or imposed in Pakistan which is repugnant to the injunctions of Islam as contained in the Holy Quran and Sunnah.

Foreign Policy

To turn to the important area of foreign policy, we believe that it is imperative for us to avoid involvement in global power conflicts. We must therefore, pursue a true independent non-aligned foreign policy. We are committed to the immediate withdrawal from SEATO and CEN IO and all other military pacts, and to avoid any such involvements in the future. We support the struggle of the oppressed people of the world against imperialism, colonialism and apartheid. In keeping with the principle 'friendship for all and malice towards none', we believe in peaceful coexistence with all states and in particular our neighbours. We believe that normalisation of our relations with our neighbours would be to the best advantage of our people. We, therefore, attach the highest importance to the settlement of our outstanding disputes. We have emphasised the importance of a just settlement of the Kashmir dispute in accordance with United Nations resolutions. The threat of grave and permanent damage to the economy of Bengal posed by the completion of Farakka barrage must be immediately met. Every effort must be made for a just solution of this problem without further delay.

But these programmes and policies can only be implemented if power is won by the people. Elections will serve as a referendum on basic national issues, particularly that of autonomy on the basis of the six-point formula. The elected representatives of the people alone can give to this country a constitution which will be a durable basis for living together. It is for this reason that we have repeatedly pointed out that restrictions sought to be imposed on the constitution-making power of the elected representatives of the people are not legitimate.

We would once again urge the President to repeal the restrictive provisions of the Legal Framework Order. It would also help to create conditions congenial for restoration of democracy if all pending cases and warrants against political workers, students and labourers arising out of political activities and out of last year's mass upsurge are withdrawn, and all sentences imposed in such cases are commuted. All political prisoners detained without trial should also be released.

Armed Forces

It is imperative for the security of the nation that our armed forces should not have to carry the burden of civil administration or to have to involve itself in politics. These highly trained professionals should be left free to devote themselves exclusively to the vital task of defending the nation's frontiers.

I would like to end by saying that as a nation we must prove equal to the challenge that faces us. A real living democracy must be established. The different people who make up Pakistan can only live together within a democratic framework. Any attempt to destroy democracy would in the process destroy Pakistan. Justice between region and region must be ensured by granting full regional autonomy to the federating units on the basis of our six-point formula. Within such a federal democratic framework, radical economic programmes must be implemented to bring about a social revolution.

The Awami League has resolved to face this great challenge. We believe that with the support and confidence of the people which our party enjoys we shall Inshallah, be able successfully to meet the challenge.

THE MANIFESTOS OF THE DIFFERENT POLITICAL PARTIES IN OUTLINE

Preparatory to the elections and soon after the campaigns started, all the parties presented their manifestos and programmes. The election programmes that were published in the manifestos of the respective parties could be summarised as follows :

AWAMI LEAGUE

President :

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman

- (i) A real living democracy be established in which people will live in freedom and dignity and where justice and equality will prevail.

- (ii) Fundamental rights and freedoms to be guaranteed by constitution.
- (iii) The character of the Government to be federal and parliamentary.
- (iv) The Federal Government to be responsible only for defence and foreign affairs.
- (v) Two separate currencies mutually or freely convertible in each wing, or one currency with separate regional reserve banks will be necessary to prevent transfer of resources and flight of capital from one region to another.
- (vi) Fiscal Policy to be the responsibility of the federating units.
- (vii) Separate accounts to be maintained of the foreign exchange earnings of each of the federating units. Foreign trade and aid to be under the federating units.
- (viii) Federating units to be empowered to maintain a militia or para-military force.
- (ix) The Constitution to guarantee the independence of the judiciary.
- (x) Naval headquarters and training establishments to be shifted to Chittagong.
- (xi) The administration to be democratic.
 - (a) The Pakistan Central and Superior Services shall be abolished.
 - (b) Recruitment to the Federal services to be made from all parts of Pakistan on the basis of population.
 - (c) District administration to be vested in the elected councils.

- (d) Basic administrative units to be strengthened by converting sub-divisions into districts.
- (xii) A socialist economic order to be introduced to remove economic injustice between man and man.
- (xiii) All the key industries to be nationalised. They would be in the following priority :

Banking ; Insurance ; Heavy Industries ; Foreign Trade ; Jute Trade ; Cotton Trade ; Interwing and International Transport and other key industries to be determined by planning agencies.

- (xiv) Progressive Taxation to be introduced.
- (xv) Monopolies and cartels to be abolished.
- (vi) Luxury consumption to be restricted.
- (xvii) Industrial workers to participate in equity capital and management.
- (xviii) Abolition of Jagirdari, Zamindri, Sardari all over the country.
- (xix) Land Revenue to be exemted upto the holdings of 25 bighas (82 acres) of Land.
- (xx) All rights of workers and trade unions to be guaranteed by law.
- (xxi) Problems of employment, education, health, housing, communications, to be given fullest priority.
- (xxii) Foreign policy to be independent and non-aligned based on the principle of friendship to all and malice towards none.
- (xxiii) Fullest support against Imperialism, Colonialism and Apartheid,
- (xxiv) Minorities to enjoy complete equality before the law and equal protection thereof.

MUSLIM LEAGUE (COUNCIL)

President :

Mian Mumtaz Mohammed Khan Daultana

- (i) Universal adult Franchise and Federal System of Government with full Autonomy for provinces.
- (ii) Three subjects, namely ; Defence, Currency and Foreign Affairs to remain with Centre.
- (iii) Pakistan to be a strong welfare state based on principles of Islamic Justice and equality.
- (iv) Establishment of Pakistan's Capital and other Central Government establishments in East Pakistan with a view to removing existing economic disparity between two wings of the country.
- (v) Pakistan belongs to its people and the people must rule over it. No system of Government except democracy will be allowed to function.
- (vi) Integrity and solidarity of Pakistan must be kept above any other consideration.
- (vii) All means of Finance accumulation, all key industries and all major power-sources shall be nationalized and run by public representatives and experts.
- (viii) Additional recruitment to Armed Forces and Central Services and Ambassadorial assignments from East Pakistan in proportion to the population of the province.

NATIONAL AWAMI PARTY

President :

Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani

- (i) Federal Parliamentary form of Government ; Law making and voting power on budget for assemblies ; regional autonomy for East-West Pakistan ; restora-

tion of provinces of Punjab, Sind, NWFP, Baluchistan and formation of a zonal federation in West Pakistan.

- (ii) East Pakistan to be made self-sufficient in defence ; naval headquarters to be shifted to East Pakistan.
- (iii) Release of all Political prisoners.
- (iv) Vested capital of bureaucrats and imperialists, Banks, Insurance and Jute industry to be nationalised.
- (v) Economy of East Pakistan to be people oriented and a complete stoppage of the flight of capital from this province ; concentration of capital in a few hands to be stopped ; all basic industries to be brought under Government control.
- (vi) Peaceful settlement of Kashmir dispute ; rights of self determination to people of Kashmir ; withdrawal from SEATO and CENTO ; abolition of Colonialism and Neo-Colonialism.

PAKISTAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY

President :

Nurul Amin

- (i) In favour of restoring the 1956 Constitution.
- (ii) Having a Federal Parliamentary form of Government with a bicameral legislature at the centre ; Lower House being composed on basis of population and Upper House being composed on the basis of equal representation of all federating units.
- (iii) Centre having Defence, Foreign Affairs, Currency and Federal Finance, inter-wing and external Communications, Trade and such other subjects as would be agreed upon.
- (iv) A citizens army would be raised in both wings.
- (v) Society to be reoriented in true Islamic spirit and Islamic value will be revived.

- (vi) Education system of the country to be completely overhauled in accordance with ideology of Pakistan.
- (vii) A study of the Holy Quran and Islamiyat to be compulsory for all Muslims. Non-muslims to be educated in their own religion.
- (iii) Policy in respect of Foreign Loans and exports to be revived to make full use of internal resources.

PAKISTAN MUSLIM LEAGUE

President :

Khan Abdul Qayyum Khan

- (i) Preservation of ideology of Pakistan.
- (ii) Strong Centre to safeguard country's solidarity and economic stability ; reasonable amount of provincial autonomy.
- (iii) Realization of Islamic Musawat, that is, equality as enunciated by Holy Quran and Sunnah and not by any other ism.
- (iv) Nationalization of all big industries including Banking and Insurance, essential for peoples' welfare and Nation's defence.

MUSLIM LEAGUE (CONVENTION)

President :

Fazlul Qader Chaudhury

- (i) The future Constitution of Pakistan to be truly Islamic in character ; No laws to be repugnant to Islamic injunctions.
 - (ii) Centre to have a bicameral legislature.
 - (iii) A strong centre with guarantee of full autonomy to provinces.
- favour of Parliamentary system of Government.

- (v) Students to have a say in the affairs of their educational institutions and measures to be taken to ensure that educational institutions remain absolutely free from unhealthy influences.

NATIONAL AWAMI PARTY

President :

Khan Abdul Wali Khan

- (i) Nationalization of basic and heavy industries, Banks Insurance Companies and Jute Trade.
- (ii) Complete provincial autonomy leaving only three subjects, namely, Defence, Foreign Affairs and Currency with Centre.
- (ii) Safeguard fundamental rights of people specially working class and peasantry.
- (iii) Setting up of a Socio-Economic order free from all types of exploitation,
- (iv) Separate economic plan for East Pakistan in order to remove Inter-Wing disparity.
- (v) Equitable distribution of wealth through well planned economic system and amelioration of common man's lot.
- (vi) Settlement of problems of Kashmir, Farkka Barrage and Indian Muslims.
- (vii) Independent and non-aligned Foreign Policy and friendly relations with Afro-Asian countries in general and neighbours in particular.

JAMAAT-I-ISLAMI

President :

Maulana Abul Ala Maudoodi

- (i) Aims at consolidating the ideological basis, community and integrity of Pakistan.

- (ii) National languages to replace English as medium of instruction and Public Schools be closed to end dual education system in the country.
- (iii) Social environment to be moulded in accordance with tenets of Islam. Every effort to be made to weed out moral evils and to educate people in matters of religious beliefs and practices. Family Planning scheme to be discarded and challenge of growing population to be met by improving resources of the country ;
- (iv) Opposition to Imperialism in all forms and in all parts of the world.
- (v) Demand for Pakistan's withdrawal from SEATO and CENTO.
- (vi) Effective steps for solution of Kashmir problem.
- (vii) Ban on all form of Usury, and Interest, Stock Exchange, Illegal sales, Hoarding.
- (viii) Eradication of all forms of exploitation.
- (ix) Resolve to break all Monopolies and Cartels in industry.

PAKISTAN PEOPLE'S PARTY

President :

Z. A. Bhutto

- (i) Realization of three-fold motto of party : Islam, Democracy and Socialism.
- (ii) Achievement of equality among all classes of people through Islamic socialism. To protect Islam and to work for its glory.
- (iii) In favour of a viable Federal and Democratic constitution embodying harmonious relationship between Centre and Provinces.

- (iv) To contest polls on socialistic economic programme.
- (v) Nationalization of Finance and all basic industries.
- (vi) To pursue independent non-aligned Foreign Policy and meaningful bilateral relations with Big Powers and closer relations with socialistic countries, particularly People's Republic of China. To follow a strong policy against India till all basic disputes between her and Pakistan viz Kashmir and Farakka are settled in a just manner.

THE RESULTS OF THE GENERAL ELECTIONS

Between December, 7, 1970 and January 17, 1971 elections were held all over Pakistan and according to Yahya Khan they were 'free and fair'

The Awami League won 167 of the 169 East Bengal seats in the National Assembly and thus came to command a clear majority in a house of 313 members. It also won 288 of the 300 seats of the provincial legislature gaining 80% of the votes cast.

The distribution of the National Assembly seats was as follows : *

	<i>General</i>	<i>Women</i>
East Pakistan	162	7
The Punjab	82	3
Sind	27	1
Baluchistan	4	0
The North-West Frontier Province	18	1
Centrally Administered Tribal Areas	7	1
Total :	300	13

* from Pakistan Affairs Special issue December 16, 1970.

The break up of the election result is as follows :

Pakistan Awami League	...	...	167
Pakistan Democratic Party	...	...	1
Independent in East Bengal	...	...	1
Pakistan People's Party	...	...	85
Council Muslim League	...	...	7
Convention Muslim League	...	...	2
Quaid-i-Azam Muslim League	...	...	9
N. A. P. (Wali Khan)	...	...	8
Jamaat-i-Islami	...	...	4
Jamiat-Ulema-I-Pakistan (Hazarvi)	...	...	7
Jamaat-i-Ulema-I-Pakistan and			
Nizam-i-Islam Party (Thanvi group)	...	...	7
Independents from West Pakistan	...	...	15
			313

In different provinces distribution of seats is shown below :*

<i>East Pakistan</i>			<i>Party Position</i>
Awami League	...	...	167
P. D. P.	...	...	1
Independent	...	...	1
			169
<i>Frontier (NWFP)</i>			
PML (Qayyum)	...	...	7
Jamiat (Hazarvi)	...	...	6
NAP (Wali)	...	...	3+2 Women
PPP	...	...	1
Jamaat-i-Islami	...	...	1
Independents	...	...	7
			25+2

* from Pakistan Affairs Special issue, December, 1970.

<i>Punjab</i>			<i>Party Position</i>
PPP	...	...	62+3 Women
CML	...	...	7
Jamiat (Ahle Sunnat)	...	...	4
PML (Convention)	...	...	2
Jamaat-i-Islam	...	...	1
PML (Qayyum)	...	...	1
Independents	...	...	5

82+3 Women

Baluchistan

NAP (Wali)	...	...	3
Jamiat (Hazarvi)	...	...	1
			4

Sind

PPP	...	...	18+1 Woman
Jamaat-i-Islami	...	...	2
Jamiat (Ahle Sunnat)	...	...	3
PML (Qayyum)	...	...	1
Independents	...	...	3

27+1 Woman

THE AWAMI LEAGUE'S CONSTITUTIONAL PROPOSALS

After the election results were out politics revolved around the Awami League. The Awami League not only had absolute majority in the Provincial Assembly of East Bengal, but had majority also in the National Assembly taking into account even West Pakistan. A series of discussions took place among the party leaders and between the individual party and the President. Since it was the majority party in the National Assembly, it became the Awami League's responsibility to introduce the Constitutional Bill for the whole country and

accordingly the Parliamentary Party of the Awami League elected the 30 member Constitution Committee to draft the Bill. The draft constitution was prepared by experts of eminence after examining all aspects of the national problems and their implications,

The salient features of the draft constitution that was prepared by the Awami League were :

(1) *The Federal Parliamentary System*

National Assembly to remain sovereign. President only the titular head. Prime Minister to head the Cabinet and to be responsible to the National Assembly.

(2) *Guarantee of Fundamental Rights*

Freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of association, right to property ; freedom of trade, business and profession ; freedom of religions and educational institutions etc.

Laws inconsistent with or derogatory to the fundamental rights to be void.

(3) *Directive Principles*

Ensuring promotion of Islamic principles and life according to the Quran and Sunnah.

(4) *The Republic and Territories*

Five Federating Units to be called States i.e., East Bengal, Punjab, Sind, N.W.F.P. and Baluchistan. All Provincial States and tribal areas were to be incorporated into the adjusting federating units.

(5) *Federation*

Defence and Foreign Affairs would be the only subjects of the federal Government. Currency also would remain with the federal Government subject to two separate banks in two wings with one coordinating state bank and with effective provision stopping flight of capital from one wing to the other.

(6) *Taxation & Fiscal Policy*

Power of taxation and responsibility of tax collection would lie with the federating units with the provision of a constitutional allocation to be reimbursed directly for the federal government to meet its own expenses.

(7) *Foreign Exchange*

Separate accounts to be maintained of the foreign exchange earning of each of the federating units and shall be utilised primarily by the units.

There shall be if agreed by the federating units of West Wing, a special arrangement* to suit the needs of the people of different units and distribution of power and subjects would accordingly be adjusted with the federal government at the time of constitution making. This was suggested in view of the fact that some of the units in West Pakistan, because of geographical and other reasons, might like to have different arrangements with federal government.

(8) *A militia* or para-military force shall be raised by the federating units under their own control.

(9) *Planning, industry, foreign trade and negotiation and procurement of foreign aid* would remain subjects for federating units. Subjects allied to foreign affairs such as Passports,

*In 1966, when the six-point programme was placed before the nation, all the Provinces of West Pakistan were constituted into one unit and, therefore, the six-point programme envisaged only two units i.e. East and West Pakistan. But the formula as such was designed to guarantee autonomy to all the regions and that would have applied to all of them both in spirit and in content. The Awami League presented a guideline for an arrangement for the Provinces West Pakistan to preserve the interest of the smaller provinces and it left the making of final mechanism of this arrangement and the subject of the quantum of autonomy with the people of West Pakistan and their representatives. Awami League offered to accept in the constitution any formula that the West Pakistani Provinces would evolve for protection of their own interests.

Visa etc. and Defence and Currency would, however, remain with the federal government. All other residuary subjects would remain with the federating units.

(10) *Judiciary*: Judiciary would remain as an absolutely independent organ. The power and jurisdiction of both Supreme Court and High Court would be expanded to suit the need and situation. A permanent bench of Supreme Court would sit in East Bengal, otherwise the Supreme Court as a whole would remain a Central subject.

(11) *The Central Services of Pakistan would be Abolished*

Federal Government would recruit officers to run its departments on the basis of population from different federating units.

Design Revealed

Army Buys Time to Attack

The fundamental features of the proposed constitution prepared by the Awami League were known to the military rulers. At the end of the Round Table Conference in 1969 and just before the imposition of Martial Law for the second time, a draft constitution was sent to Ayub. Subsequently, after the election in 1971, the Constitution committee of the Parliamentary Party of the Awami League drafted a Constitution Bill, the salient features of which were basically the same as in the original one.

The idea was clear and the purpose was objective. All the federating units had individual identities marked by differences in language, culture and economy. Particularly, Bangladesh situated at a distance of 1200 miles was unlike the other federating units. Historically and culturally it had always been a distinct nation. Therefore, the principle of 'unity in diversity', allowing the maximum opportunity for the federating units to develop their own culture and economy, could be the only viable and pragmatic basis of any constitutional arrangement for Pakistan and her existence.

The post-election period was a time of hope, for never had a people spoken so decisively in the history of parliamentary democracy. It was widely believed in both wings of the country that an effective constitution based on the Six-point programme could be worked out. The Pakistan People's Party which emerged as the leading party in Sind and the Punjab did not raise the issue of Six Points in its election campaign

and had no obligation whatsoever to its electorate to resist it. In Baluchistan, the dominant party, the National Awami Party, was fully committed to the Six Points. Similarly in the NWFP, the NAP, dominant in the Provincial Assembly, wanted the fullest autonomy. The course of the elections, which marked the defeat of the reactionary parties, therefore gave every reason to be optimistic about the future of democracy in Pakistan.

Preparatory to the convening of the National Assembly, talks were expected between the main parties in the political arena. However, whilst the Awami League was always prepared, even before going to the Assembly, to explain its constitutional position to other parties and to discuss alternative proposals made by them, it believed that the spirit of true democracy demanded that the constitution be debated and finalised in the National Assembly itself, rather than in secret sessions. To this end, it insisted on an early summoning of the National Assembly. In anticipation of this session, the Awami League worked day and night to prepare a draft constitution based on the Six Points and fully examined all the implications of formulating and implementing such a constitution.

The first major talks over Pakistan's political future took place between General Yahya and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in mid-January. In this session General Yahya probed the extent of the Awami League's commitment to its programme and was assured that they were fully aware of its implications. But contrary to expectation Yahya did not spell out his own ideas about the constitution. General Yahya gave the impression of not finding anything seriously objectionable in the Six Points but emphasised the need for coming to an understanding with the PPP in West Pakistan.

The next round of talks took place between the PPP and the Awami League from 27th January, 1971 in Dacca where Mr. Bhutto and his team held a number of sessions with the Awami League to discuss the constitution.

Like Yahya, Mr. Bhutto did not bring any concrete proposals of his own about the nature of the constitution. He and his advisers were mainly interested in discussing, the implications of the Six-Points. Since their responses were essentially negative and they had no prepared brief of their own it was not possible for the talks to develop into serious negotiations where attempts could be made to bridge the gap between the two parties. It was evident that as yet Mr Bhutto had no formal proposal of his own to negotiate.

It must be made clear that when the PPP leaders left Dacca there was no indication from them that a deadlock had been reached with the Awami League. Rather they confirmed that all doors were open and that following a round of talks with West Pakistani leaders, the PPP would either have a second and more substantial round of talks with the Awami League or would meet in the National Assembly whose committees provided ample opportunity for detailed discussion of the constitution.

Mr Bhutto's announcement to boycott the National Assembly therefore came as a complete surprise. The boycott decision announced in a Press conference at Peshawar on February 15, 1971, was surprising because Mr. Bhutto had already been accommodated once by the President when he refused Sheikh Mujib's plea for an early session of the Assembly on February 15 and fixed it, in line with Mr Bhutto's preference, for March 3.

Following his decision to boycott the Assembly, Mr Bhutto launched a campaign of intimidation against all other parties in West Pakistan to prevent them from attending the session. In this task, there is evidence that Lt. Gen. Umer, Chairman of the National Security Council and close associate of Yahya, with a view to strengthening Mr Bhutto's hand, personally pressurised various West Wing leaders not to attend the Assembly. In spite of this display of pressure tactics by Mr Bhutto and Lt. Gen. Umer, all members of the National

Assembly from West Pakistan, except the PPP and the Qayyum Muslim League, had booked their seats to East Pakistan, for the session of March 3.

Within the QML itself, half their members had booked their seats and there were signs of revolt within the PPP where many members were wanting to come to Dacca.

GENERAL YAHYA KHAN'S BROADCAST ON MARCH 1, 1971

Faced with the breakdown of this joint front against Bangladesh, General Yahya obliged Mr Bhutto on March 1 by postponing the Assembly, not for any definite period, but sine die. The announcement postponing the N. A. Session was made over the radio on March 1, at five past one in the afternoon. The announcement is reproduced below :

"Today, Pakistan faces her gravest political crisis. I, therefore, consider it necessary to apprise you of the situation and the action that I propose to take to resolve our present difficulties. But before I do that let me recount to you the steps that I took from the day that the responsibility for the administration of the country devolved on me to transfer power to the elected representatives of the people.

In my very first address to the nation I had indicated the need for the smooth transfer of power. Since then we have moved forward step by step towards the achievement of this aim. In spite of there being Martial Law in the country I did not ban the political parties and in fact permitted full political activity with effect from the 1st of January 1970.

Later in March 1970 the Legal Framework Order, under which elections were to be held, was duly notified. All other work, including delimitation of constituencies and preparation of electoral rolls was completed with speed.

The election campaign, which was long and arduous, ended up in what we may all claim with pride, was one of the most peaceful and well organised general elections on the basis of adult franchise. As you

know, the elections were finally completed on 17 January, 1971.

Just prior to the elections in my address of the 3rd of December 1970, I had suggested to the leaders of the political parties that it would be useful for them to employ the period between the elections and the first session of the National Assembly in meeting each other and arriving at a consensus on the main provisions of our future constitution.

I had, at that time, indicated that to be successful these meetings would call for a spirit of give and take, trust in each other and realisation of the extreme importance of this particular juncture in our history. Appreciating the great significance of such exchanges of views between political leaders I tried to facilitate the process by giving them enough time to do so. I, therefore, decided to fix the 3rd of March as the date of the inaugural session of our National Assembly.

In the past few weeks certain meetings between our political leaders have indeed taken place. But I regret to say that instead of arriving at a consensus, some of our leaders have taken hard attitudes. This is most unfortunate. The political confrontation between the leaders of East Pakistan and those of the West is a most regrettable situation. This has cast a shadow of gloom over the entire nation.

The position briefly is that the major party of West Pakistan People's Party as well as certain other political parties have declared their intention not to attend the National Assembly session on the 3rd of March 1971. In addition, the general situation of tension created by India has further complicated the whole position. I have therefore decided to postpone the summoning of the National Assembly to a later date.

I have repeatedly stated, a constitution is not an ordinary piece of legislation but it is an agreement to live together. For a healthy and viable constitution therefore it is necessary that both East and West Pakistan have an adequate sense of participation in the process of constitution-making.

Needless to say I took this decision to postpone the date of the National Assembly with a heavy heart.

One has, however, to look at the practical aspects of such problems. I realised that with so many representatives of the people of West Pakistan keeping away from the Assembly if we were to go ahead with the inaugural session on the 3rd of March, the Assembly itself could have disintegrated and the entire effort made for the smooth transfer of power that has been outlined earlier would have been wasted.

It was therefore imperative to give more time to the political leaders to arrive at a reasonable understanding on the issue of constitution-making. Having been given this time I have every hope that they will rise to the occasion and resolve this problem. I wish to make a solemn promise to the people of Pakistan that as soon as the environments enumerated earlier become conducive to constitution-making, I will have no hesitation in calling the session of the Assembly immediately. As for myself, I would like to assure my countrymen that I shall do everything in my power to help the political leaders in achieving our common goal with even-handed justice which I have all along been doing.

In the end, I pray to Almighty Allah to guide us all in acting according to the dictum of the Father of the Nation, namely, faith, unity and discipline. I appeal to the political leaders and all my countrymen to exercise the utmost restraint at this grave hour of our lives”.

The reaction to the postponement in Bangladesh was inevitable and spontaneous and throughout the land people took to the streets to record their protest at this arbitrary act. People now felt sure that Yahya never really intended to transfer power, and was making a mockery of parliamentary politics. The popular mood was that the rights of Bangladesh could never be realised within the framework of Pakistan, where Yahya could so blatantly frustrate the summoning of an Assembly proclaimed by his own writ. The people urged Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to go for full independence.

Yahya's action postponing the National Assembly session was both immoral and illegal. The Legal Frame Work Order,

his own promulgated creation, did not provide for the postponement of the National Assembly once it was summoned. Section 14 of the Legal Frame Work Order laid down the provision for the summoning of the National Assembly etc.

The President had the authority to summon the National Assembly even if all the seats of the Assembly were not filled, but once it was summoned the President did not have the authority to postpone the session. The right to fix the time and place of the meeting of the National Assembly once convened was left with the Speaker and the power of adjournment was left with the National Assembly itself.

Section 14 of the Legal Frame Work Order reads as follows :

14, (1) After the close of the General election of members of the National Assembly, the President shall for the purpose of framing a Constitution for Pakistan, summon the National Assembly to meet on such day and at such time and place as he may think fit ; and the National Assembly so summoned shall stand constituted on the day of its first meeting :

Provided that nothing in this clause shall be construed as preventing the President from summoning the National Assembly on the ground that all the seats of the members have not been filled.

(2) After meeting as convened under clause (1). the National Assembly shall meet at such times and places as the Speaker may decide.

(3) The National Assembly shall, subject to reasonable adjournments, meet from day to day to transact its business.

Sheikh Mujib however continued to seek a political settlement. In calling for a programme of non-violent and non-cooperation movement on March 3, he chose the weapon of peaceful confrontation against the army as a means of bringing it to its senses. This was in itself a major gesture in

the face of the wanton and cold-blooded firing on unarmed demonstrators on March 1, 2, 3 and 4 which had already led to over a thousand innocent Bengali casualties.

SHEIKH MUJIBUR RAHMAN'S SPEECH OF MARCH 3, 1971

The pressure was mounting all over Bangladesh for more radical action than hitherto but Mujib showed tremendous restraint. On March 3 he addressed a meeting organised by the East Pakistan Students League and the Jatiya Sramik League at Paltan Maidan where everybody expected that he would accede to the overwhelming wishes of the people. But his speech, delivered in calm and metallic tones, was a masterpiece of disciplined utterance. He still showed his faith in constitutional methods and instead of taking any extreme step advised the people to restrain themselves and to remain disciplined. He called upon the people to resist acts of violence and to maintain harmony and unity among citizens, and to continue the movement peacefully. He also made an appeal to the leaders of the West Wing to come and 'sit' with him so as to find a solution to the constitutional crisis. The following is a translation of portions of his speech as it appeared in the vernacular press :

"We desire the prosperity and well being of the poor man of West Pakistan. We wish to live with them like brothers, but conspirators are in the way. They do not want us to be together. They have exploited us to the limit, and now they want us to be separated.

All who live in Bangladesh are Bengalis and it is our sacred duty to afford protection to the life and property of every citizen whether Bengali or non-Bengali, Hindu or Muslim.

I warn those who are refusing to share with us the task of framing a constitution. If they continue to do so, we shall frame a constitution ourselves.

We shall respectfully remember the martyrs of Tuesday night. They were unarmed people. And firing on

unarmed people is an act of cowardice. I however assure you, you will not be able to kill off 75 million people. I call upon the Martial Law authorities to withdraw the army to the barracks forthwith. The Bengalis helped raise the armed forces with their money not to be their targets.

I say to the authorities : if you are unable to maintain law and order hand over power to us. We know how to maintain peace and harmony. I call upon the people to resort to non-violent non-cooperation until power is handed over to the elected representatives of the people. This must be our protest against the indefinite postponement of the session of the National Assembly. No tax and revenue shall be paid to the government till it changes its attitude.

Employees of all government organizations shall refrain from attending their duties. Every citizen must maintain peace and discipline and avoid lawlessness and antisocial activities.

I shall address a rally on March 7 at Ramna Race Course. If the government does not change its mind by that time, I shall announce my next course of action at that meeting.

The present situation has been brought about by the Government by violating the mandate of the majority. The session of the National Assembly has been postponed sine die despite our request for an early session for the solution of the country's problems. I wanted the Assembly to convene on February 15 but it did not. When Mr. Bhutto, who is the leader of the minority party, asked for a session by early March, his wish was granted. When Mr. Bhutto said he would not attend the National Assembly, its session was postponed. I am the leader of the majority party in the country, and yet I was neither consulted before the announcement of a date for a meeting of the Assembly nor when it was postponed.

We must resist acts of violence and conduct the movement peacefully and stop paying taxes. Internal services like the press, water supply, ambulance, and electricity should not be disrupted during the observance of hartal.

I urge the press of Bangladesh not to abide by any unjust restrictions imposed on them by any quarters.

The March 3 speech of the Sheikh was therefore a call for a non-violent non-cooperation movement. The response to the call was from every walk of life and the non-cooperation was total. It was capped by the refusal of the Chief Justice of Dacca High Court to administer the Oath of office to the new governor Lt. General Tikka Khan. The entire civil administration including the police and Civil Service of Pakistan stopped work. Even the civilian employees of the defence establishment joined in the boycott. Food supply to the army also stopped.

GENERAL YAHYA KHAN'S BROADCAST OF MARCH 6, 1971

Faced with this demonstration of total support to the Awami League and its historic non-cooperation movement, General Yahya changed his tactics. On March 6, Yahya made a highly provocative speech putting the blame on the Awami League leadership for the latest crisis without referring at all to Mr. Bhutto who was the architect of the whole business and who had declared that he would not attend the National Assembly session if it sat on March 3. The speech of Yahya Khan will be self-explanatory :

"In my statement of the 1st of March I had recounted to you the steps that I took to transfer power to the elected representatives of the people. In the same statement I had also said that I, on my part, would do everything possible to help our elected leaders in moving towards the attainment of our common goal which was and which continues to be, a smooth transition towards a democratic way of life.

As you would recall, in this direction my latest step has been to call a conference of the leaders of all parliamentary groups to meet me at Dacca on the 10th of March. Unfortunately, however, in total disregard of my genuine and sincere efforts to bridge the gap between the various points of view, the response to my call has been rather discouraging, particularly from the leader of our majority party who, before the

announcement over the Radio had given me the impression that he would not be averse to the idea of such a conference. His outright rejection was therefore both a surprise and a disappointment. As you are aware, Mr. Nurul Amin has also refused to participate. This in effect means that there would be no representative from East Pakistan in the proposed conference.

You will thus see that from the time the elections were completed practically every step that I took in the process of transfer of power has in one way or another been obstructed by some of our leaders. I might also mention at this stage, that after the completion of the elections on the 17th of January and after I had met the leaders of the two major parties and the leaders had conferred among themselves at Dacca I had invited them to come and discuss the situation with me on more than one occasion with a view to working out an acceptable method of moving forward. I regret to say that the President of the Awami League did not think it fit to respond to my invitations and we thus lost the opportunity of avoiding mis-understandings and of working out an amicable solution.

As the resulting environments were not conducive to constitution-making and a very large number of West Pakistani representatives refused to attend the Assembly session on the 3rd of March, I came to the conclusion that having the inaugural session of the National Assembly on that date would be a futile exercise and was likely to result in the dissolution of the Assembly itself. I, therefore, tried to save the situation by postponing the date of the session. I had thereby hoped to achieve two purposes—firstly, to save the Assembly and all the national effort that had gone into its birth and secondly, to allow time for passions to cool down and a fruitful dialogue to take place. But instead of accepting the decision in the spirit in which it was taken, our East Pakistani leadership reacted in a manner which resulted in destructive elements coming out in the streets and destroying life and property. Needless to say, Government could not have remained a silent spectator in such a situation. It was, therefore, my moral obligation to take the minimum essential measures for protecting the lives and property of the innocent otherwise peaceful law-abiding

citizens who in the absence of any such measures would have fallen victim to extremist elements. I am, however, sorry to say that lawlessness continued to be the order of the day in East Pakistan.

For some reason, the postponement of the date of the Assembly session has been completely misunderstood. Whether this is deliberate or otherwise I cannot say but one thing is certain this misunderstanding has become the rallying cry for the forces of disorder. When such forces become activated the main sufferers are the innocent citizens whose daily life is seriously disturbed and who are in constant danger of suffering bodily injury and even death. While realising that an application of adequate force can effectively bring the situation under control I have deliberately ordered the authorities in East Pakistan to use the absolute minimum force required to stop the law breakers from loot, arson and murder.

It will be seen that only one of my purposes behind the postponement of the session of the Assembly, namely, the preservation of the Assembly itself, has been achieved. The other and equally important purpose of having a fruitful dialogue has, however, not been achieved. In the meanwhile innocent lives are being lost for which the bereaved families have my fullest sympathies and which in a situation that is not of my creation is the least that I can offer. As explained earlier, my efforts to arrive at a date for the opening of the National Assembly session in consultation with political leaders have been frustrated.

I, therefore, in my capacity as President and Chief Martial Law Administrator of this country, feel duty bound to resolve this unfortunate impasse by taking a decision myself. I cannot wait indefinitely. I have consequently decided that the inaugural session of the National Assembly will take place on 25th March. It is my sincere hope that this decision will elicit a patriotic and constructive response from all our political leaders.

Since my efforts to get the leaders to arrive at a broad consensus on the process of constitution making have not succeeded, to those political parties who may have doubts about the viability of the future constitution of Pakistan, I would like to say that no

better assurance than the provisions of the Legal Framework Order is needed.

Finally let me make it absolutely clear that no matter what happens, as long as I am in command of the Pakistan Armed Forces and Head of the State, I will ensure complete and absolute integrity of Pakistan. Let there be no doubt or mistake on this point. I have a duty toward millions of people of East and West Pakistan to preserve this country. They expect this from me and I shall not fail them. I will not allow a handful of people to destroy the homeland of millions of innocent Pakistanis. It is the duty of the Pakistan armed forces to ensure the integrity, solidarity and security of Pakistan—a duty in which they have never failed.

Let us go forth with full confidence in ourselves and faith in Almighty Allah towards the goal we have set before us for achieving a democratic way of life and to enable the elected representatives of the people to fulfil their duty which the nation expects of them."

SHEIKH MUJIBUR RAHMAN'S SPEECH OF MARCH 7, 1971

In the meantime, as declared on 1 March, preparations for a public meeting, to be addressed by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, were under way. The people of Bangladesh, man or woman, young or old—were all expecting a call for independence. But Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's speech on March 7 at the Race Course before one million people was still basically the same. It was again a call for settling matters through constitutional and peaceful means. But since the people by that time had lost faith in President Yahya's promise to transfer power and restore democracy the Sheikh laid down four conditions for attending the National Assembly and by doing so he contained the public mood and at the same time left a way open for Yahya Khan to explore the last chance for a peaceful settlement. He did not close the door towards negotiation. Despite overwhelming public sentiment Sheikh Mujibur Rahman restrained himself from hoisting the

flag of Bangladesh which was kept ready behind the dias at the meeting. People expected that he would hoist the flag on that day.

The 4 conditions that were put forward by the Sheikh were as follows :—

- (1) The Martial Law will have to be lifted ;
- (2) The soldiers must return to the barracks ;
- (3) A public enquiry into the incidents of massacre by the armed forces should be made ; and
- (4) Power should be transferred immediately to the elected representatives.

The Sheikh further declared that till these conditions were fulfilled the Awami League would not attend the National Assembly Session and the non-violent civil disobedience movement would continue. His speech of March 7 could be translated as follows :

Brethren,

I am before you today with a very heavy heart. You know and understand everything. We have done our best, and yet the streets of Dacca, Chittagong, Khulna, Rangpur and Jessore are drenched with the blood of my brothers.

Today the people of Bengal want freedom ; they want to live ; they want their rights restored.

You elected Awami League to frame the constitution. We hoped that the National Assembly would sit and we would frame the constitution. Through this constitution, the people would achieve their economic, political and cultural freedom. The history of the last 23 years is the history of the agonised cry of the people of Bengal, it is a painful history of giving blood, it is the history of the tears of an oppressed people.

We gave blood in 1952. In 1954, even though we won the election, we were denied the opportunity to rule. By promulgating Martial Law in 1958, Ayub Khan kept us in bondage for ten years.

In 1966, the six-point formula was submitted before the nation and for this many of my brothers were murdered.

In 1969, in the face of the mass movement Ayub fell and Yahya came. Yahya said he would hand over power to the people and there would be a constitution. We accepted his promise. You all know what happened after that. We had discussions with Yahya Khan. We requested him to summon the National Assembly Session on February 15, but he did not listen to me, although I am the leader of the majority party. He listened to Mr. Bhutto, who is the leader of a minority party. I am not only the leader of the majority party in Bengal, I am the leader of the majority party of Pakistan as a whole. Bhutto demanded National Assembly should meet in the first week of March. Yahya obligingly called the session on 3rd March. I said even then we would attend the Session and, although we constitute the majority in the National Assembly, would listen to anyone who would talk reason, even if it came from an individual member.

Mr. Bhutto came to Dacca. We had discussions with him. Before he left, Mr. Bhutto said that the door of discussion was not closed and that these would continue further. Other parliamentary leaders of West Pakistan including Moulana Hazarvi and Mufti Mahmud came to Dacca and we had discussions with them. Our aim was to frame a constitution through mutual consultations. However, I informed them that I have no right to alter the six-point programme ; it belongs to the people.

Mr. Bhutto came out with threats. He said he was not ready to be a double hostage by coming to Dacca. He said that the Assembly would turn into a slaughter house. He told the West Pakistan members of the Assembly that if they attended the Assembly Session there would be a blood bath, their heads would be smashed and they would all be killed. He would launch a movement from Peshawar to Karachi. Not a single shop would be allowed to remain open.

Despite these threats 35 West Pakistani members of the National Assembly arrived in Dacca. But on March 1 Yahya Khan postponed the Session of the

National Assembly. He blamed the people of Bengal, he blamed me and he said that it was not possible to achieve anything because of my obstinacy.

The people of Bengal resented this postponement. I called for a 'hartal' in order to carry on a peaceful movement. People came out in the streets spontaneously.

But what did we get ? Arms have been used against the unarmed people of Bengal. They have no weapons. The arms we bought at our own cost to defend the country from external aggression, are being used to kill my innocent people. The suffering people are the targets of bullets.

Whenever we Bengalees, the majority of the nation, sought power and to exercise our right to rule, a conspiracy was immediately hatched to stop it. They unleashed repression on us.

Yahya Khan had alleged that I had agreed to attend the Round Table Conference on March 10, but the facts are these. I had a conversation with him. I told him, he was the President of the country ; he should come to Dacca and see how my poor people were being killed ; how the laps of mothers have been made empty.

I had made it known before that there would be no more Round Table Conferences. What Round Table Conference and with whom ? Would I sit in a Round Table Conference with those who have robbed our mothers of their children ?

On March 3 at Paltan Maidan I gave a call for a non-cooperation movement. I asked you to stop offices and courts from functioning and stop paying taxes and you did.

Suddenly without any consultation with us and after discussions with Mr. Bhutto lasting five hours Yahya Khan made a speech putting the entire blame for the developments on me and on the people of Bengal. While Mr. Bhutto was the guilty one, the people of Bengal were fired upon. We are the people who got the bullets and we are the people who are blamed.

Our struggle from now on is a struggle for emancipation, for freedom. Blood stains of those killed have not yet dried, and I cannot step on the blood of the martyrs to attend the National Assembly on March 25.

Yahya Khan has convened the Assembly. But my demands are: Lift Martial Law; take the soldiers back to the barracks; investigate the mass killings; and transfer power to the elected representatives. After these we will consider whether we could sit in the National Assembly or not. Before these demands are fulfilled, there is no question of our sitting in the Assembly. The people have not given me that right. My brethren, do you have faith in me?

I do not want the Prime Ministership of the country. I want to get for the people their rights. The enemies of these rights have not succeeded in making me surrender by offering me the Prime Ministership, or by their plot of having me hanged. You freed me from the conspiracy case. I told you at the Race Course Ground after my release that I would repay the debt of blood with blood. Do you remember? I am ready to do so now.

I would like to tell you that from today all Courts, including the High and Supreme Courts, all offices and educational institutions will remain closed for an indefinite period. No officer will attend office. This is my direction. Rickshaws and trains will however run so that the poor are not subjected to hardship.

The Secretariat, Supreme Court, High Court, District Court, Government, Semi-Government, and autonomous bodies would remain closed. Banks would remain open for two hours only for transactions within East Bengal. No money will go from East Bengal to West Pakistan. Bengalees should act with caution. The telegraph and telephone systems would continue service within Bangladesh, but journalists would be allowed to send their despatches abroad.

There is a plot to finish off the people of Bangladesh. So please be careful.

You would draw your salary at the usual time. If they do not pay you, if they fire one single bullet, turn every home in Bengal into a fortress. You will have to

face the enemy with whatever you have. We must make him die of thirst and hunger if necessary. The roads and ferries will have to be closed down. If I am not there to give you directions or if none of my colleagues is there for this purpose, you would continue yourselves.

To the soldiers of the Pakistan Army I say this.

You are my brothers, if you stay in the barracks, you will be left alone, but if you come to murder us the consequences will be bad. You will not be able to suppress seventy-five million people anymore. Bengalees have learnt how to face death—nobody can suppress them.

For the families of martyrs, the Awami League have formed a Relief Committee. We will try to help. Contribute as much as you can afford.

The mill owners will pay workers who have taken part in the last seven days' hartal or were unable to work because of the curfew. Government employees, please note, must obey what I say. We don't want to see anybody in the office. Till the freedom of this country is achieved payment of taxes would remain suspended. Please leave it to me. I know how to carry on movement.

But be on your guard. You should remember that the enemy has infiltrated among us. They would try to create dissension among us under cover. Bengalis, Non-Bengalis, Hindus and Muslims are all our brothers. It is our responsibility to protect them all.

Trains will run, but not for the purpose of transporting troops. If they carry troops, then I shall not be responsible for the consequences.

If the radio, television and news papers do not circulate news of our movement, then no Bengalee would go to work in these institutions.

There is still a possibility of our living like brothers with the people of West Pakistan, if there is a peaceful settlement. Otherwise there is none. If the Pakistan Army commits any more excesses we may never look

at one another's face again. I request you to form action committees in every village, mohalla and union under the leadership of the Awami League. Be ready with whatever weapons you have in your hands. Since we have given blood once, we will give more, but Bengal must be liberated. This is a struggle for survival, for emancipation, and for freedom.

You should remain prepared and let not your struggle lose its intensity. Continue with your movement and demonstrations. If the movement cools down they will crack down upon us. You should maintain discipline because without discipline no nation can win a struggle.

‘JOY BANGLA’



NEGOTIATIONS AND AGREEMENT BETWEEN SHEIKH MUJIBUR RAHMAN AND GENERAL YAHYA KHAN REACHED DURING THEIR TALKS ON MARCH 1971.

On March 15 President Yahya came to Dacca with some of his Generals to have talks once again with Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and these continued till March 25. At first the talks were in camera between the President and the Sheikh only who arrived at an agreement. Meanwhile the President had also invited the leaders from West Pakistan including Mr. Bhutto to join the discussions. After broad agreement was reached between the Sheikh and Yahya Khan discussions at experts level were held. The Awami League experts sat with the President's advisers in several sessions to work out the details of the broad agreement already reached.*

* In these discussions President Yahya Khan was assisted by Lt. General Pirzada, Mr. Justice Cornelius, Ex-Chief Justice of Supreme Court of Pakistan and Col. Hassan, the military advocate. The Awami League leader was assisted by his trusted colleagues, namely Syed Nazrul Islam, M. Mansur Ali, Khandaker Moshtaque Ahmed, Tajuddin Ahmed and A. H. M. Kamaruzzaman. Dr. Kamal Hossain was also included to advise on constitutional matters.

At the beginning of the talks President Yahya had expressed regrets for what had happened and his sincere desire for a political settlement. In a crucial meeting with Sheikh Mujibur Rahman he was asked to state positively the junta's position on the Awami League's 4 Point proposals. Yahya indicated that there was no serious objection in implementing these proposals. Accordingly, when the broad agreement was reached, advisers from both the parties were named who held a series of meetings amongst themselves to prepare the instrument of implementation. Political circles and the people at large in the country were waiting eagerly to hear on the radio the announcement of this instrument of transfer of power which would implement the Awami League's 4-point proposals.

Once this agreement in principle had been reached between Sheikh Mujib and Yahya there was only the question of defining the powers of Bangladesh vis-a-vis the Centre during the interim phase. Here it was again jointly agreed that the distribution of power should as far as possible approximate the final constitution to be approved by the National Assembly which it was expected would be based on the 'Six Points'.

Although the talks were going on, the military Generals used the darkness of the night to accelerate their military build-up from March 1 upto March 25. Members of the armed forces dressed in civilian clothes were flown in commercial flights via Ceylon. C-130s carrying arms and provisions for the garrisons flew into Dacca. A full Division of the army was brought in during that period. To ensure security the airport was put under strict control and it was heavily guarded with artillery and machinegun nests. SSG commando groups specially trained for undercover operations in sabotage and assassination were deployed in key centres of Bangladesh. These men were probably responsible for the attacks on Bengalis in Dacca and Syedpur two days before March 25 which were designed only to provoke clashes between locals and non-locals.

Yahya Khan's role during this time was of utter treachery and deception. While he was pretending accord with the Sheikh on the broad principles, tanks which had been sent north to Rangpur to defend the borders were brought back to Dacca. Families of army personnel were being sent to West Pakistan on a priority basis along with the families of West Pakistani businessmen.

It is now clear that Yahya and his Generals never had the slightest intention of resolving Pakistan's political crisis peacefully but were only interested in buying time to permit the reinforcement of their military machine within Bangladesh. Yahya's visit to Dacca was a mere cover for his plan of genocide. It has now become clear that contingency plans for such a crisis had already begun well in advance.

However, for working out the economic part of the interim settlement Mr. M. M. Ahmed, the Economic Adviser to the President was specially flown in. In his talks with the Awami League advisers he made it clear that provided a political agreement was reached there was no insuperable problem in working out some version of the Six Points programme even for the interim period. The final list of three amendments to the Awami League draft which he presented as suggestions, indicated that the gap between the Government and the Awami League position was no longer one of principle but remained merely over the precise phrasing of the proposals. The Awami League in its sitting of March 24 accepted the amendments with certain minor changes of language.

At no point was there any indication that the talks had failed. On the contrary, the impression was that talks were continuing and substantial progress had been made. On 24th evening the Council Muslim League leaders with Mian Mumtaz Khan Daulatana and Mr. Shawkat Hayat Khan, Jamiat leader Moulana Ahmed Nurani, NAP leader Khan Abdul Wali Khan and Gayus Bux Bizenjo, called on Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and none of them gave any indication of the possibility of such failure. These leaders were particularly invited

by General Yahya Khan only to ascertain their opinion with regard to the proposed basis of agreement that was reached between him and the Sheikh.

The question of legal cover for the transfer of power is another belated fabrication by Yahya to cover his genocide. He and his team had agreed that, in line with the precedence of the Indian Independence Act of 1947, power could be transferred by Presidential Proclamation. The notice that there would be no legal cover to the arrangement raised subsequently by Mr. Bhutto and endorsed by General Yahya was never a bone of contention between Sheikh Mujib and Yahya. There was never the slightest reason to think that, had Yahya indicated that a meeting of the National Assembly was essential to transfer power, the Awami League would have broken the talks on such a minor legal technicality. After all, as the majority party it had nothing to fear from such a meeting and its acceptance of the decision for separate sitting was a gesture designed to accommodate Mr. Bhutto rather than a fundamental stand for the party.

Evidence that agreement in principle between contending parties had been reached is provided by Mr Bhutto's own Press Conference on March 25. It is not certain what passed in the separate sessions between General Yahya and Mr. Bhutto but there is evidence that General Yahya's dialogue with the People's Party leader mainly concentrated on how the conspiracy to suppress the legitimate demands of Awami League could be executed. Needless to say, not the slightest indication of these misgivings had been given in the meetings between the Awami League team and General Yahya's advisers where amicable relations and optimism prevailed to the end.

While hope for settlement was being raised, more ominous signs of the intentions of the army were provided by their sudden decision to unload the munitions ship M. V. Swat berthed at Chittagong Port. Preparatory to this decision

Brigadier Mazumdar, a Bengali officer commanding the garrison in Chittagong had been suddenly removed from his command and replaced by a West Pakistani. On the night of March 24 Mazumdar was flown to Dacca under armed escort and has probably been executed. Under the new command, notice was given to local authorities of the decision to unload the ship in spite of the fact that the army had abstained from doing so for the last 17 days in the face of non-cooperation from the port workers. The decision to unload was a calculated provocation which immediately brought 100,000 people on the streets of Chittagong and led to massive firing by the Army to break its way out. The issue was raised by the Awami League with General Pirzada as to why this escalation was being permitted while talks were still going on. He gave no answer beyond a promise to pass it on to General Yahya.

During this time, after Yahya's postponement of the National Assembly Session, conditions became very tense. The Army time and again tried to provoke communal disharmony amongst the people. Finding no support from any section of society including the Police and Civil Service, the army felt more desperate and furious. They started shooting down unarmed civilians in Dacca and elsewhere. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Awami League realised the game that the army was playing and took all precautions to see that people did not play into their hands. It is because of Sheikh's clear conviction in a secular democratic system that there was not any incident of communal riot in those difficult days in Bangladesh.

Not a single despatch published before March 25 either within Pakistan or outside, ever pointed out that there was any communal riot or killing of non-Bengalis in any part of Bangladesh. There were about 50 foreign correspondents in Dacca till March 26, and none of them could report any such incident of communal or racial violence. Nor was this ever raised by any leader including Mr. Bhutto in the numerous press conferences, they addressed at that time. General Yahya Khan in his

broadcast of March 26, also did not mention any such killing.

On the contrary, on March 16, the Pakistan Army started killing Bengalis in Chittagong, which was reported in Dacca newspapers on March 17. The situation was so provoking that Moulana Bhasani had to rush to see the situation for himself. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman also sent a delegation on behalf of Awami League for an on-the-spot enquiry. Khandaker Moshtaque Ahmed and M. Mansur Ali visited Chittagong and submitted a report to the Sheikh, a copy of which was also released to the Press. In this report the army and navy personnel were accused for their deliberate involvement in killing Bengalis in Chittagong. Despite all these provocations the situation was brought under control successfully.

Following the final meeting between General Yahya's and the Awami League's advisers on March 24 where Mr. M. M. Ahmed passed on his amendments, a call was awaited from General Pirzada for a final session at which the draft could be finalised. No such call materialised and instead it was learnt that Mr. M. M. Ahmed, who was central to the negotiations, had suddenly left for Karachi on the 25th morning without any warning to the Awami League team.

While negotiations were not yet declared to be complete, on March 25 at approximately 11 p.m. Yahya Khan committed an act of treachery that has no parallel in human history. The well-trained and mechanised army of West Pakistan descended on the weak and unarmed civilian population of Dacca. Without any warning or announcement or any order of curfew, tanks, mortars, artillery, machineguns, and rockets were indiscriminately used to kill innocent people in the dark of the night. The major targets in Dacca where attacks took place were the police Barracks at Rajarbagh, the Headquarters of the East Pakistan Rifles at Peelkhana, the University students' hostels and teachers' quarters, the Tejgaon Industrial

Area, ferry ghats, Railway stations, roadside slums, Malibagh, Maghbazar, Babubazar, and Noabazar. The office of the English daily 'The People' was attacked and destroyed in the small hours of 26 March and the office of the Bengali daily 'Ittefaq' was burnt down the same day.

The nature of the genocide that has been committed in Bangladesh has no parallel in modern history. The soldiers mostly coming from a tribal background of the Punjab and Frontier were undoubtedly human beings but in reality they behaved worse than animals. They killed, looted, burnt and raped. On the first night they attacked the University dormitories and killed hundreds of students and shot to death several distinguished teachers in their homes. They picked up philanthropic industrialists and after killing them, looted their properties and money.

On the morning of March 27 when curfew was apparently lifted after 33 hours, almost the entire population of Dacca started evacuating and within the next 24 hours approximately 75% of the population left the city. The army had created such terror that at the moment all the cities and towns of Bangladesh are deserted. A large number of people including politicians, doctors, engineers, lawyers, teachers, students, businessmen and intellectuals all left their respective places of work and went to the villages to join the liberation forces.

All Bengali officers and other ranks in the armed forces stationed in Bangladesh who were within reach of the Pakistani Army were disarmed around March 25 and were subsequently massacred along with their families. In Jessore and Comilla cantonments almost all the Bengali officers, about 30 in each, were killed with their families. Similar killings took place in all the other cantonments and military bases in Bangladesh located at Dacca, Comilla, Rangpur, Jessore, Bogra and Chittagong.

Bengalis had, however, accepted this challenge of war. Though in Dacca they were caught unprepared, the people

organised themselves into liberation forces all over Bangladesh within 24 hours. Led and guided by the East Bengal Regiment (3000), the East Bengal Rifles (a para military force of about 17000), Police (24000), Ansars, Mujahids, Awami League Volunteers and young people in every district and sub-division immediately prepared themselves for resistance. Finding the collapse of administration all over Bangladesh and failing to control both the population and the land and discovering that their whole calculations had gone wrong, the West Pakistan Generals became desperate and jittery. Resorting to massive air-strikes they started to strafe and bomb every place where they encountered resistance. Besides thousands of villages, the towns which were heavily mortared and bombed from the air are, among others, Chittagong, Sylhet, Moulvibazar, Sunamganj, Habiganj, Sreemangal, Narshingdi, Brahmanbaria, Akhaura, Kasba, Comilla, Laksham, Chandpur, Feni, Khulna, Daulatpur, Kaliganj, Jhinida, Chuadanga, Mehrpur, Narail, Kushtia, Bheramara, Kumarkhali, Alamdanga, Pabna, Shahzadpur, Rajshahi, Nawabganj, Rangpur, Santa-har, Parbatipur, Lalmonirhat, Nilphamari, Dinajpur, Bogra, Sherpur, Mymenshingh, Tangail, Jamalpur and Jaydevpur.

The West Pakistani troops are following the most heinous method of fighting a war. Before they send troops to a particular area they bomb and strafe indiscriminately. By this, ordinary people are massacred and then the troops arrive. On their way, the troops kill anybody they find, loot houses, banks, jewellery shops, rape women, take away foodgrains and cattle and finally set habitations on fire.

Hospitals and medical centres have been bombed, nurses have been driven away from their patients, clergymen have been persecuted and missionaries made to broadcast at gun point at Rajshahi. A huge population of Christians and Buddhists were attacked and forced to flee the country and there were many instances of churches and mosques being shelled and damaged.

Bangladesh

A New Sovereign State

BROADCAST DECLARING INDEPENDENCE FROM BANGLADESH RADIO ON 26TH MARCH, 1971

On the morning of March 26, the following announcement was broadcast by a radio station controlled by the Bangladesh Liberation army :

“To-day Bangladesh is a sovereign and independent state. On Thursday night West Pakistani armed forces suddenly attacked the police barracks at Rajarbagh and the EPR Headquarters at Peelkhana in Dacca. Many innocent and unarmed people have been killed in Dacca city and other places of Bangladesh. Violent clashes between the East Pakistan Rifles and Police on the one hand and the armed forces of Pindi on the other, are going on. The Bengalis are fighting the enemy with great courage for an independent Bangladesh. Resist the treacherous enemy in every corner of Bangladesh. May God aid us in our fight for freedom.”

“JOY BANGLA”

GENERAL YAHYA KHAN'S BROADCAST ON MARCH 26, 1971

On the night of March 26, 1971 Yahya Khan addressed the nation. By that time thousands of unarmed people had been killed in Bangladesh. Indiscriminate loot, rape and arson was committed by his troops. About 50 foreign journalists who were in Dacca were expelled at an hour's notice from the

province. The speech of Yahya, a remarkable exposition of his brutal and colonial attitude towards the people of Bangla Desh, will go down in history as a black document :

“On the 6th of this month I announced the 25th of March as the new date for the inaugural session of the Nation Assembly, hoping that conditions would permit the holding of the session on the appointed date. Events have, however, not justified that hope. The nation continues to face a great crisis.

In East Pakistan, a non-cooperation and disobedience movement was launched by the Awami League and matters took a very serious turn. Events were moving very fast, and it became absolutely imperative that the situation was brought under control as soon as possible. With this aim in view, I had a series of discussions with political leaders in West Pakistan and subsequently on the 15th of March I went to Dacca.

As you are aware I had a number of meetings with Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in order to resolve the political impasse. Having consulted West Pakistani leaders it was necessary for me to do the same over there, so that areas of agreement could be identified and an amicable settlement arrived at.

As has been reported in the press and other news media from time to time, my talks with Sheikh Mujibur Rahman showed some progress. Having reached a certain stage in my negotiations with Sheikh Mujibur Rahman I considered it necessary to have another round of talks with West Pakistani leaders in Dacca.

Mr. Z. A. Bhutto reached there on 21st March, and I had a number of meetings with him.

As you are aware, the leader of the Awami League had asked for the withdrawal of Martial Law and transfer of power prior to the meeting of the National Assembly. In our discussions he proposed that this interim period could be covered by a proclamation by me whereby Martial Law would be withdrawn, provincial Governments set up and the National Assembly would, *ab initio*, sit in two committees—one composed of members from West Pakistan, and one of members from East Pakistan.

Despite some serious flaws in the scheme in its legal as well as other aspects, I was prepared to agree in principle to this plan in the interest of peaceful transfer of power but on one condition. The condition which I clearly explained to Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was that I must first have unequivocal agreement of all political leaders to the scheme.

I thereupon discussed the proposal with other political leaders. I found them unanimously of the view that the proposed proclamation by me would have no legal sanction. It would neither have the cover of Martial Law, nor could it claim to be based on the will of the people. Thus a vacuum would be created and chaotic conditions would ensue. They also considered that splitting of the National Assembly into two parts through a proclamation, would encourage divisive tendencies that may exist. They, therefore, expressed the opinion that if it was intended to lift Martial Law and transfer power in interim period, the National Assembly should meet, pass an appropriate interim Constitution Bill and present it for my assent. I entirely agreed with their view, and requested them to tell Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to take a reasonable attitude on this issue.

I told the leaders to explain their views to him that a scheme whereby, on the one hand, you extinguish all source of power namely Martial Law and on the other fail to replace it by the will of the people through a proper session of the National Assembly, would merely result in chaos. They agreed to meet Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, explain the position and try to obtain his agreement to the interim arrangement for transfer of power to emanate from the National Assembly.

The political leaders were also very much perturbed over Sheikh Mujib's idea of dividing the National Assembly into two parts right from the start. Such a move, they felt, would be totally against the interest of Pakistan's integrity.

The Chairman of the Pakistan People's Party, during the meeting between myself, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and him, had also expressed similar views to Mujib.

On the evening of the 23rd of March the political leaders, who had gone to talk to Mujib on this issue,

called on me and informed me that he was not agreeable to any changes in his scheme. All he really wanted was for me to make a proclamation, whereby I should withdraw Martial Law and transfer power.

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's action of starting his non-cooperation movement is an act of treason. He and his party have defied the lawful authority for over three weeks. They have insulted Pakistan's Flag, and defiled the photograph of the Father of the Nation. They have tried to run a parallel Government. They have created turmoil, terror and insecurity.

A number of murders have been committed in the name of the movement. Millions of our Bengali brethren and those who have settled in East Pakistan are living in a state of panic, and a very large number had to leave that wing out of fear for their lives.

The Armed Forces, located in East Pakistan, have been subjected to taunts and insults of all kinds. I wish to compliment them on the tremendous restraint that they have shown in the face of grave provocation. Their sense of discipline is indeed praiseworthy. I am proud of them.

I should have taken action against Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his collaborators weeks ago, but I had to try my utmost to handle the situation in such a manner as not to jeopardise my plan of peaceful transfer of power. In my keenness to achieve this aim I kept on tolerating one illegal act after another, and at the same time I explored every possible avenue for arriving at some reasonable solution. I have already mentioned the efforts made by me and by various political leaders in getting Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to see reason. We have left no stone unturned. But, he has failed to respond in any constructive manner. On the other hand, he and his followers kept on flouting the authority of the Government even during my presence in Dacca. The proclamation that he proposed was nothing but a trap. He knew that it would not have been worth the paper it was written on, and in the vacuum created by the lifting of Martial Law he could have done anything with impunity. His obstinacy, obduracy and absolute refusal to talk sense can lead to but one conclusion—the man and his party

are enemies of Pakistan, and they want East Pakistan to break away completely from the country. He has attacked the solidarity and integrity of this country—this crime will not go unpunished.

-We will not allow some power-hungry and unpatriotic people to destroy this country and play with the destiny of 120 million people.

In my address to the nation of 6th March I had told you that it is the duty of the Pakistan armed forces to ensure the integrity, solidarity and security of Pakistan. I have ordered them to do their duty and fully restore the authority of the Government.

In view of the grave situation that exists in the country today I have decided to ban all political activities throughout the country. As for the Awami League, it is completely banned as a political party. I have also decided to impose complete press censorship. Martial Law regulation will very shortly be issued in pursuance of this decision.

In the end, let me assure you that my main aim remains the same, namely transfer of power to the elected representatives of the people. As soon as the situation permits. I will take fresh steps towards the achievement of this objective.

It is my hope that the law and order situation will soon return to normal in East Pakistan, and we can again move forward towards our cherished goal.

I appeal to my countrymen to appreciate the gravity of the situation for which the blame rests entirely on the anti-Pakistan and secessionist elements, and to act as reasonable citizens of the country because therein lies the security and salvation of Pakistan."

Yahya in his speech of March 26, has tried to justify his brutal act of genocide by saying that Awami League was out to break up Pakistan." He charged Mujib with treason and went to the extent of saying that "the man and his party were enemies of Pakistan and they wanted East Pakistan to break away completely from the country. The facts, however, were

different and no reasonable and honest person could say that there was any truth in Yahya's allegation.

The Awami League was a constitutional political party and had always acted according to the norms of democratic principles. It was always eager to solve the problems of the country through peaceful and constitutional means. It believed in the basic structure of Pakistan guaranteed by the Lahore Resolution and all its constitutional proposals were meant to be implemented within the framework of Pakistan. None of the speeches or resolutions attributed to the party itself and the leaders ever indicated, any intention on their part of separating East from West Pakistan. All they wanted was the right, for the people of Bangladesh to live with honour in partnership with the other regions of Pakistan. The six-point formula was introduced with this end in view. Its essence was to secure for Bangladesh the right to manage and control her own economy. After lengthy dealings with the Awami League Yahya pretends to have discovered that it is a party bent upon destroying Pakistan. Had this been true there would have been no reason for the Awami League to go for elections and send their candidates to the National Assembly for the whole of Pakistan. When the mischievous Legal Framework Order was introduced, curbing fundamental rights of the elected representatives and restricting the function of the National Assembly as a sovereign body, there was a wide-spread movement and pressure on the Awami League leaders all over the country to reject it. It was considered that any election under this Order (Legal Framework), would produce no fruitful result and almost all the political organisations had passed resolutions urging the President to amend certain provisions. As a democratic party the Awami League shared this apprehension. Yet Sheikh Mujib and the Awami League consented to take part in the elections.

The Awami League's constitutional proposals were based on their six-point formula which was presented before the

nation in February, 1966. The military rulers and the intelligentsia of the country knew its contents for several years. The details of the six-point formula were discussed for years through newspapers, public meetings, and conferences. Had they found the six-point formula to be a programme for dividing the country, it is surprising that no action was taken in this respect although the military rulers had the power to do so. Had there been any ground for such an allegation, the ruling class would not have sat idle. The Martial Law authorities not only allowed the Awami League to participate in the elections on the basis of its manifesto but permitted it to make the Six-Point programme the subject of a referendum. However, all on a sudden they discovered that the programme was meant to disintegrate Pakistan.

Yahya Khan had a series of discussions with Sheikh Mujibur Rahman since his coming to power and he was having discussions with Sheikh till March 23. The leader he now proclaimed as an enemy of the country was referred to by him in public in January as "The future Prime Minister of Pakistan". It is inconceivable that a part of the country which has the majority of the population and a majority in the National Assembly would secede from the rest of the country. On the contrary, in view of the election results, the Awami League assumed, in all seriousness, responsibility for the whole country.

The Punjabi clique has always ruled Pakistan exploiting all the other regions single-handedly and single-mindedly. Today the Pakistan Army is dominated by the fanatically obsessed Punjabis who delight in brutalities. One is driven to the conclusion that it decided to destroy Pakistan by its defiance of democratic codes of conduct and by its refusal to accept majority rule within the framework of Pakistan. By waging this war upon the unarmed people of Bangladesh, it is the Punjabis who have created conditions for the separation of the Punjab from the rest of the country.

The same separatist trend is seen in Mr. Bhutto's political actions. If he is indeed the leader of West Pakistan as a whole then his actions are the more sinister in so far as they are directed towards separating West Pakistan from the rest of the country. It is Mr. Bhutto who threatened a 'blood-bath' if any West Pakistan member attended the National Assembly Session on March 3, and it is he who boycotted the session in defiance of all established rules of democratic politics. It is Mr. Bhutto who had demanded the bifurcation of the National Assembly for separate sittings of East and West Pakistani members. If there is anybody other than the military rulers and the Punjabi interests who is also responsible for disintegration of Pakistan, it is Mr. Bhutto.

What was a movement for effective autonomy within the framework of Pakistan now turned into a movement for Independence. The people of Bangladesh were no longer willing to accept West Pakistanis as their masters. Millions of youths including a large number of educated people immediately joined the liberation army to resist this brutal and barbaric aggression by West Pakistan troops. Almost all the leaders of Awami League including MNAs and MPAs established contact with each other and assembled gradually in the liberated zones.

THE PROCLAMATION OF INDEPENDENCE ISSUED ON APRIL 10, 1971

On the 10th of April, 1971 the elected representatives of the people of Bangladesh constituted themselves into a constituent assembly and after having mutual consultations and in order to ensure for the people of Bangladesh equality, human dignity and social justice declared and constituted Bangladesh to be a sovereign People's Republic and thereby confirmed the declaration of independence that had already been made by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on 26th March, 1971.

The proclamation of Independence read as follows :—

The Proclamation of Independence

Mujibnagar, Bangladesh

Dated 10th day of April, 1971.

Whereas free elections were held in Bangladesh from 7th December, 1970 to 17th January, 1971, to elect representatives for the purpose of framing a Constitution,

AND

Whereas at these elections the people of Bangladesh elected 167 out of 169 representatives belonging to the Awami League,

AND

Whereas General Yahya Khan summoned the elected representatives of the people to meet on the 3rd March, 1971, for the purpose of framing a Constitution,

AND

Whereas the Assembly so summoned was arbitrarily and illegally postponed for an indefinite period,

AND

Whereas instead of fulfilling their promise and while still conferring with the representatives of the people of Bangladesh, Pakistan authorities declared an unjust and treacherous war,

AND

Whereas in the facts and circumstances of such treacherous conduct Banga Bandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the undisputed leader of 75 million of people of Bangladesh, in due fulfilment of the legitimate right of self-determination of the people of Bangladesh, duly made a declaration of independence at Dacca on March 26, 1971, and urged the people of Bangladesh to defend the honour and integrity of Bangladesh.

AND

Whereas in the conduct of a ruthless and savage war the Pakistani authorities committed and are still continuously committing numerous acts of genocide and unprecedented

tortures, amongst others on the civilian and unarmed people of Bangladesh,

AND

Whereas the Pakistan Government by levying an unjust war and committing genocide and by other repressive measures made it impossible for the elected representatives of the people of Bangladesh to meet and frame a Constitution, and give to themselves a Government,

AND

Whereas the people of Bangladesh by their heroism, bravery and revolutionary fervour have established effective control over the territories of Bangladesh,

We the elected representatives of the people of Bangladesh, as honour bound by the mandate given to us by the people of Bangladesh whose will is supreme duly constituted ourselves into a Constituent Assembly, and

having held mutual consultations, and
in order to ensure for the people of Bangladesh equality, human dignity and social justice,
declare and constitute Bangladesh to be a sovereign People's Republic and thereby confirm the declaration of independence already made by Banga Bandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and

do hereby affirm and resolve that till such time as a Constitution is framed, Banga Bandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman shall be the President of the Republic and that Syed Nazrul Islam shall be the Vice President of the Republic, and

that the President shall be the Supreme Commander of all the Armed Forces of the Republic.

shall exercise all the Executive and Legislative powers of the Republic including the power to grant pardon,

shall have the power to appoint a Prime Minister and such other Ministers as he considers necessary.

shall have the power to levy taxes and expend monies,

shall have the power to summon and adjourn the

Constituent Assembly, and

do all other things that may be necessary to give to the people of Bangladesh an orderly and just Government.

We the elected representatives of the people of Bangladesh do further resolve that in the event of there being no President or the President being unable to enter upon his office or being unable to exercise his powers due to any reason whatsoever, the Vice-President shall have and exercise all the powers, duties and responsibilities herein conferred on the President,

We further resolve that we undertake to observe and give effect to all duties and obligations that devolve upon us as a member of the family of nations and to abide by the Charter of the United Nations.

We further resolve that this proclamation of independence shall be deemed to have come into effect from 26th day of March, 1971.

We further resolve that in order to give effect to this instrument we appoint Prof. Yusuf Ali our duly Constituted potentiary and to give to the President and the Vice-President oaths of office.

Sd/- PROF. YUSUF ALI
Duly Constituted Potentiary.
By and under the authority
of the Constituent Assembly
of Bangladesh.

LAWS CONTINUANCE ENFORCEMENT ORDER 1971

On the same day in exercise of his powers contained in the Proclamation of Independence Syed Nazrul Islam, Acting President of Bangladesh promulgated a "LAWS CONTINUANCE AND ENFORCEMENT ORDER" in order to establish the laws that were enforced in Bangladesh on March 25, 1971. subject to

the Proclamation of Independence. The Laws Continuance and Enforcement Order was as follows :—

Laws Continuance Enforcement Order

Mujibnagar,

Dated 10th day of April, 1971.

I, Syed Nazrul Islam, the Vice President and Acting President of Bangladesh, in exercise of the powers conferred on me by the Proclamation of Independence dated tenth day of April, 1971 do hereby order that all laws that were in force in Bangladesh on 25th March, 1971, shall subject to the Proclamation aforesaid continue to be so in force with such consequential changes as may be necessary on account of the creation of the sovereign independent State of Bangladesh formed by the will of the people of Bangladesh and that all government officials—civil, military, judicial and diplomatic who take the oath of allegiance to Bangladesh shall continue in their offices on terms and conditions of service so long enjoyed by them and that all District Judges and District Magistrates, in the territory of Bangladesh and all diplomatic representatives elsewhere shall arrange to administer the oath of allegiance to all government officials within their jurisdiction.

This order shall be deemed to have come into effect from 26th day of March, 1971.

Signed :- SYED NAZRUL ISLAM,
Acting President.

**THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S
REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH**

Simultaneously a Cabinet was also announced with Sheikh Mujibur Rahman as the President of the Republic of Bangladesh. The Cabinet and the distribution of portfolios was in the following form :

Members of the first Cabinet of Bangladesh Government

<i>President :</i>	... Sheikh Mujibur Rahman
<i>Vice-President :</i>	... Syed Nazrul Islam
<i>Prime Minister :</i>	... Mr. Tajuddin Ahmed
<i>Minister, In-Charge of Foreign Affairs, Law & Parliamentary Affairs :</i>	... Khandaker Moshtaque Ahmed
<i>Minister, In-Charge of Finance, Commerce & Industries :</i>	... Mr. M. Mansoor Ali
<i>Minister, In-Charge of Interior, Supply, Relief & Rehabilitation :</i>	... Mr. A. H. M. Kamruzzaman



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