

27.5.73

East Bengal:

roots of the
GENOCIDE



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EAST BENGAL:
ROOTS OF THE GENOCIDE

A PAKISTAN FORUM PUBLICATION

Sponsored by:

FRIENDS OF EAST BENGAL
13 East 17th Street, 6th floor
New York, New York

Printed by:

GLAD DAY PRESS
308 Stewart Ave.
Ithaca, N.Y.

Friends of East Bengal is a group of Americans concerned about the fate of East Bengal and the role the U.S. is playing in escalating that tragedy. Some of us are members of the Quaker Project, some of Mayday, some or People's Coalition for Peace and Justice, and some are just plain independent radicals. We have come together because we share a common concern.

We affirm that the Bengali people, like all the peoples of the world, should have the right of self-determination.

We condemn our government for aiding the West Pakistani junta that refuses to acknowledge or honor the right of the Bengali majority to choose its own fate.

We deplore the genocide of the Bengali people that is being conducted by this junta and is being financed by our government.

We believe that all U.S. aid to Pakistan, whether military or economic, should be stopped immediately. We pledge to work with the aim of bringing about such stoppage.

If you are in agreement with our aims and beliefs, write to us: c/o Quaker Project, 13 E. 17th St. New York, New York.

We are sponsoring this short book in the belief and hope that it will help clarify at least some of the issues. All proceeds from the sale of this book shall be used collectively to implement the program outlined above.

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Eqbal Ahmad is a West Pakistani scholar, a Fellow of the Adlai Stevenson Institute in Chicago, and is presently under indictment, along with Philip Berrigan and others, for allegedly conspiring to kidnap Henry Kissinger. He has contributed to a large number of magazines and anthologies. His Revolution and Reaction in the Third World will be published by Pantheon in 1972. Eqbal Ahmad is an editor of Africasia.

Feroz Ahmad is also a West Pakistani scholar. He is the editor of Pakistan Forum, and has published political analyses in Pakistani as well as American and French journals, including Africasia and the Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars.

Peter Bertocci is an American social anthropologist and has done field research in East Bengal.

Rehman Sobhan is the leading economist of Bangla Desh, was a Professor of Economics in Dacca University prior to March 25th, has written widely and has been advisor to Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on economic affairs.

Tajjudin Ahmad is the Prime Minister in the clandestine Provisional Government of Bangla Desh.

General Yahya is, as the world knows, the military President of Pakistan.

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Introduction

The merciless and unrelenting genocide of the Bengali people by the West Pakistani Army has been conducting over the last five years has had few precedents even in this, the bloodiest and the most terrible of human centuries. Indonesia comes to mind, and more than Nazi Germany. The most apt analogy is, we suppose, with the American genocidal tactics in Southeast Asia. There is, however, one difference. The technological factor in the direct American deaths is far greater. In Pakistan, massacres still involve infinite possibilities of one-to-one encounter and savagery. If American correspondents have been particularly horrified by the tragedy in Bengal, it is partly because they find it easier to despise in Vietnam that they never were, never allowed themselves to be, horrified by a My Lai-type massacre can be conducted by some Asians too, they are evoked by simply the number of times the victim and the victim come face to face, the number of times someone has said to him, "this is the man I am going to kill." The blind, callous, unknown American pilot of a bomber plane in Laos rarely enjoys that particularly savage variety of direct gratification.

In this book, however, we are not concentrating on the story of atrocities: they are well known, and given the American love of stories, we can trust the established press to keep the focus on

The most authentic account to appear yet has come from a West Pakistani correspondent, Anthony Mascarenhas, and we have included extracts from his report here; it first appeared in London Times. Mascarenhas was taken on a guided tour of the ravaged East Bengal. His first report was written while he was still under control of the Pakistani army, it was, predictably, favorable to the Army. Then, driven by the fact that he had experienced while in Bengal, he fled, with his family, to India, and told the real story. We have used parts of this second

For the most part, we have concentrated on putting together in one book articles by diverse hands and on diverse aspects of the political crisis in Pakistan. Unlike Viet Nam, Pakistan is not a country whose politics or even basic history is well known in the West. Here we have taken a small step to remedy this situation. Later, of course, more comprehensive and cohesive books will come to fill this vacuum adequately.

The situation in Bangla Desh is highly fluid; it changes, literally week to week. An understanding of the background is particularly important, so that out of the chaos of highly speculative reporting one can begin to make at least some sense. In compiling this little book, we have been very aware of the depths of ignorance we face here, in America, about Pakistan and the Bangla Desh question. Thus, we have begun with the basics.

The book opens with a basic chronology of events. Next, we have mounted two articles, by the same author and from the same journal, which concentrate on interpretative analysis of the fundamental trends in the rebellion of 1968-69 and the current massacre; as would be quite apparent to the reader, this massacre occurred precisely because no one heeded the signals given out at the time of the more limited rebellion of 1965-66. Then, after the article by Anthony Mascarenhas, we have an analysis of the food problems built into the East Pakistani economy which have been aggravated a thousand-fold by the disruptions caused by

the armed intervention of last Spring.

The two articles by Sobhan and Ahmad on the political and military strategy of U.S. aid which lie very much at the center of the book, pose the central question of the U.S. involvement and suggest that the U.S. aid, which has so far been seen as perhaps a misguided but surely a benign donation, is perhaps the single most prominent factor in the rise of the Army as the ruling class in Pakistan and in the growth of the regional disparities which have now split the country apart. The piece by Eqbal Ahmad, which concludes this half of the book, is an attempt to see the problem in dialectical terms, to weigh the arguments and the facts presented by the two sides, and to clarify concretely the reasons why the military adventure needs to be condemned in the strongest terms possible.

In the second half of the book, we have collected statements by the Prime Minister of the Provisional Government of Bangla Desh and the President of Pakistan; the latter outlines the features of the sort of democracy the Army is trying to restore to Pakistan. We have concluded the book with a table of statistics on the regional disparities between East and West Pakistan, and a selection of analytical reports from some of the most knowledgeable correspondents of some of the more prestigious international journals and newspapers. The principle for selection in the last instance has been not so much a quest for materials to support this or that interpretation; rather, we have concentrated on the analyses that seemed to us the most valuable in terms of providing a more comprehensive perspective on the progress of events since March 25th.

This is in no sense a dogmatic book, though it is not the work of passionless people either. The authors we have selected are mostly reputable scholars and mostly from West Pakistan. Each article, and the book as a whole, should be seen as a quick stab of recognition of the fundamental facts in a situation which is at best confusing and often inhuman. More dispassionate, more theoretical analyses can come later. For now, we needed a bunch of writings which grapple with events while they are still taking shape; writings, in other words, which we think are informed and intelligent and committed to finding significance within the shapelessness of the present, and which have the courage to confess their tentativeness when they are, indeed, tentative.

A Basic Chronology

Pakistan Forum

- March 22, 1940 The Muslim League passes the Pakistan resolution in Lahore, stating, "...that areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority, as in the north-west and eastern zones of India, should be grouped to constitute "Independent States" in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign."
- August 14, 1947 Pakistan emerges as one independent state, with two parts separated by 1000 miles.
- October, 1947 The first armed conflict between India and Pakistan over the latter's territorial claim on Jainaau and Kashmir.
- February 21, 1952 Several Bengalis killed while protesting against the imposition of Urdu as the sole national language. Bengali finally accepted as a national language.
- March 8-12, 1954 The Jukto Front, with the Awami League as its major component, gives a crushing defeat to Muslim League in East Pakistan elections. Chief Minister, Nurul Amin, and all of his cabinet members, who had been subservient to West Pakistani landlords, lose their seats.
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- 1967 The U.S. resumes arms sale to both countries.
- November, 1968 to March, 1969 Popular uprising against the dictatorship of General Ayub Khan results in the release of most of the political prisoners and dropping of the infamous Agartala Conspiracy Case against the Awami League chief, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Ayub Khan resigns under the popular pressure and the military chief, Gen. Yahya Khan, takes over the interim government. Ayub's 1962 constitution abrogated.
- November 28, 1969 General Yahya Khan announces that elections will be held on October 5, 1970
- March 28, 1970 Yahya Khan issues a 'Legal Framework Ordinance,' envisaging general elections on the basis of population and adult franchise by October 22. The 313 member assembly to be elected must draft a constitution within 120 days after its first session and the constitution must incorporate the guidelines of the ordinance, including preserving the "unity" and "territorial integrity" of Pakistan.
- August 15, 1970 Owing to the severe floods in East Pakistan, elections are put off till December, 1970.
- October, 1970 The U.S. signs a secret agreement to supply Pakistan with an unspecified number of F-104 jet fighters, B-52 bombers, and armored personnel carriers.
- November 12, 1970 Coastal areas of East Pakistan are hit by this century's worst natural calamity--a cyclone accompanied by tidal wave--that causes approximately half a million deaths and suffering to another three million people. Inadequate relief measures on part of the West Pakistan based central government enrages the Bengali people. Maulana Bhashani's National Awami Party withdraws from the elections and demands independence for East Pakistan within the union. Bhashani's demand gains widespread support among the masses but the hope for achieving autonomy through the ballot still persists.
- December 7, 1970 Election results give the Awami League all but two national assembly seats from East Pakistan and a simple majority nationwide. In West Pakistan, Pakistan People's Party, running on the slogan of "Islamic Socialism", pulls a major surprise by winning 83 of the 138 seats in the region.
- December 17, 1970 Provincial assembly elections repeat the earlier trend by giving an almost total control of East Pakistan assembly to the Awami League.
- January 17, 1971 Elections held in the Cyclone affected areas and by-elections National Assembly completed.
- January 31, 1971 Two Kashmiri youth hijack an Indian Airlines plane to

Lahore and blow it up. War psychosis grips India and Pakistan, and supporters of strong center in West Pakistan exploit the situation to discredit provincial autonomy. The Awami League gets apprehensive and demands inquiry into the matter.

- February 15, 1971 After a series of talks with Gen. Yahya and Sheikh Mujib, the PPP chief, Mr. Bhutto, announces boycott of the assembly session scheduled for March 3.
- February 16---
March 14, 1971 Mr. Bhutto's refusal and Gen. Yahya's decision to postpone the assembly session indefinitely is answered by a general strike in East Pakistan. Yahya sets March 25 as the new date for the assembly but his March 6 tirade against Mujib angers the Bengali people further. As a result of a civil disobedience movement the control of East Pakistan passes into the hands of the Awami League. Several hundred demonstrators are killed by army firing. The Awami League puts forth four pre-conditions for attending the session, including the transfer of the interim government to the elected representatives.
- March 15, 1971 Gen. Yahya rushes to Dacca for talks.
- March 16-24, 1971 While talks between Mujib and Yahya continue, West Pakistani troop build-up in East Pakistan also continues.
- March 25, 1971 Amidst the reports of army massacre of civilians in Chittagong and Rangpur, talks are deadlocked. Yahya Khan returns to West Pakistan, denounces Mujib as a traitor, bans the Awami League, and orders military takeover of the province. The army goes on rampage, killing innocent people and burning homes and offices.
- March 26, 1971 East Pakistan declares itself an independent People's Republic of Bangla Desh, and war starts between the army and the people of Bangla Desh.
- April 12, 1971 Chou En-lai, the Chinese Prime Minister, writes to Yahya affirming the unity of Pakistan and warning against foreign intervention, particularly Indian intervention. The letter is publicised in the Western Press as being supportive of the Yahya regime---the Chinese Press does not publish the letter.
- March 27---
April 15, 1971 Radio Pakistan claims arrest of Mujib and his colleagues and a complete control of Bangla Desh. A clandestine rebel radio denies the army claim and urges the people to resist. At different times, the rebels control Chittagong, Rangpur, Dinajpur, Kushtia, Jessore, Sylhet, Chaudanga, etc. The army ruthlessly slaughters the people and regains most of the lost territory. Thousands flee to India or to countryside.

April 17, 1971

The Awami League leadership announced the creation of the Provisional Government of Bangla Desh, with Nazrul Islam as Acting President and Tajuddin Ahmad as Prime Minister. All Left groups, including the National Awami Party, are kept out of this clandestine government.

June 28, 1971

In a radio broadcast, General Yahya promised to return the country to civilian rule within four months or so. He also says that Martial law will continue to operate along with this civilian rule and that he himself will be the President. The Awami League, meanwhile, is outlawed indefinitely. He also announces the appointment of a committee to draft a constitution "according to the needs of the country as assessed by me." The names of the members of this committee are not announced.

April-August, 1971

The flow of refugees to India continues. The food situation inside East Bengal continues to deteriorate. With the monsoon rains the fighting diminishes. Guerrillas with Left orientation begin to regroup in the interior; reports of the formation of a broad-based Left coalition begin to arrive. Meanwhile, an Indian-financed commando type army steps up its actions in the border regions and from the sanctuaries in India. The Indian Government keeps up her diplomatic offensive in behalf of the Provisional Government of Bangla Desh. Chances of a direct war between Pakistan and India increase.

July-August, 1971

U.S. arms shipments to the West Pakistani junta continue. The State Department takes the position that the U.S. has to continue giving the aid in order to gain a leverage in the situation.

August 3, 1971

The House of Representatives passes the Foreign Aid Bill with an amendment to cut off the aid to Pakistan until a political solution is found.

August 4, 1971

Nixon holds a Press Conference and criticises the House amendment categorically stressing again the need to continue the aid in order to maintain a leverage for the U.S.

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'Law & Order' In Pakistan

Aijaz Ahmad

Expanded version of this article appeared in The Nation, April 14, 1969

Martial law has just been imposed on Pakistan for the second in its twenty-two years as a nation. It seems evident that armed forces decided to dispense with Ayub Khan, who became President when martial law was declared in 1958, in order to retain power in the face of opposition from the Left as well as the right elements of the Right. At the same time, the new military has been installed to perpetuate the domination of East Pakistan by the West Pakistanis, and to contain the upsurge in the East. In other words, the military are playing their traditional role: the defense of the status quo.

What will happen now can be predicted by all who care to read the signs. The Left will retire to the underground from which it emerged for a few months, and will try to gird itself for real struggle instead of mere agitation. Despite its military courts the regime will, on the whole, be benevolent. And for the time being it will not be threatened; General Yahya may have a couple of years in which to play another Ayub. Pakistan's alliances, against the masses have been agitating, will continue. The masses in East Pakistan, students all over the country and factory workers will go back to work, and to brood on the future. Next time they will arise with shotguns and shells - that will take a few years.

Pakistan has been from the start a land of contradictions, for it is now paying in oppression and blood. A country largely feudal, capitalist and anti-American has been fed countless volumes of propaganda and millions of dollars worth of American aid. The rulers believe their interests are served by the continuation of a people of high political sophistication, who only twenty years ago created a whole new country in defiance of both India and Britain, has been subjected for more than ten years to a military rule that is unyielding in autocracy and notorious for corruption. Though this country is divided into two almost equal parts, by the whole width of India, only very minimal effort has been made to bring the people together. Indeed, East Pakistan, the poorer part, feels that it is being dictated to by the Western world in a country growing economically at a rate so fast that it is extolled as a model throughout the developing world, with all power concentrated in the hands of the so-called "twenty families." No appreciable advance has been made against the prevailing corruption and is so severe that Ayub's son has progressed from a monthly salary of about \$150 to possessions worth more than \$20 million. Above all, the political system is such that is the status quo which martial law is to defend.

It may, a few developments are almost inevitable. The masses have been able to test their power, and oligarchs will find it very difficult to repress their next time the millions who participated in the unrest now checked

by the military are for the most part anti-American and a very large number are openly pro-Peking. The masses in West Pakistan have found a compelling leader in the young, pro-Peking ex-Foreign Minister, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. It has never been sufficiently recognized that East Pakistan's very powerful leftist opposition is not merely an affair of colleges but goes deep into the countryside. Now the formation of a Communist government in the neighboring Indian province of West Bengal offers East Pakistan the first serious alternative to union with West Pakistan that it has ever had. It will be thinking seriously of seceding and forming a separate state with West Bengal and Assam.

In short, one is talking about not simply another political movement in yet another Asian country but the balance of power - in fact the map itself - of the subcontinent, and what may yet become the most significant new revolutionary movement in Asia. The situation is fluid and somewhat chaotic, but pressures are discernible and very clear patterns are emerging. So when Bhutto, harassed by rightist terrorism, says, "There must not be another Indonesia in Pakistan," Americans should try to understand what he means.

Serious dissatisfaction with the Ayub regime began to grow in Pakistan during the early sixties, when the people took stock of their situation in the following terms:

1. The political and constitutional structure Ayub had developed permitted only about 80,000 people, out of some 120 million, to have any direct participation in or impact on the electoral process.
2. His economic policies, although generating an overall progress, concentrated wealth in a few hands.
3. Economic progress was accompanied by an inflation which hit the middle and poor classes very hard; by corruption and by American aid which had intolerable strings attached to it.
4. While the United States was following with Pakistan and India a neutralish policy biased toward the latter, Pakistan had committed itself wholeheartedly to a pro-American policy that was damaging its relationships with China, Russia, Eastern Europe and the emergent revolutionary forces in the rest of the world.

While the discontents arising from these factors were growing, war broke out with India, followed by the ceasefire and the controversial Tashkent Agreement. The circumstances under which the Tashkent Agreement was signed indicated to a large number of Pakistanis that Russia and the United States twisted Ayub's arm. It was also believed quite generally in Pakistan that the agreement was signed without the acquiescence of Mr. Bhutto, then Foreign Minister. The conclusion of the agreement, Bhutto's departure from the cabinet and the resumption of American aid came in such quick succession that few Pakistanis failed to connect them. Since then, Bhutto's popularity and prestige have grown--partly because many feel that since he has been disgraced by Ayub he must be a man of honor. Meanwhile, Ayub's position was eroding rapidly, in some degree simply from failures of judgement as, for example, his decision not only to jail Sheikh Mujib-ur-Rehman, the most influential of East Pakistani leaders, for almost three years, but also to charge him, apparently on false grounds, with conspiracy and seditious intent.



In 1968, Bhutto formed his People's Party, under the slogan of "Islam, Democracy and Socialism." Then, last November, somebody, allegedly a student, tried to assassinate Ayub. The attempt failed, but the campuses caught fire. Bhutto refused to condemn the demonstrators on the ground that they were resisting dictatorship; and, carried away by the surge of protest, he began asking for violent confrontations and for alliance of students, workers and peasants. By December, Bhutto was in jail, the opposition leaders were walking out of the National Assembly, the cities were paralyzed by strikes called by the students who were demanding nationalization of essential industries and withdrawal of the Presidential ordinances limiting freedom of the press. By January, Ayub was offering to negotiate with the opposition; but with Mujib and Bhutto in jail and Bhashani, the Socialist leader, boycotting negotiations, the opposition was in no position to enter any dialogue. On February 6, Bhutto announced that if the State of Emergency, first imposed in 1965, was not lifted by the 15th of February, he would start a fast unto death. Demonstrations grew in size and intensity, and by the middle of the month more than 150 people had died in the disturbances. Ayub lifted the State of Emergency on the day Bhutto's ultimatum was to expire, released Bhutto and, six days later, took himself out of the forthcoming Presidential elections. He then released Mujib, dropping the charges against him. It was obvious that the situation was out of his hands and that the military chiefs had refused to rescue him.

After taking himself out of the race, Ayub conferred with all opposition leaders except Bhutto, who refused to meet with him and demanded instead his immediate resignation, elections to be held on the basis of adult franchise, and the election of a new constituent assembly. Ayub granted the principle of universal adult franchise, but agreed to nothing else, and left to the opposition the task of solving internal differences. The rightist leaders, hoping for a peaceful transition of power from Ayub to themselves, urged an end to demonstrations and violence. But the rebellion continued, partly in response to terrorism from the extreme Right and partly to push through its original aims in that hour of Ayub's weakness. After a lull of hardly three weeks, West Pakistan was again beset by strikes in factories and among the low-paid professions. In East Pakistan, the rebellion never subsided and everybody acknowledged that the students were the only real power in the province, and that they controlled all walks of life. Even senior officials were conceding in private that the rebellion and the terrorism were now drawn up along class lines.

At this point, word came from Islamabad that, in view of the failure of the police to insure tranquillity, the government was considering tougher measures. Since troops had repeatedly been called out in all the cities during the previous six months, that was rightly interpreted as the signal for martial law.

When Ayub withdrew from the forthcoming elections, he wanted to play Johnson to Bhutto's McCarthy. But Bhutto is no McCarthy and Pakistan has a political culture potentially far more revolutionary than that of America. He is undoubtedly the most attractive leader to emerge in West Pakistan. In a country where most cabinet posts in the past ten years have gone to colorless, ill-educated, opportunistic, traditionalist, middle-aged men, he has much to offer: youth, left-wing politics, a style that can stir the masses as much as it stirs the universities, and experience as a Foreign Minister in whose time Pakistan

normalized its relations with China and some other Communist countries. In addition, he possesses a qualification that pays high dividends in Asia these days: Americans hate him.

Bhutto is no Communist; he is a millionaire several times over, and by feudal inheritance too. His bias toward China must be understood in less obvious terms. America demands such subservience and obsequiousness of its non-Western allies that any Asian leader of self-respect is driven to a position far more to the left than he might otherwise have taken. Pakistan is too small, too weak and too close to the Chinese border to ignore this fact. Two facts implement each other: Pakistan must establish a cordial and effective relationship with China; and the example of the Chinese revolution is a source of inspiration for the young men and women in Pakistan.

Bhutto is caught up in this historical and geographical reality. When he talks of socialism, he may be talking of an aristocrat's socialism, a la Nehru, but we need to remember two things: only a man who promises at least socialism has the ghost of a chance to survive as a leader in Pakistan today, and Bhutto is at present the only reputable national leader, other than Bhashani who is 83 years old and has a smaller following, who is doing that.

The main problem Bhutto faces is that his mass appeal is limited thus far to West Pakistan; and even there he faces opposition, not only from pro-Ayub elements but also from a large, rightist section which opposes him as much as it opposes Ayub. In East Pakistan, the pro-Western Mujib-ur-Rehman had appeared to be the leader with the largest following, which has been gathered over the years on issues such as provincial autonomy and what amounts to self-government for East Pakistan. Of late, however, there has surfaced in East Pakistan what one suspects was there all along: a very strong, pro-Communist movement, to the left of Bhutto's movement in West Pakistan. Although the student uprising in Dacca was originally pro-Mujib, it has come to be dominated increasingly by Left-oriented students. Bhashani, who has all his life preached democratic socialism, has suddenly grown in prestige and power. However, it would be wrong to assume that, at his advanced age, Bhashani has gained some new authority. The fact is that although the radical movement exists on a vast scale in East Pakistan, it has so far failed to throw up an acknowledged new leader, and Bhashani has simply occupied a vacuum that must sooner or later be filled by a much younger leader.

Up until two weeks ago, that movement was in almost full control of East Pakistan; what remains to be seen is how long it can hold its power under the newly imposed martial law and with a disaffected and volatile Right. It is now evident that a real, bloody encounter between Right and Left was shaping up in East Pakistan, an area over which Ayub could not exert any satisfactory degree of control from his capital in the distant hills of northwestern Pakistan. By comparison with the real revolutionaries of East Pakistan, Bhutto's pro-Socialist sound and fury is mere rhetoric; though leaderless, the East Pakistani students have gone to the heart of the matter, have gained control of the province, and are now facing terrorism from the extreme Right. Now that the army has intervened, they are the ones who will continue to be the vanguard of revolutionary resistance. They have perhaps lost the first round, but even in that they accomplished much more than their Parisian or Mexican counterparts. The main point, however, is that the

long-awaited rebellion was begun on such a scale that it cannot be totally obliterated by anything short of a Suhartotype massacre of hundreds of thousands.



THE BLOODY SURGERY OF PAKISTAN

Aijaz Ahmad

An expanded version of this article appeared in The Nation, June 28, 1971

After the arbitrary suppression of the East Pakistan rebellion in 1968-69, a resurgence of nationalist sentiment in that Bengali section of the twopart country became inevitable. As I predicted then by imposing martial law the ruling military regime was merely buying time; the rebellion would go underground for a couple of years, only to emerge again prepared to fight for the highest stakes. All of that has now come to pass. The best informed correspondents estimate that the genocidal tactics of the West Pakistani army have cost Bengal close to a quarter of a million lives. Indian sources, up to now the only available, claim that already approximately 1 million refugees have crossed the border, and that thousands more come over each day.

Meanwhile, the movement that started as no more than agitation for autonomy has grown into a struggle for full liberation. Nor is this a Biafra type of minority insurrection; East Pakistan, though the smaller land area, contains the majority of the population - 75 million - and these no longer wish to remain in the same state with West Pakistan. The creation of an independent country, Bangla Desh, has for them become both necessary and inevitable.

In West Pakistan, on the other hand, the economy approaches total collapse. With its foreign exchange reserves falling well below \$200 million, Pakistan owes almost \$5 billion to its many sponsors. The war in Bengal is costing something like \$2 million a day and the disruption of economic life in East Bengal has cut Pakistan's capacity to earn foreign exchange in half. As a state, Pakistan is in an irreversible decline, its progressive disintegration caused by the military-bureaucratic character of the ruling groups. Unless, however, a responsible and humane international policy can be formulated and enforced within the next couple of months, the drift of present events will lead to one of the worst Asian tragedies in even this most blood-ridden of centuries.

East Bengal and West Pakistan are estranged from each other by vast differences of geography, language and culture, and the relationship between the two has fallen into the classic colonial pattern: West Pakistan dominates the military and the bureaucracy. East Bengal accounts for less than 16 per cent of the civil service and less than 10 per cent of the army; at the higher levels of military officialdom, it has no representation at all, and that in itself is decisive in a military state such as Pakistan.

In addition, all the significant industrial and commercial concerns are governed from West Pakistan; Bengal controls, if anything, the subsidiaries. West Pakistan converts Bengali resources to its own profit. According to the official Planning Commission, \$2.6 billion worth of Bengali resources were transferred to West Pakistan between 1948-49 and 1968-69. In the same period, according to the same sources, East Bengal produced 50 to 70 per cent of the exports, but received only 25 to 30 per cent of the imports. That this disparity

has accelerated during the military government's tenure is also documented by the Planning Commission: in 1959-60, per capita income in West Pakistan was 32 per cent higher than in Bengal; ten years later this inequality had increased to 61 per cent. The effect of economic exploitation on the development of human resources was also drastic. Between 1947 and 1967, Bengal's percentage of the total student enrollment fell from 80 to 61 for the primary schools, from 53 to 40 for the secondary, from 60 to 49 for the general university level.

These statistics are mere samples; similar ones could be provided in such other areas as housing, medicine, industrial output, relative price indexes, etc. Thus, starting off in 1947 as the dominant province, with higher educational levels and greater capacity to earn foreign exchange, East Bengal had been reduced by the late 1960's to a semi-colonial status wherein it served as the producer of raw materials for West Pakistan to process and sell, and as a consumer of surplus West Pakistani goods.

It should be kept in mind as well that West Pakistani ruling groups have built their wealth and power at the expense not only of Bengal but also of vast areas of West Pakistan itself. Accordingly, nationalist movements exist within West Pakistan, notably in Baluchistan and in the northwestern home of the Pathans. So, by attempting to suppress the revolutionary struggle in East Bengal, the army acts in the economic interest of the rulers in West Pakistan and at the same time serves a warning on militant groups within West Pakistan.

Between 1947 and 1958, while the country was still ruled by a succession of civilian coalitions and Bengal enjoyed parity, at least on the parliamentary level. Political means had not yet been fully exhausted, nor were the civil service and the army yet seen as the only powerful groups in the country. However, the failure of the feudal politicians to create representative institutions of some permanence and to solve the central problem of parity between the two provinces placed an extraordinary concentration of power in the hands of the bureaucrats, and the civil service became the first prominent power elite in the country.

During the same period, the introduction of American arms aid threw the entire political culture of Pakistan off balance. Coupled with a fear of neighboring India, the availability of weapons led quickly to a thorough militarization of all facets of national life. Then, in 1958, the army took over directly. Given the almost negligible representation of Bengal in the military and the civil services, Bengali leaders watched the rise of the military-bureaucratic state with great apprehension. In the preceding parliamentary decade, they had been demanding only parity between the regions--which was, considering Bengal's numerical majority and its superior capability to earn foreign exchange, generous almost to a fault. Now, they began to talk more and more of provincial autonomy. They still hoped that some kind of loose federal structure, giving each section of the country substantive control over its own resources and planning could resolve the inter-provincial impasse. However, a situation in which Bengal would control its own resources was defined in West Pakistan as secession and a threat to the national interest. The demand was rejected out of hand.

Then in the closing months of 1968, uprisings occurred on university campuses and were supported by workers and the lower bourgeoisie. In East Pakistan, the rebels rallied to the six-point program of Sheikh Mujib-ur-Rehman's Awami League, which was a declaration of Bengali

aspirations for autonomy. In West Pakistan, where the Bengali demands were thought seditious, agitation was organized around questions of university reforms, higher salaries for professionals, and the liberal freedoms of press, assembly, etc. There were thus two parallel and simultaneous rebellions, that in the West being of reformist character, whereas the Bengalis in the East were demanding a radical revaluation of the national question itself.

Nevertheless, the events of 1968-69 set the basic political character of Pakistan for the years immediately ahead. First of all, the fact that Ayub Khan had to abdicate was a limited victory for the rebellion. Secondly, General Yahya took over with full knowledge that prolonged army rule would be disastrous and was obliged to promise general elections. Thirdly, the dominant political power in both regions became evident: Sheikh Mujib-ur-Rehman in Bengal and in West Pakistan, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, former Foreign Minister and leader of the People's Party, were now clearly unbeatable. Finally, it was evident that the politics, even the politicians, of the two regions, were irreconcilable: Mujib and Bhutto had nothing but contempt for each other.

That the elections did take place in Pakistan, that they were not rigged, that within the scope of the electoral possibilities offered them the people were allowed to exercise free and remarkably well-defined choices--all of that reflects not so much the good will of the ruling junta as the intensity and continuity of public pressure. Sheikh Mujib's Awami League contested elections for the National Assembly on the single issue of regional autonomy and captured all but two of the seats reserved for Bengal, which gave the party a clear majority in the Assembly. In West Pakistan, Bhutto's People's Party also won a comfortable majority. However, the fact that each region was represented by a party that did not contest seats in the other province was further indication of the country's polarization. The two parties were not so much opposed to each other as exclusive of each other, and no common interest joined the regions into a single nation.

Because of its hold on the Assembly, Mujib's Awami League was in a position to frame a constitution guaranteeing regional autonomy. Before the elections, however, the ruling junta had issued a "Legal Framework Ordinance" which made it mandatory that the forthcoming constitution preserve the "integrity" and "unity" of Pakistan. In context, "integrity" simply meant retaining the status quo. Effective power was still with the army, which was determined to keep things as they were, whereas the elections had given a clear majority to a party specifically pledged to make basic changes. The result was a deadlock.

The elections were completed by mid-December, and a session of the National Assembly was scheduled for March 3, 1971. On February 15, however, Bhutto, knowing that he had only half as many seats as did Mujib, and therefore no power to determine the character of the constitution, announced, in extraordinary defiance of the mandate given by the Bengali people, that unless Mujib was prepared to compromise in advance on the issue of autonomy, the People's Party would boycott the session. General Yahya quickly postponed the session and declared a crisis. The sensible course would have been to let Bhutto carry out his threat, while the majority party went ahead with the urgent business of forming a government. But Bhutto was in cahoots with the army, and East Bengali nationalists had no choice but to mount a strike that was tantamount to civil disobedience. Consequently, all effective administration of this province of 75 million people passed into the hands of the Awami League; even the provincial Chief Justice refused to administer the oath of office to the new army-appointed

Governor. So, after a charade of talks that fooled almost no one, but which gave time for a troop buildup, Yahya ordered the army to take over East Bengal, and ousted all foreign journalists so that the precise details of what was to happen would be hard to determine.

Nationalism is obviously the most important issue in Bengal today. However, it has been used to build a mass movement primarily by the urban bourgeoisie, who thus far have not been able to compete with the West Pakistani ruling groups on the terms set by the latter. This bourgeoisie has received active support from the urban working classes, who are often employed by West Pakistani bosses and know themselves to be exploited. The peasant masses, however, are not directly abused by West Pakistanis, but are, on the contrary, sharply aware of exploitation by indigenous entrepreneurs. For the peasant, therefore, the issue is not independence, or even autonomy, but social revolution in the countryside. Because there is no effective Socialist movement, the peasant vote has gone along with that of the urban bourgeoisie. But that class, led by the Awami League, has embraced nationalism purely as a way to Bengali control over Bengal's resources--which, given the programs and leadership of the League, means replacing West Pakistani ruling groups with the aspiring urban classes of Bengal. A true emancipation of the peasantry is not on the League's agenda.

Consequently, the Bengali leaders, who must have anticipated the West Pakistani response to the cry for autonomy, did not prepare the peasantry to resist. The masses were used to lend electoral legitimacy to the programs of the urban leaders, but they were not given in return the means to defend themselves against the genocidal tactics of the army. Thus, while excusing in no way the behavior of the West Pakistani ruling classes, one must question the wisdom, even the motives, of the Awami League.

Its leadership had no illusions about the army or the excesses to which it would resort. Under the circumstances, it had a choice between arming the masses or bending to the will of the army just enough to avoid massacre. To have done neither, to have flung an unarmed populace into a predictable inferno, was unforgivable. The illusion was kept up that an autonomous East Bengal, even an independent Bangla Desh could be acquired through negotiations and electoral politics, and without the direct, militant participation of the people. The unpleasant probability is that the peasantry was never prepared for an armed struggle, precisely because to give it that role would have profoundly changed the character of the movement and committed East Bengal to a social revolution in the countryside, instead of mere autonomy with increased leeway for the Bengali middle classes.

In view of all this, it is not at all likely that autonomy, or even the creation of an independent Bengali state, could begin to cope with the hunger, the misery, the oppression of the deeply injured Bengalis. One is far from convinced that the urban, middle-class Awami League, now outlawed and gone for the most part underground, can exert the force necessary to achieve not only political independence but a genuine social revolution in the countryside.

So far, the Bengali peasantry has not emerged as a genuinely revolutionary class, in the sense of being conscious of its distinct interests and developing both the leadership and the programs to realize their fulfillment. For the moment, however, the terror practiced by the West Pakistani troops has forced a revolutionary potential upon

this peasantry. It is likely that the alienation of the rural Bengali is now absolute and that, for a relatively short time, he may be imbued with a will for armed struggle. The same genocidal troop tactics have bestowed a revolutionary aura upon the banished leadership of the Awami League. It is possible, therefore, that the revolutionary peasant mass may accept the League as a revolutionary vanguard. In that case, we may yet see the peasantry fighting for essentially urban, middle-class goals. It can even happen that a Bengali state will be created by the efforts and sacrifices of the peasantry--who will then be ruled by a socially advanced, urban middle class. The question is not whether a Bengali state should come into being; it must. The question is, what sort of state?

Within East Bengal, the cry of secession was first raised by Maulana Bhashani, the perennial peasant leader who, after the tidal wave hit Bengal and the West Pakistani rulers failed to provide even the semblance of adequate relief, demanded independence in November 1970--almost four months before the more moderate leaders of the Awami League got around to escalating their demand beyond autonomy. The factionalism of the Bengali Left, and the superior organization of the Awami League, made it possible for Mujib to steal Bhashani's thunder. In addition, Bhashani made the mistake of boycotting the elections, instead of using them as a sort of referendum on the independence issue. This error gave the Awami League a near consensus and thus an unchallengeable electoral legitimacy.

Now that electoral politics have proved a disaster, Bhashani is likely to regain prestige. He will then surely point out that the elections should never have been taken seriously, that from the start, the struggle should have been a peasant fight for independence and social revolution in the countryside. Bhashani is almost 90, but still amazingly well. The more radical elements within the Awami League, restrained in the past by the moderate politics of Mujib, are also likely to gather more force and following.

Meanwhile, refugee camps in India, overcrowded with poor, angry peasants, will probably become recruitment centers for a liberation army. As the Bengalis shift from electoral illusions to armed struggle, the composition of the leadership is bound to change drastically. There is already fervent talk of launching guerrilla warfare, but it is unlikely that a strong, coherent, well-trained guerrilla movement capable of effectively confronting West Pakistan's army can arise soon. If it is launched too hurriedly, it can only provoke a new massacre and deepened despair in the Bengali masses.

Some of the Bengali problems may be solved by the bankruptcy and chaos within West Pakistan itself. In the short run, however, the army is likely to step aside in favor of a quisling administration that will have the appearance of civilian rule. With this arrangement made, West Pakistan will probably get enough financing to stave off disintegration. In that case, Bengal will either have to give up its aspirations for independence or prepare for a long struggle.

WHY THE REFUGEES FLED:

the first full eye-witness report of the horror when the troops went into East Pakistan

Anthony Mascarenhas

reprinted from the Sunday Times, June 13, 1971

Abdul Bari had run out of luck. Like thousands of other people in East Bengal, he had made the mistake--the fatal mistake--of running within sight of a Pakistani army patrol.

He was 24 years old, a slight man surrounded by soldiers. He was trembling, because he was about to be shot.

"Normally we would have killed him as he ran," I was informed chattily by Major Rathore, the G-2 Ops. of the 9th Division, as we stood on the outskirts of a tiny village near Mudafarganj, about 20 miles south of Comilla. "But we are checking him out for your sake. You are new here and I see you have a squeamish stomach."

"Why kill him?" I asked with mounting concern.

"Because he might be a Hindu or he might be a rebel, perhaps a student or an Awami Leaguer. They know we are sorting them out and they betray themselves by running."

"But why are you killing them? And why pick on the Hindus?" I persisted.

"Must I remind you," Rathore said severely, "how they have tried to destroy Pakistan? Now under the cover of the fighting we have an excellent opportunity of finishing them off."

"Of course," he added hastily, "we are only killing the Hindu men. We are soldiers, not cowards like the rebels. They kill our women and children."

I was getting my first glimpse of the stain of blood which has spread over the otherwise verdant land of East Bengal. First it was the massacre of the non-Bengalis in a savage outburst of Bengali hatred. Now it was massacre, deliberately carried out by the West Pakistan army.

The pogrom's victims are not only the Hindus of East Bengal--who constitute about 10 per cent of the 75 million population--but also many thousands of Bengali Muslims. These include university and college students, teachers, Awami League and Left-Wing political cadres and every one the army can catch of the 176,000 Bengali militarymen and police who mutinied on March 26 in a spectacular, though untimely and illstarred bid to create an independent Republic of Bangla Desh.

What I saw and heard with unbelieving eyes and ears during my 10 days in East Bengal in late April made it terribly clear that the killings are not the isolated acts of military commanders in the field.

The West Pakistani soldiers are not the only ones who have been killing in East Bengal, of course. On the night of March 25--and this was allowed to report by the Pakistani censor--the Bengali troops and paramilitary units stationed in East Pakistan mutinied and attacked non-Bengalis with atrocious savagery.

Thousands of families of unfortunate Muslims, many of them refugees from Bihar who chose Pakistan at the time of the partition riots in 1947, were mercilessly wiped out. Women were raped, or had their

breasts torn out with specially-fashioned knives. Children did not escape the horror: the lucky ones were killed with their parents; but many thousands of others must go through what life remains for them with eyes gouged out and limbs roughly amputated. More than 20,000 bodies of non-Bengalies have been found in the main towns, such as Chittagong, Khulna and Jessore. The real toll, I was told everywhere in East Bengal, may have been as high as 1000,000; for thousands of non-Bengalis have vanished without a trace.

The government of Pakistan has let the world know about that first horror. What it has suppressed is the second and worse horror which followed when its own army took over the killing. West Pakistani officials privately calculate that altogether both sides have killed 250,000 people--not counting those who have died of famine and disease.

Reacting to the almost successful breakaway of the province, which has more than half the country's population, General Yahya Khan's military government is pushing through its own "final solution" of the East Bengal problem.

"We are determined to cleanse East Pakistan once and for all of the threat of secession, even if it means killing off two million people and ruling the province as a colony for 30 years," I was repeatedly told by senior military and civil officers in Dacca and Comilla.

The West Pakistan army in East Bengal is doing exactly that with a terrifying thoroughness.

We had been racing against the setting sun after a visit to Chadpur (the West Pakistan army prudently stays indoors at night in East Bengal) when one of the Jawans (privates) crouched in the back of the Toyota Land Cruiser called out sharply: "There's a man running, Sahib."

Major Rathore brought the vehicle to an abrupt halt, simultaneously reaching for the Chinese-made light machine-gun propped against the door. Less than 200 yards away a man could be seen loping through the knee-high paddy.

"For God's Sake don't shoot," I cried. "He's unarmed. He's only a villager."

Rathore gave me a dirty look and fired a warning burst.

As the man sank to a crouch in the lush carpet of green, two jawans were already on their way to drag him in.

The thud of a rifle butt across the shoulders preceded the questioning.

"Who are you?"

"Mercy, Sahib! My name is Abdul Bari. I'm a tailor from the New Market in Dacca."

"Don't lie to me. You're a Hindu. Why were you running?"

Before the man could answer he was quickly frisked for weapons by a jawan while another quickly snatched away his lungi. The skinny body that was bared revealed the distinctive traces of circumcision which is obligatory for Muslims.

At least it could be plainly seen that Bari was not a Hindu.

The interrogation proceeded.

"Tell me, why were you running?"

By this time Bari, wild-eyed and trembling violently, could not answer. He buckled at the knees.

"He looks like a Fauji, sir," volunteered one jawan as Bari was hauled to his feet. (Fauji is the Urdu word for soldier: the army uses it for the Bengali rebels it is hounding.)

"Could be," I heard Rathore mutter grimly.

Abdul Bari was clouted several times with the butt end of a rifle, then ominously pushed against a wall. Mercifully his screams brought a young head peeping from the shadows of a nearby hut. Bari shouted something in Bengali. The head vanished. Moments later a bearded old man came haltingly from the hut. Rathore pounced on him.

"Do you know this man?"

"Yes, Sahib. He is Abdul Bari."

"Is he a fauji?"

"No, Sahib, he is a tailor from Dacca."

"Tell me the truth."

"Khuda Kassam (God's oath), Sahib, he is a tailor."

There was a sudden silence. Rathore looked abashed as I told him "For God's sake let him go. What more proof do you want of his innocence?"

But the jawans were apparently unconvinced and kept milling around Bari. It was only after I had once more interceded on his behalf that Rathore ordered Bari to be released. By that time he was a crumpled, speechless heap of terror. But his life had been saved.

Others have not been as fortunate.

For six days I travelled with the officers of the 9th Division headquarters at Comilla I witnessed at close quarters the extent of the killing. I saw Hindus, hunted from village to village and door to door shot offhand after a cursory "short-arm inspection" showed they were uncircumcised. I have heard the screams of men bludgeoned to death in the compound of the Circuit House (civil administrative headquarters in Comilla. I have seen truckloads of other human targets and those who had the humanity to try to help them hauled off "for disposal" under the cover of darkness and curfew. I have witnessed the brutality of "kill and burn missions" as the army units, after clearing out the rebels, pursued the pogrom in the towns and villages.

I have seen whole villages devastated by "punitive action."

And in the officers mess at night I have listened incredulously as otherwise brave and honourable men proudly chewed over the day's kill.

"How many did you get?"

The answers are seared in my memory.

All This is being done, as any West Pakistani officer will tell you, for the "preservation of the unity, the integrity and the ideology of Pakistan." It is, of course too late for that. The very military action that is designed to hold together the two wings of the country, separated by a thousand miles of India, has confirmed the ideological and emotional break. East Bengal can only be kept in Pakistan by the heavy hand of the army. And the army is dominated by the Punjabis, who traditionally despise and dislike the Bengalis.

The break is so complete today that few Bengalis will willingly be seen in the company of a West Pakistani. I had a distressing experience of this kind during my visit to Dacca when I went to visit an old friend. "I'm sorry," he told me as he turned away, "things have changed. The Pakistan that you and I knew has ceased to exist. Let us put it behind us."

Hours later a Punjabi army officer, talking about the massacre of the non-Bengalis before the army moved in, told me: "They have treated us more brutally than the Sikhs did in the partition riots in 1947. How can we ever forgive or forget this?"

When the army units fanned out in Dacca on the evening of March 25, in pre-emptive strikes against the mutiny planned for the small hours of the next morning, many of them carried lists of people to be liquidated. These included the Hindus and large numbers of Muslims; students, Awami Leaguers, professors, journalists and those who had been prominent in Sheikh Mujib's movement. The charge, now publicly made, that the army was subjected to mortar attack from the Jaganath Hall, where the Hindu university students lived, hardly justifies the obliteration of two Hindu colonies, built around the temples on Ramna racecourse, and a third in Shakrepati, in the heart of the old city. Nor does it explain why the sizeable Hindu populations of Dacca and the neighbouring industrial town of Narayanganj should have vanished so completely during the round-the-clock curfew on March 26 and 27. There is similarly no trace of acres of Muslims who were rounded up during the curfew hours. These people were eliminated in a planned operation: an improvised response to Hindu aggression would have had vastly different results.

Touring Dacca on April 15 I found the heads of four students lying rotting on the roof of the Iqbal Hall hostel. The caretaker said they had been killed on the night of March 25. I also found heavy traces of blood on the two staircases and in four of the rooms. Behind Iqbal Hall a large residential building seemed to have been singled out for special attention by the army. The walls were pitted with bullet holes and a foul smell still lingered on the staircase, although it had been heavily powdered with DDT. Neighbours said the bodies of 23 women and children had been carted away only hours before. They had been decomposing on the roof since March 25. It was only after much questioning that I was able to ascertain that the victims belonged to the near-by Hindu shanties. They had sought shelter in the building as the army closed in.

This is genocide conducted with amazing casualness. Sitting in the office of Major Agha, Martial Law Administrator of Comilla City, on the morning of April 19, I saw the off-hand manner in which sentences were meted out. A Bihari sub-inspector of police had walked in with a list of prisoners being held in the police lock-up. Agha looked it over. Then, with a flick of his pencil, he casually ticked off four names on the list.

"Bring these four to me this evening for disposal," he said. He looked at the list again. The pencil flicked once more. "...and bring this thief along with them."

The death sentence had been pronounced over a glass of coconut milk. I was informed that two of the prisoners were Hindus, the third a "student," and the fourth an Awami League organiser. The "thief," it transpired, was a lad named Sebastian who had been caught moving the household effects of a Hindu friend to his own house.

Later that evening I saw these men, their hands and legs tied loosely with a single rope, being led down the road to the Circuit House compound. A little after curfew, which was at 6 o'clock, a flock of squawking mynah birds were disturbed in their play by the thwacking sound of wooden clubs meeting bone and flesh.

Overwhelmed with terror, the Bengalis have one of two reactions. Those who can run away just seem to vanish. Whole towns have been abandoned as the army approached. Those who can't run adopt a cringing servility which only adds humiliation to their plight.

Chadpur was an example of the first.

In the past this key river port on the Meghna was noted for its thriving business houses and gay life. At night thousands of small country boats anchored on the river's edge made it a fairyland of lights. On April 18 Chandpur was deserted. No people, no boats. Barely one per cent of the population had remained. The rest, particularly the Hindus who constituted nearly half the population, had fled.

Weirdly they had left behind thousands of Pakistani flags fluttering from every house, shop and rooftop. The effect was like a national day celebration without the crowds. It only served to emphasise the haunted look.

The flags were by way of insurance.

Somehow the word had got around that the army considered any structure without a Pakistani flag to be hostile and consequently to be destroyed. It did not matter how the Pakistani flags were made, so long as they were adorned with the crescent and star. So they came in all sizes, shapes and colours. Some flaunted blue fields, instead of the regulation green. Obviously they had been hastily put together with the same material that had been used for the blue Bangla Desh Flag. Indeed blue Pakistani flags were more common than the green. The scene in Chandpur was repeated in Hajiganj, Mudarfarganj, Kasba, Brahmanbaria; all ghost towns gay, with flags.

Laksham was an example of the other reaction: cringing.

When I drove into the town the morning after it had been cleared of the rebels, all I could see was the army and literally thousands of Pakistani flags. The major in charge there had camped in the police station, and it was there that Major Rathore took us. My colleague, a Pakistani TV cameraman had to make a propaganda film about the "return to normalcy" in Laksham-- one of the endless series broadcast daily showing welcome parades and "Peace meetings."

I wondered how he could manage it, but the Major said it would be no sweat. "There are enough of these bastards left to put on a good show. Give me 20 minutes."

Lieutenant Javed of the 39th Baluch was assigned the task of rounding up a crowd. He called out to an elderly bearded man who had apparently been brought in for questioning. The man, who later gave his name as Maulana Said Mohammad Saidul Huq, insisted he was a "staunch Muslim Leaguer and not from the Awami League." (The Muslim League led the movement for an independent Pakistan in 1947.) He was all too eager please. "I will very definitely get you at least 60 men in 20 minutes." He told Javed. "But if you give me two hours I will bring 200."

Maulana Saidul Huq was as good as his word. We had hardly drunk our fill of the deliciously refreshing coconut mild that had been thoughtfully supplied by the Major when he heard shouts in the distance. "Pakistan zindabad!" "Pakistan army zindabad!" "Muslim League zindabad!" they were chanting. (Zindabad is Urdu for "long live!") Moments later they marched into view, a motley crowd of about 50 old and decrepit men and knee-high children, all waving Pakistani flags and shouting at the top of their voices. Lt. Javed gave me a knowing wink.

Within minutes the "Parade" had grown into a "public meeting" complete with a make-shift public address system and a rapidly multiplying group of would-be speakers.

Mr. Mahbub-ur-Rahman was pushed forward to make the address of welcome to the army. He introduced himself as "N.F. College professor of English and Arabic, who had also tried for History and is a life-time member of the great Muslim League Party."

Introduction over, Mahbub-ur-Rahman gave forth with gusto. "Punjabis and Bengalis," he said, "had united for Pakistan and we had our own traditions and culture. But we were terrorised by the Hindus and the Awami Leaguers and led astray. Now we thank God that the Punjabi soldiers have saved us. They are the best soldiers in the world and heroes of humanity. We love and respect them from the bottom of our hearts." And so on, interminably, in the same vein.

After the "meeting" I asked the Major what he thought about the speech. "Serves the purpose," he said, "But I don't trust that bastard. I'll put him on my list."

So the army is not going to pull out. The Government's policy for East Bengal was spelled out to me in the Eastern Command headquarters at Dacca. It has three elements:---

(1) The Bengalis have proved themselves "unreliable" and must be ruled by West Pakistan;

(2) The Bengalis will have to be re-educated along proper Islamic lines. The "Islamisation of the masses"--this is the official jargon--is intended to eliminate secessionist tendencies and provide a strong religious bond with West Pakistan;

(3) When the Hindus have been eliminated by death and flight, their property will be used as a golden carrot to win over the underprivileged Muslim middleclass. This will provide the base for erecting administrative and political structures in the future.

This policy is being pursued with the utmost blatancy.

Because of the mutiny, it has been officially decreed that there will not for the present be any further recruitment of Bengalis in the defence forces. Senior Air Force and Navy officers, who were not in anyway involved, have been moved "as a precaution" to nonsensitive positions. Bengali fighter pilots, among them some of the aces of the Air Force, had the humiliation of being grounded and moved to non-flying duties. Even PIA air crews operating between the two wings of the country have been strained clean of Bengalis.

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

Hundreds of West Pakistani government civil servants, doctors, and technicians for the radio, TV, telegraph and telephone services have already been sent out to East Pakistan. More are being encouraged to go with the promise of one- and two-step promotions. But the transfer, when made, is obligatory. President Yahya recently issued an order making it possible to transfer civil servants to any part of Pakistan against their will.

Captain Durrani, of the Baluch Regiment, who was in charge of the company guarding the Comilla airport, had his own methods of dealing with the problem. "I have told them," he said with reference to the Bengalis maintaining the control tower, "that I will shoot anyone who even looks like he is doing something suspicious." Durrani had made good his word. A Bengali who had approached the airport a few nights earlier was shot. "Could have been a rebel," I was told. Durrani had another claim to fame. He had personally accounted for "more than 60 men" while clearing the villages surrounding the airport.

The harsh reality of colonisation in the East is being concealed by shameless window dressing. For several weeks President Yahya Khan and Lt.-Gen. Tikka Khan have been trying to get political support in East Pakistan for what they are doing. The results have not exactly been satisfying. The support forthcoming so far has been from people like Moulvi Farid Ahmad, a Bengali lawyer in Dacca, Fazlul Quadeer Chaudhary and Professor Ghulam Azam of the Jamat Islami, all of whom were soundly beaten in the General Elections last December.

The only prominent personality to emerge for this purpose has been Mr. Nurul Amin, an old Muslim Leaguer and former Chief Minister of the Province who was one of only two non-Awami Leaguers to be elected to the National Assembly. He is now in his seventies. But even Nurul Amin has been careful not to be too effusive. His two public statements to date have been concerned only with the "Indian interference."

Bengalis look with scorn on the few who "collaborate." Farid Ahmad and Fazlul Quadeer Chaudhury are painfully aware of this. Farid Ahmad makes a point of keeping his windows shuttered and only those who have been scrutinised and recognised through a peephole in the front door are allowed into the house.

By singularly blunt methods the Government has been able to get grudging acquiescence from 31 Awami Leaguers who had been elected to the national and provincial assemblies. They are being kept on ice in Dacca, secluded from all but their immediate families, for the big occasion when "representative government" is to be installed. But clearly they now represent no one but themselves.

Abdul Bari the tailor who was lucky to survive, is 24 years old. That is the same age as Pakistan. The army can of course hold the country together by force. But the meaning of what it has done in East Bengal is that the dream of the men who hoped in 1947 that they were founding a Muslim nation in two equal parts has now faded. There is now little chance for a long time to come that Punjabis in the West and Bengalis in the East will feel themselves equal fellow-citizens of one nation. For the Bengalis, the future is now bleak: the unhappy submission of a colony to its conquerors.

THE FOOD SITUATION IN BANGLA DESH

Peter Bertocci

Over 90% of East Bengal's estimated (1970) 75 million people live in more than 64,000 villages, in densities ranging from 75 to 2,000 persons per square mile of cultivated area. It is eminently a land of small farmers, most of whom own less than the provincial average of around 3 acres, their holdings often fragmented into many small plots. Nearly 20% of those employed in agriculture in 1960 were landless laborers and it is likely that their number has increased since the last agricultural census.

Rice dominates agricultural production in East Bengal, contributing under normal conditions up to 75% of the produce from all crops and occupying 80% of the gross cultivated area.

Most peasants must rely on the summer and autumn crops, as they cannot cultivate much of their land during the winter season. Throughout most of the province the annual yields of native rice varieties from both the summer and autumn crops typically average between 1,000 and 1,500 lbs. per acre in consumable rice (not paddy). Although the average farm size in East Bengal is about 3 acres, many cultivators farm much less than that and thus many families are left with around 2,000 lbs. of rice a year. Under normal conditions, most cultivators retain about 60% of their harvest for domestic consumption, using the remainder for debt repayment and seeding purposes, marketing whatever might then be left. Estimates in the 1960's suggest that an average East Bengali family consumes 1,800 lbs. of rice annually, although it can be assumed that many do not attain this standard. It can thus be seen that many East Bengali farm families live on the margins of self sufficiency even in good times, constantly staring at the threat of hunger from one year to the next. The months of June and July and October and November are particularly "crisis months" even under normal conditions, as millions pray that the monsoons will not fail them and the harvests will come.

While rice dominates East Bengal's agricultural economy, significant investment in certain cash crops has been the rule as well. Jute, in particular, has been the most important. Since 1947 East Bengal's jute has been the largest single foreign exchange earner for Pakistan as a whole; in the early years of Pakistan's independence, jute provided in some periods as much as 70% of the total amount of hard currency earned by the new state, and although that proportion has diminished significantly to around 40-45% in recent years, as manufactures from West Pakistan have succeeded on international markets, jute and jute products remained crucial as export items.

The Pakistani "civil war" could not have broken out at a worse time, coming as it did at the tail end of the winter growing season, the period of little production, when most cultivators must have been

"on the ropes" for food supplies. It is thus not for nothing that heads of international food relief organizations, such as Iain MacDonald, East Pakistan relief coordinator for Oxfam, were warning in early April that 1.5 million Bengalis might face starvation on a greater scale than that reported for Biafra during the Nigerian civil war. Precise details as to the current food situation in East Bengal are hard to come by. But enough is known to suggest that the dire predictions of experts may be in the process of coming true.

As indicated, the crisis broke out at a time when food stocks and expected harvests are normally quite low in East Bengal. The normal shortage was, therefore, immediately compounded by the fact of war. Reports from foreigners evacuated in early April indicate, for example, that the price of paddy - not husked rice - was as high as Rs. 70 per maund even at that early point in the fighting, nearly 6 times its usual price at that time of year! The same reports suggest the prices of other basic food and non-food items such as kerosene had reached similar levels and in some cases 6 times the normal prices.

This time of year is the beginning of the summer cropping season. Since the monsoon usually begins in late April, early May. It is imperative for cultivators to get on with seeding immediately as the rains begin, in order to allow sufficient gestation period for the early harvest and simultaneous planting of the second autumn crop. At present, all indications are that the war and the repressive activities of the Pakistan army have not permitted cultivators to engage in planting. Foreign evacuees to whom I have talked report that, at least in the areas with which they were familiar prior to departure, the Army maintained rigid curfew hours, patrolling the rural areas in jeeps with "shoot to kill" orders. Subsequent random killing, raping and looting in the rural areas have obviously disgraced farmers from doing anything as long as the Army's reign of terror remains. It may be that, as the Yahya government claims, things in rural Bangla Desh have returned to normal by now. Even were we to grant credence to this fabrication, it is clear that optimum planting period in a precariously balanced agricultural zone has been missed.

What, then, of available food stocks? The most recent food production figures are not available to this writer, but it is estimated that the 1969-70 total of rice production was around 10.8 million tons and experts believe that this might have increased by one million by the end of this year. In any case, it is unlikely that the usual annual shortfall of 1 to 2 million tons of rice in Bengal is going to be greatly lessened this year.

Thus, East Bengali peasants must rely on imported food stocks according to reliable sources have been at an all time high of 60's in East Bengal, largely because of the cyclone relief of last November. As of January 1, 1971, there were 183,000 tons of rice and 411,000 tons of wheat in the province and it was at least at the beginning of the crisis in March that the loss of these food stocks could avert a major food crisis in June or July. Most of these stocks are said to have in fact been already

distributed in storage depots all over the countryside. Thus, control of these is, no doubt, an important factor in the battle for the countryside. Some reports have it that Yahya's troops have destroyed food stocks, and it is likely that, whatever the status of the stocks, when push comes to shove, troops, and not hungry peasants, will get "first dibs" on them. Finally, it should be pointed out that East Bengal, a net importer of rice because of its immense population, under normal conditions was reliant upon West Pakistan for some rice supplies. According to Harvey Stockwin, between July, 1970 and January, 1971, East Pakistan imported 220,000 tons of rice from the West Wing; the total stoppage of East-West trade since the outbreak of war has thus brought a loss of 80,000 tons of rice from West Pakistan which, in addition to the loss incurred by the West Pakistan economy, further enhances the danger of famine in East Bengal.

Even given the willingness to the Government to alleviate the rice situation, it is likely that distribution problems would greatly hinder it in its task. Reports of widespread destruction are numerous. Mascarenhas reports that as of early May major bridges and thousands of small ones had been destroyed throughout the province. Stockwin also reported for the same period that the Feni road and rail bridges had been blown up, that the Dacca-Chittagong Road had had 2 major and 1 minor bridge destroyed and that the railway to and from Chittagong, the major port through which any food shipments must pass, had been cut in possibly as many as 24 places.

Meanwhile, as of this writing, the Government of Pakistan has given no serious assent to entry into East Bengal by foreign relief agencies. For obvious reasons, the Yahya government appears anxious to control all relief efforts; in such things lie a tool for control of the recalcitrants in the population and, of course, the more foreigners who see the extent of the holocaust in East Bengal, the less likely will the Government get a favorable press which it so desperately wants.

Yet the danger of famine remains. Even Tikka Khan, the "Butcher of Baluchistan" and now Bengal, head of military operations in Dacca, acknowledged in a radio broadcast as early as April 18th that he was "gravely concerned" about the food situation. Time will tell how much he does about it.

Bailing Out Pakistan

Rehman Sobhan

reprinted from The New Republic, June 5, 1971

As Pakistan slides towards disintegration, the United States is being forced to do some fundamental rethinking of a policy dating back to the days of Dulles diplomacy which inaugurated Pak-US relations through a Mutual Security Pact in 1954. Pakistan did well out of the relationship, receiving \$1.5-to-2 billion in armaments and \$3 billion in economic aid up to 1969. It is less certain what the U.S. got out of it, apart from a U-2 base in Peshwar, since Pakistan never made any bones about the fact that it needed American arms to face India. The ostensible purpose of this investment, however, was to contain Communism in Southeast Asia and the Middle East and Pakistan was happy to subscribe to this illusion by making anticommunist noises at international forums. While the U.S. sold its aid package to Pakistan in Congress as part of its containment strategy, the pacts were sold in Pakistan as an expedient to get arms to defend the nation against Indian designs. No one on either side sought to question these conventional assumptions until Pakistan actually became embroiled in a shooting war with India in September 1965, when a large quantity of U.S. gifted hardware was seen in action on the plains of the Panjab. Washington's reaction to this failure of policy was to suspend all shipments to both sides, but the denial was far more severely felt in Pakistan where the entire military machine had been geared to the need States. The move soured Pak-U.S. relations which had already strained by the U.S. decision to send arms to India following the Indian border war in 1962. Pakistan moves to strengthen ties with on the assumption that "my enemy's enemy is my friend" had led out another key assumption underlying U.S. policy, and the Pakistan war merely wrote 'finis' to that phase in the relationship. As history has shown, U.S. arms are far more likely to be used to press popular movements at home, than to resist external aggression. The rise of the military whose numbers and strength within Pakistan grew with every shipload of American weapons received gave testimony to this truth. By October 1958 the armed forces under Ayub Khan were strong enough to take over the country and frustrate the prospect of a genuine return to democracy imminent in the general elections set for 1959. The Pak-Indian war in 1965 led to a suspension of arms shipments to Pakistan, the U.S. continued pumping in economic aid. The aggregate growth rates concealed the fact that during the 1960s the inequalities increased sharply both between social classes in East and West Pakistan. Disparities in per capita income rose West over East Pakistan increased from 32 percent in 1961 to 61 percent in 1969-70. This followed from the fact that one-third of the development financed by aid, took place in the form of population growth. Though 55 percent of the population lived there. \$2.6 billion in resources in the way of East Pakistan's foreign exchange plus the share of foreign aid were transferred to West Pakistan in 1968-69. Such policies were possible because power was held indirectly before 1958 or directly since, rested in the hands of forces and bureaucracy which was overwhelmingly

from West Pakistan. To the extent that the U.S. underwrote these military regimes, it perpetuated a set of power relationships which permitted the West wing based army-bureaucratic complex to dominate the more numerous East.

The war of liberation now raging in East Pakistan stems from an attempt by the Bengalis to break free of the hegemony of West Pakistan's ruling groups. They thought they could do it within the framework of Pakistan by seeking a loose federal relationship which put all decision-making and resources into the hands of the regions. But this was seen as a threat not only to the captive markets of West Pakistan's inefficient industrialists but as a threat to the westward flow of resources. And to the army it appeared as a menace to their privileged budget: East Pakistani revenues and foreign exchange were vital, particularly since arms had to be bought for cash from the French and other suppliers after the suspension of large scale U.S. arms shipments in 1965. The refusal of the army to come to terms with the peaceful attempt to restructure power relations within Pakistan has now compelled it to use force to suppress the Awami League which won 80 percent of the votes and 98.5 percent of the seats in the East wing on its autonomy platform. Since the entire eastern population of 75 million is united in its support for its elected representatives, the army has had to resort to genocide. Visiting foreign journalists estimate that this has led to over half a million Bengali dead within the first 6 weeks of fighting. It is hardly surprising that a political struggle by East Pakistan for autonomy within Pakistan has been transformed into a full scale war of independence for the creation of Bangla Desh.

The United States remains an uneasy but by no means uninvolved spectator. Its economic aid strategy which favored the west wing has now culminated in a drive for freedom by 55 percent of the population, and the arms Washington gave are being used by the West Pakistani army to crush this drive.

The U.S. is further involved by the recent request from West Pakistan to rescue it from economic catastrophe. All exports from East Pakistan being suspended, Pakistan's foreign exchange earnings are cut by 50 percent and their reserves are expected to be down to zero in another two months. A business recession threatens West Pakistan due to the loss of captive markets and a price inflation of up to 100 percent is imminent because of the drop in production. This plus the loss of all revenues from the East promises that only half of the next Pakistan budget can be financed. A war now costing the impoverished economy \$2 million a day will have to be financed by creating paper.

In this predicament Pakistan has asked aid donors for up to \$1 billion to bail her out. She needs \$70 million in commodities aid from the U.S., plus \$100 million as ready cash. A further \$300-\$400 million will be required by the year's end just to stay afloat.

How Washington will respond to this request depends on how determined the Americans are to go on compounding their failures in Pakistan. Indications are that the U.S. has bought time to make up its mind and is taking cover behind a World Bank-IMF mission being sent out early this month to look over the situation.

Meanwhile, Pakistan presses for a "political" solution to the war and speaks of the need to get relief to Bengalis faced by famine. But both these issues are tied up with a willingness by Pakistan to come to terms with reality and to negotiate disengagement with the

elected leaders of Bangla Desh.

Only an inclination to resume business with old friends could persuade the Americans to buy Pakistan's proposed solution of setting up a Quisling Administration in Bangla Desh, on the pretense of returning Pakistan to civilian rule. If the U.S. chooses under these circumstances to resume aid and agrees to put relief into the hands of the Pak army, it will neither be tranquilizing the crisis nor saving the Bengalis from famine. It will merely hand another weapon--relief--to the Pakistan army and will foster the illusion that Washington can insulate West Pakistan from the costs of this war. By doing so, the Americans will ensure that the war goes on with a mounting expenditure of Bengali lives and resources and eventual disaster for West Pakistan as the price for its refusal to negotiate a political disengagement before it is too late. An open-ended crisis of this dimension transcends the frontiers of Bangla Desh and threatens not just a subcontinental war but because of the interest of both China and the USSR in the area, possibly another global confrontation. The United States, today, can buy disengagement cheaply by refusing to underwrite Pakistan's military adventure in Bangla Desh. Tomorrow it may find itself in yet another quagmire not of its own making.



The U.S. Responsibility In Bengal

Aijaz Ahmad

reprinted from Liberation, September, 1971

Thanks very largely to the American strategies of the last two decades, Pakistan is now in the fist of an awesome military-bureaucratic Fascism which possesses the power of modern weaponry given to it by the U.S., and has launched, so as to protect itself as well as the interests of its sponsors, a genocide in the Eastern, majority part of the country.

Pakistan is allowed no independent Press at all, and all foreign correspondents were barred from East Pakistan as of March 25, the first night of the Terror. Some were re-admitted, but for only limited and supervised tours. It is, therefore, impossible to give entirely accurate figures. Relatively more knowledgeable sources, however, estimate quarter of a million to half a million dead, five to eight million refugees who have already fled to India, and an unimaginably vaster number of potential refugees created within East Pakistan. Practically all East Pakistanis live on starvation point--those, that is, who still live. Furthermore, a number of international agencies, ranging from Oxfam to Senator Kennedy's Subcommittee on Refugees, have estimated that, unless a political solution to the Bengali tragedy is found by August 1, or thereabouts, the terrorism unleashed by the West Pakistani junta will have claimed perhaps as many as twenty million victims by the end of the year.

Within West Pakistan, the junta has arrested, tortured or banished from the country hundreds, perhaps thousands, of dissenters, particularly from the Left-Wing. The courts and the information media are manipulated with almost medieval swagger. For example, Abdullah Malik, a noted Radical journalist, was fined 50,000 rupees and sentenced to a long term in jail for what was considered an insult to the President; the court declared in the judgement that, but for the advanced age of the victim, flogging would have been recommended. The repression in West Pakistan is yet in no way comparable to the genocide in East Pakistan; it is, nevertheless, as widespread as, say, in Greece, and is surely a foretaste of things to come.

The Pakistani military is a creation, literally, of Western imperialism. On the highest levels, it is run by generals trained first in the British Indian Army with all the colonialist intent and outlook implicit in that training. Then, as the U.S. became the dominant imperialist power in Asia, she also became, and remained until 1965, the exclusive supplier of arms and training to this military. Since the 1965 Indo-Pakistani conflict, the U.S. has been under constant pressure from the larger and more influential Indian clientele and has had to cut down on arms supplies to Pakistan. However, under one cover or another, the aid has continued. On June 22, for example, The New York Times reported that between 1967 and April, 1970, the flow of equipment from the Air Force sales alone had reached close to 50 million dollars; the sales from the Army and the Navy are still unknown. Further, the same report revealed that in October, 1970, the Administration agreed to sell to Pakistan an undisclosed number of F-104 fighter planes, B-57 bombers, and armored personnel carriers. Even as the genocide continues, arms are still being sent. For the latest

shipments, the U.S. government has given three, quite conflicting explanations: that the shipments are merely a bureaucratic error, that they are carrying deliveries on orders accepted before April 8 when the Nixon administration supposedly imposed an embargo on arms to Pakistan, and that continuation of arms aid is necessary for the U.S. to gain the leverage for forcing the junta to accept a sensible political solution.

Meanwhile, Senator Kennedy has revealed a State Department testimony saying that U.S. experts are being dispatched to East Bengal to train West Pakistani police. The testimony further reveals that "U.S. teams" shall be sent to help the West Pakistani troops suppress the Bengali rebellion. It is yet too early to say just who will go on these "teams." One should perhaps be ready for the sort of "advisors" who used to go to Vietnam on similar missions about a decade ago.

In the face of this blatant duplicity, it is reasonable to ask what U.S. interests are being served in Pakistan and why is it that the Nixon administration is so anxious to underwrite the survival of the junta.

East and West Pakistan, although units in one country, are a thousand miles apart from each other. East Pakistan shares a border with Burma, is separated from China by a very narrow strip of Indian territory, and is vulnerable to the politics and pressures of Southeast Asia. West Pakistan, on the other hand, is closer to Iran and the Middle East. Both are very important for maintaining a presence in the Indian Ocean. U.S. aid has been tied, therefore, to Pakistan's membership in both the offensive alliances, namely SEATO and CENTO, which stabilise the American interests in Southeast Asia and the Middle East. No Pakistani mercenaries are used in Viet Nam; the West Pakistani junta has, however, periodically dispatched such items as children's toys and equipment for flood control so as to display her solidarity with the junta in Saigon. In the Middle East, the monarchs of Iran, Jordan and Saudi Arabia--all noted clients of the U.S.--are Pakistan's best friends. Thus, while Jordan is too embarrassed to petition for American troops for suppressing the Palestinian guerrillas, Pakistani battalions, equipped of course with American arms, have been sent in to train King Hussein's troops. Also, West Pakistan has played a significant role in the encirclement of the Soviet Union during the cold war years, and in the harassment of China throughout. It was from Peshawar, an American base in Northwest Pakistan, that the famous U2 had taken off. The same base has been used for electronic surveillance of the defense installations in the Chinese interior. Now that Britain is completing her overdue withdrawal from the Indian ocean, and the U.S. is competing with Russia for strategic control of that vast region, Pakistan's continued participation in the American design is indispensable for the conquest of not the lands but the waters of Asia. The arms that are going to the Pakistani junta to carry on the massacre of the Bengalis and the repression within West Pakistan represent a small donation made to a U.S.-sponsored military establishment which is, in turn, expected to ensure American presence in the Indian Ocean. It is unlikely that this aid will stop altogether.

Soon after the creation of Pakistan in 1947, in fact as early as the Korean War, the American clientele in Pakistan began to shape

an economy dependent on the U.S. By the end of the '50's, massive injections of American arms and money, as well as the manipulations that go by the name of "technical assistance", had locked Pakistan into America's cold war strategies internationally, had created a monopolistic base for capital accumulation in the domestic industrial sector, and had led to a thorough militarisation of Pakistan's young and vulnerable political culture. Then, in 1958, fed up with the bickerings of the civilian politicians and having tremendous faith in military establishments as being a source for stability in the Third World generally, the U.S. decided that time was ripe for a military take-over in Pakistan; Ayub, who engineered the coup, writes quite candidly in his *Autobiography* of the prior discussions he had had with some of the Pentagon crowd, including Maxwell Taylor.

Until 1962, the relationship between the ruling elites of the U.S. and Pakistan was placid and profitable for both sides. Then, in an entirely separate development, the Sino-Indian conflict was staged so as to make India a full client of the U.S. military establishment, which had the effect not of resolving but in fact accentuating the rivalry between India and Pakistan. America's growing involvement in the Indian military affairs created a degree of insecurity among the rulers of Pakistan, who retaliated by beginning to "normalise" their relations with the Soviet Union and China. Then, three years later, at the time of the war between India and Pakistan, the U.S. adopted a neutral stance and put an embargo on arms to both countries, an act that the Pakistani rulers saw as being pro-Indian since India was getting arms from the Soviet Union as well. Again, Pakistan grew diplomatically closer to China and petitioned the Chinese for some arms. Thus, without in any way even suggesting the termination of her membership in the U.S.-sponsored alliances, the Pakistani junta was trying a little belligerence. The U.S. on her part, managed to absorb these strains on her relationship with Pakistan through a reduced but continued flow of arms, and through increasingly large amounts of what is described as economic aid but what amounts in fact to donations to the capitalist class in Pakistan. While the U.S. was trying to play Pakistan against India, and the Pakistani junta kept her fragile status secure by playing the U.S. against China, the inner erosion of Pakistani political culture kept elsewhere of the domestic contradictions which have led to such extreme polarisation in Pakistan today. The capitalist factor is worth underscoring here. Owing mainly to the manner in which the U.S. economic "aid" is dispensed, Pakistan was facing a situation, by 1968, wherein twenty-two families controlled 97% of all insurance, 80% of all banking, and 66% of all industry. Needless to add, the generals have been at the center of this profiteering. Besides, the growth of militarism and monopoly capitalism have polarised not only the classes but also regions. The Army is an altogether West Pakistani wealth of the country are West Pakistani families. Bengali nationalism is a genuine protest against this colonial relationship between East and West Pakistan.

Unfortunately, the factionalism of the East Bengali Left made it possible for Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's Awami League, a pro-Western and political expression to the nationalist sentiments of Bengal. Thus, despite very acute class contradictions, we have had in Pakistan, until very recently, a situation where the militaristic domination of East Bengal was being opposed not by a mass movement of the

exploited peasants but by the aspiring middle classes of Bengal.

Quite contrary to the dominant trend in Western reporting, the fact is that the U.S. supported the autonomy move in Bengal until very recent months. For one thing, she could please her Indian clients by doing so; given the animosity toward Pakistan, the Indian government supports anything that spells trouble for her adversary. For another, an Awami League government in East Pakistan would have been a clearly pro-American government and thus yet another instrumentality for the U.S. to maintain her presence in the Indian Ocean and her bases near China and Southeast Asia. American officials let it be known, therefore, that were there to be an autonomous East Bengal, the U.S. would provide her aid on separate, more flexible terms. For example, as recently as last March, barely two weeks before the massacre started, Selig S. Harrison, reporting from Bangkok, quoted "a high American official" (a euphemism in this case for the U.S. ambassador to Pakistan) as saying that the U.S. would provide an autonomous East Bengal with immediate aid amounting to as much as 500 million dollars to take care of the initial problems of autonomy. Sheikh Mujib's Awami League obviously enjoyed American blessings.

The U.S. had made three calculations: that the autonomy drive shall succeed very quickly; that an autonomous Bengal would have a Rightist government; and that the U.S. would thus gain a reliable client in East Bengal without losing her clientele in West Pakistan. All these calculations have backfired.

When the junta launched the genocide in East Bengal it was aimed at preserving her own power of militarism and capitalist exploitation of that majority part of the country. By no stretch of human imagination or values could anyone condone what may yet become the most hideous crime against humanity even in this most criminal of human centuries. However, at a cost that was in no way worth paying, the autonomy drive has been halted and East Pakistan has not undergone an indigenous Rightist take-over.

The situation that has emerged now needs to be understood quite clearly, for it is this new situation that gives the clue to the U.S. going back to her unequivocal support for the West Pakistani junta. Except for a few who were killed or captured, most Awami League leaders have fled to the clubs and suburban homes in Calcutta (it is the poor that languish in the refugee camps, or perish on the way; the rich have their golf courses wherever they are) where they have formed a Provisional Government of Bangla Desh. With Indian support, they are trying to launch what they think is a guerrilla movement; in reality, what is being put together in the border regions of India is quite a conventional Army that is capable, at best, of commando actions only. Internal resistance in Bengal is being organised by Left groups who, facing a monolithic enemy, have thus far been able to transcend their factionalism and have made a common front. In the Indian territories of West Bengal where the Awami League leadership is based, this leadership faces opposition from both the Marxist-Leninists, who are the largest political party in West Bengal, and the Naxalites, who are numerically weak but have a certain leverage as troubleshooters for the Left-wing owing to their political terrorism. Together, these two groups can morally and politically isolate the East Bengali Rightists who want to wage their "struggle" from the safety of the Indian sanctuaries.

an economy dependent on the U.S. By the end of the '50's, massive injections of American arms and money, as well as the manipulations that go by the name of "technical assistance", had locked Pakistan into America's cold war strategies internationally, had created a monopolistic base for capital accumulation in the domestic industrial sector, and had led to a thorough militarisation of Pakistan's young and vulnerable political culture. Then, in 1958, fed up with the bickerings of the civilian politicians and having tremendous faith in military establishments as being a source for stability in the Third World generally, the U.S. decided that time was ripe for a military take-over in Pakistan; Ayub, who engineered the coup, writes quite candidly in his *Autobiography* of the prior discussions he had had with some of the Pentagon crowd, including Maxwell Taylor.

Until 1962, the relationship between the ruling elites of the U.S. and Pakistan was placid and profitable for both sides. Then, in an entirely separate development, the Sino-Indian conflict was staged so as to make India a full client of the U.S. military establishment, which had the effect not of resolving but in fact accentuating the rivalry between India and Pakistan. America's growing involvement in the Indian military affairs created a degree of insecurity among the rulers of Pakistan, who retaliated by beginning to "normalise" their relations with the Soviet Union and China. Then, three years later, at the time of the war between India and Pakistan, the U.S. adopted a neutral stance and put an embargo on arms to both countries, an act that the Pakistani rulers saw as being pro-Indian since India was getting arms from the Soviet Union as well. Again, Pakistan grew diplomatically closer to China and petitioned the Chinese for some arms. Thus, without in any way even suggesting the termination of her membership in the U.S.-sponsored alliances, the Pakistani junta was trying a little belligerence. The U.S. on her part, managed to absorb these strains on her relationship with Pakistan through a reduced but continued flow of arms, and through increasingly large amounts of what is described as economic aid but what amounts in fact to donations to the capitalist class in Pakistan. While the U.S. was trying to play Pakistan against India, and the Pakistani junta kept her fragile status secure by playing the U.S. against China, the inner erosion of Pakistani political culture kept elsewhere of the domestic contradictions which have led to such extreme polarisation in Pakistan today. The capitalist factor is worth underscoring here. Owing mainly to the manner in which the U.S. economic "aid" is dispensed, Pakistan was facing a situation, by 1968, wherein twenty-two families controlled 97% of all insurance, 80% of all banking, and 66% of all industry. Needless to add, the generals have been at the center of this profiteering. Besides, the growth of militarism and monopoly capitalism have polarised not only the classes but also regions. The Army is an altogether West Pakistani wealth of the country are West Pakistani families. Bengali nationalism is a genuine protest against this colonial relationship between East and West Pakistan.

Unfortunately, the factionalism of the East Bengali Left made it possible for Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's Awami League, a pro-Western and political expression to the nationalist sentiments of Bengal. Thus, despite very acute class contradictions, we have had in Pakistan, until very recently, a situation where the militaristic domination of East Bengal was being opposed not by a mass movement of the

exploited peasants but by the aspiring middle classes of Bengal.

Quite contrary to the dominant trend in Western reporting, the fact is that the U.S. supported the autonomy move in Bengal until very recent months. For one thing, she could please her Indian clients by doing so; given the animosity toward Pakistan, the Indian government supports anything that spells trouble for her adversary. For another, an Awami League government in East Pakistan would have been a clearly pro-American government and thus yet another instrumentality for the U.S. to maintain her presence in the Indian Ocean and her bases near China and Southeast Asia. American officials let it be known, therefore, that were there to be an autonomous East Bengal, the U.S. would provide her aid on separate, more flexible terms. For example, as recently as last March, barely two weeks before the massacre started, Selig S. Harrison, reporting from Bangkok, quoted "a high American official" (a euphemism in this case for the U.S. ambassador to Pakistan) as saying that the U.S. would provide an autonomous East Bengal with immediate aid amounting to as much as 500 million dollars to take care of the initial problems of autonomy. Sheikh Mujib's Awami League obviously enjoyed American blessings.

The U.S. had made three calculations: that the autonomy drive shall succeed very quickly; that an autonomous Bengal would have a Rightist government; and that the U.S. would thus gain a reliable client in East Bengal without losing her clientele in West Pakistan. All these calculations have backfired.

When the junta launched the genocide in East Bengal it was aimed at preserving her own power of militarism and capitalist exploitation of that majority part of the country. By no stretch of human imagination or values could anyone condone what may yet become the most hideous crime against humanity even in this most criminal of human centuries. However, at a cost that was in no way worth paying, the autonomy drive has been halted and East Pakistan has not undergone an indigenous Rightist take-over.

The situation that has emerged now needs to be understood quite clearly, for it is this new situation that gives the clue to the U.S. going back to her unequivocal support for the West Pakistani junta. Except for a few who were killed or captured, most Awami League leaders have fled to the clubs and suburban homes in Calcutta (it is the poor that languish in the refugee camps, or perish on the way; the rich have their golf courses wherever they are) where they have formed a Provisional Government of Bangla Desh. With Indian support, they are trying to launch what they think is a guerrilla movement; in reality, what is being put together in the border regions of India is quite a conventional Army that is capable, at best, of commando actions only. Internal resistance in Bengal is being organised by Left groups who, facing a monolithic enemy, have thus far been able to transcend their factionalism and have made a common front. In the Indian territories of West Bengal where the Awami League leadership is based, this leadership faces opposition from both the Marxist-Leninists, who are the largest political party in West Bengal, and the Naxalites, who are numerically weak but have a certain leverage as troubleshooters for the Left-wing owing to their political terrorism. Together, these two groups can morally and politically isolate the East Bengali Rightists who want to wage their "struggle" from the safety of the Indian sanctuaries.

The U.S. supported the Awami League in her bid till the very last, and abandoned her only when the West Pakistani troops moved in. Now, the U.S. has chosen to be on the winning side, particularly since the winning side also consists of her own clients. When it appeared, in April and May, that the Awami League may yet stage a come-back with Indian support, the U.S. merely saddled the fence and even promised the Indian Foreign Minister that there shall be no aid, military or economic, for West Pakistan. During the past weeks, however, and particularly with the resurgence of Left politics in Bengal, it has become quite clear that whereas the Bengali struggle is bound to succeed, the struggle shall be protracted and that the leadership is likely to shift to the left entirely. It is this mass character and socialist orientation of the emerging movement that forces upon the U.S. the need to mend her relations with the junta in West Pakistan and to finance the junta in her bid to exterminate the rebellious Bengalis.

If the U.S. is to maintain a presence in the Indian Ocean, it is necessary for this design that it include Pakistan. So long as this imperative exists, the U.S. will continue to underwrite a military regime in West Pakistan, irrespective of the human costs. If the entire population of Southeast Asia is dispensable, so are the Bengalis. The U.S. would of course prefer an arrangement (a 'political solution' as it is called) whereby the junta stays in power in the West and the Awami League, or a similar pro-Western outfit, rules an autonomous Bengal. Under no circumstances, however, shall the U.S. let the West Pakistani junta get so weak as to let an autonomous East Pakistan, or an independent Bangla Desh, emerge with a leadership whose role and composition cannot be predicted. From the U.S. viewpoint, a butchered and terrorized East Pakistan is far more preferable to a struggling Bangla Desh that may possibly drift out of the American global system. This is the meaning of the continued arms aid to the military junta in West Pakistan.

The most important single issue is that of the human suffering. Military terrorism, hunger and pestilence have claimed hundreds of thousands of lives; the worst is, I fear, yet to come. The complicity of the U.S. in this reign of terror is obvious; but for America's savage pursuit of global power, there would have been no militarism in Pakistan even to begin with. The crime is not merely that the army is still going, but that they have been going in for so many years and in such quantities as to have perverted an entire culture. The crime is not only that a junta is being supported now, but that it was set up in the first place, and that it was supported for close to thirteen years. What we are seeing now is not the result of a few shipments but the cumulative effects of America's global militarism in the post-war years. Thus, merely stopping the aid now is not enough, even if such stoppage were to come about. The U.S. has invested close to five billion dollars in creating the Fascism that now devours Pakistan. Is she prepared to pay even half that much to restore what she has destroyed? How? And when? These are the questions we need to ask of Richard Nixon and his advisors. The deaths and the sufferings in Bengal are an American responsibility.

Letter to a Pakistani Diplomat

Eqbal Ahmad

NOTE: Since the publication of a letter in the New York Times (April 10, 1971) signed by me jointly with three other West Pakistani scholars and subsequent statements opposing the Pakistani military government's intervention in East Bengal, several Pakistani officials have protested my position. They all point out that: (1) The army is only protecting national integrity against a secessionist movement. (2) The army intervened only after the Bengali Nationalists had started killing the minority Biharis refugees from India. (3) Since the leaders of the Awami League have pro-Western sympathies and connections, and the Chinese support the Federal government, anti-imperialist and radical elements should not oppose the military's action. The following is a reply to one such 'friend':

Dear _____,

I hope you understand that it was not easy for me to publish the statement you saw in the New York Times (April 10, 1971). First, I did not have any natural sympathy for the Bangla Desh movement. In fact, I had a definite feeling of antipathy for Sheikh Mujib (East Pakistan's leader whose party, the Awami League won a governing majority in the National Assembly, and 95% of Bengali votes), who impressed me as being a limited man, impetuous and unimaginative. But then I have less regard for his West Pakistani counterparts -- the miserable Mr. Bhutto who changes his politics like a lizard his color, or the Generals who, bred by colonial Britain and armed by U.S.A., appear bent on turning the country into a Muslim version of Greece and Spain. Second, as you know I am originally from Bihar, and most of my people had migrated to East Pakistan. Several of them were killed by Bengali zealots during the period immediately preceding the military's intervention. Furthermore, I grew up during the Movement for Pakistan, and it is hard not to cherish the idea of national unity. Lastly, as a radical and an internationalist, I do not believe that separatist movements constitute a forward step in the right direction. For these reasons, my inclinations should be to support a policy of maintaining the integrity of Pakistan.

However, as I see the facts surrounding recent developments, I am able to find neither a political, economic, nor moral justification for the current policy of military intervention. I have been looking into the facts as closely as it is possible to do, given the censorship of news by the military regime and the resulting imbalances in news reports, some of which necessarily emanate from India. My considered opinion is that:

- 1) The East Pakistanis had genuine grievances against the federal government, dominated by the military since at least 1957. Not even the most hawkish West Pakistanis deny the gross economic

inequities and exploitation suffered by the Bengalis. Politically, twelve years of direct military rule deprived them of even a minor share in the exercise of power.

2) The nearly unanimous electoral support for Awami League's demand for provincial autonomy was the result of the neglect of East Pakistan, climaxing in the example of the incredible negligence surrounding the relief of cyclone victims last November. I recognize that the poor in West Pakistan have suffered also. The callousness of our rulers may be indiscriminating. Yet the more disadvantaged people of East Pakistan could only comprehend their treatment in terms of regional discrimination.

3) Having failed to arrive at an extra-parliamentary settlement, the military, supported by West Pakistani leaders, intervened to off-set the results of Pakistan's first freely held elections.

4) There is absolutely no popular base of support for the federal government. Even after four months of terror it has been unable to produce a group of political quislings capable of lending some legitimacy to the army's occupation.

5) While the military has the power to lord over East Pakistan, the cost of this colonization will be very high for the peoples of both East and West. For the latter it must include increasing economic hardships, militarization of our politics and society, and total denial of civil liberties. The closing of journals like Azad and Lail-o-Nahar, the recent arrests in West Pakistan of hundreds of persons, of leaders like Afzal Bangash, Mukhtar Rana, and G.M. Syed, of intellectuals like Abdullah Malik and Sheikh Ayaz, of academicians like G.M. Shah are indicative of the shift toward totalitarianism. Similarly, I worry over the promotion of religious fundamentalism, systematic killing of Hindus, and statements and editorials which invoke public paranoia by alleging Indian, Jewish, and American conspiracy in this conflict. This, regardless of the fact that with arms and money the American government is underwriting the murderous mission of the military dictatorship.

6) Unless there is an immediate end to the military rule and restoration of civilian government in East Pakistan, famine and pestilence, plus periodic massacres by the army, will cost millions of lives in the coming months. Three months ago, Iain MacDonald, Relief Coordinator for Oxfam and other agencies warned that 1.5 million persons may face starvation. Recently the Financial Times of London estimated a possible four million deaths unless relief and reconstruction was speedily begun. Alan Hart, a B.B.C. reporter believes it "probable that 20 or more million East Pakistanis will be starving by September or October."

7) Lastly, I should stress that no genuine restoration of civilian government will be possible until the East Pakistanis have been conceded their right to autonomy or even secession. For these reasons, I believe that the only viable course for West Pakistanis is to insist on immediate and unconditional termination of martial law, the convening of the duly elected National Assembly, and a commitment that the majority decisions dismember Pakistan as a state consisting of East and West.

I know that I shall be condemned for my position. For someone who is facing a serious trial in America, it is not easy to confront one's own government. Yet it is not possible for me to oppose

American crimes in Southeast Asia or Indian occupation of Kashmir while accepting the crimes that my government is committing against the people of East Pakistan. Although I mourn the death of innocent Biharis by Bengali vigilantes, and condemn the irresponsibilities of the Awami League, I am not willing to put their actions at par with that of the government and the criminal acts of an organized, professional army. I know that the army did not intervene to stop the killing of non-Bengalis which went on during the three weeks when the Generals sought extra-parliamentary deals with the politicians. Saving civilian lives was not the motive behind the massive repressions which have already caused countless Pakistanis their lives and property and forced millions to flee to India. Unequal bartering of brutalities is not a function of responsible government. The very fact that this military regime seeks justification for its behaviour by referring to the excesses of the Awami League and the aroused masses is a measure of the steep decline in the civic standards of our army and civil services. Above all, criminality is not a commercial proposition: One cannot deposit the crimes of one into the account of another.

The Chinese rhetoric on this issue is irrelevant. They have offered Pakistan their vague support only against foreign interference; and indicated their belief that this conflict is an internal matter. Much more alarming is the American government's decision to continue armaments sales and economic aid to the dictatorship, despite the unanimous opposition of its Western allies, and of important men in Congress. This particularly striking in view of Sheikh Mujib's long standing loyalty to the West and to U.S.A. Perhaps West Pakistan is too important to President Nixon's strategy of building an alliance of dependable governments around the Mediterranean and Indian oceans. Perhaps unconsciously, he would like also to see other governments share accusations of committing crimes against humanity.

I do not know if my position would at all contribute to a humane settlement. Given the fact that our government is neither accountable to the public nor sensitive to the opinion of mankind, our protest may have no effect until this regime has exhausted all its assets, and taken the country down the road to moral, political and economic bankruptcy. However, lack of success does not justify the crime of silence in face of criminal, arbitrary power.

Eqbal

Press Statement of Mr. Tajuddin Ahmad,
Prime Minister of Bangla Desh
17th April, 1971

(Issued after the inauguration of the Government of the People's Republic of Bangla Desh)

Bangla Desh is at war. It has been given no choice but to secure its right of self-determination through a national liberation struggle against the colonial oppression of West Pakistan.

In the face of positive attempts by the Government of Pakistan to distort the facts in a desperate attempt to cover up their war of genocide in Bangla Desh, the world must be told the circumstances under which the peace-loving people of Bangla Desh were driven to substitute armed struggle for parliamentary politics to realise the just aspirations of the people of Bangla Desh.

The Six Point Programme for autonomy for Bangla Desh within Pakistan had been put forward in all sincerity by the Awami League as the last possible solution to preserve the integrity of Pakistan. Fighting the elections to the National Assembly on the issue of Six Points, the Awami League won 167 out of 169 seats from Bangla Desh in a House of 313. Its electoral victory was so decisive that it won 80% of the popular votes cast. The decisive nature of its victory placed it in a clear majority within the National Assembly.

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 that a viable constitution based on Six Points could be worked out. The Pakistan People's Party which emerged as the leading party in Sind and Punjab had avoided raising the issue of Six Points in their election campaign and had no obligation whatsoever to its electorate to resist it. In Baluchistan, the dominant party, National Awami Party, was fully committed to Six Points. In NWFP, the NAP, dominant in the Provincial Assembly, was also a believer in maximum 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 willing, preparatory to going to the Assembly, to explain its constitutional position and to discuss alternative proposals from the other parties, it believed that the spirit of a true democracy demanded that the constitution be debated and finalised in the National Assembly 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 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 expectations, Yahya did not spell out his own ideas about the constitution. General Yahya gave the impression of not finding anything seriously objectionable in 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.

As in the case with 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 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 position of his own from which to negotiate.

It must be made clear that when the PPP left Dacca there was no indication from their part 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 substantive round of talks with the Awami League or would meet in the National Assembly whose committees provided ample opportunity for detailed discussion on the constitution.

Mr. Bhutto's announcement to boycott the National Assembly therefore came as a complete surprise. The boycott decision 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 15th February and fixed it, line with Mr. Bhutto's preference, for 3rd March.

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 3rd March.

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. Faced with the breakdown of this joint front against Bangla Desh, General Yahya obliged Mr. Bhutto on 1st March by postponing the Assembly, not for any definite period, but sine die. Moreover, he dismissed the Governor of East Pakistan, Admiral S. M. Ahsan, who was believed to be one of the moderates in his administration. The Cabinet with its component of Bengalis was also dismissed so that all power was concentrated in the hands of the West Wing military Junta.

In these circumstances Yahya's gesture could not be seen as anything but an attempt to frustrate the popular will by colluding with Mr. Bhutto. The National Assembly was the only forum where Bangla Desh could assert its voice and political strength, and to frustrate this was a clear indication that Parliament was not to be the real source of power in Pakistan.

The reaction to the postponement in Bangla Desh 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 felt that the rights of Bangla Desh could never be realised within the framework of Pakistan, where Yahya could so blatantly frustrate the summoning of an Assembly proclaimed by his won writ and urged that Sheikh Mujibur Rahman must go for full independence.

Sheikh Mujib however continued to seek a political settlement. In calling for a programme of non-cooperation on 3rd March he chose the weapon of peaceful confrontation against the army of occupation as an attempt to bring them to their senses. This was in itself a major gesture in the face of the cold-blooded firing on unarmed demonstrators on the 2nd and 3rd March which had already led to over a thousand casualties.

The course of the non-cooperation movement is now a part of history. Never in the course of any liberation struggle has non-cooperation been carried to the limits attained within Bangla Desh between 1st and 25th March. Non-cooperation was total. No Judge of the High Court could be found to administer the oath of office to the new Governor, Lt. General Tikka Khan. The entire civilian administration including the police and the Civil Service of Pakistan, refused to attend office. The people stopped supply of food to the army. Even the civilian employees of the Defence establishment joined the boycott.

Non-cooperation did not stop at abstention from work. The civilian administration and police positively pledged their support to Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and put themselves under his orders.

In this situation, the Awami League, without being a formally constituted Government, was forced to take on the responsibility of keeping the economy and administration running whilst non-cooperation lasted. In this task they had the unqualified support not only of the people but the administration and business community. The latter too subordinated themselves to the directives of the Awami League and accepted them as the sole authority to solve their various problems.

In these unique circumstances the economy and administration were kept going in spite of the formidable problems arising out of the power vacuum which had suddenly emerged in Bangla Desh. In spite of the lack of any formal authority, Awami League volunteers in cooperation with the police maintained a level of law and order which was a considerable improvement on normal times.

Faced with this demonstration of total support to the Awami League and this historic non-cooperation movement, General Yahya appears to have modified his tactics. On the 6th March, he still seemed determined to provoke a confrontation when he made his highly provocative speech putting the full blame for the crisis on the Awami League and not even referring to the architect of the crisis, Mr. Bhutto. It seems that he expected a declaration of Independence of 7th March. The Army in Dacca was put on full alert to crush the move and Lt. Gen Tikka Khan was flown to replace Lt. Gen. Yakub to signify the hardening of attitudes within the Junta.

Sheikh Mujib, however, once again opted for the path of political settlement in spite of massive public sentiment for independence. In presenting his 4-point proposal for attending the National Assembly he not only had to contain the public mood but to leave a way open for Yahya to explore this last chance for a peaceful settlement.

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

Shortly before 1st March, tanks which had been sent north to Rangpur to defend the borders were brought back to Dacca. From 1st March the families of Army personnel were being sent off to West Pakistan on a priority basis along with the families of West Pakistani businessmen.

The military build-up was accelerated after 1st March and continued throughout the talks up to 25th March. Members of the armed

forces dressed in civilian clothes were flown in PIA commercial flights via Ceylon. C-130s carrying arms and provisions for the garrisons flew into Dacca. It is estimated that up to one division, with complementary support, was brought into Bangla Desh between 1st and 25th March. To ensure security, the airport was put under strict airforce control and heavily guarded with artillery and machine-gun nets whilst movement of passengers was strictly supervised. An SSG Commando Group specially trained for undercover operations in sabotage and assassinations was distributed in key centres of Bangla Desh and were probably responsible for the attacks on Bengalis in Dacca and Saidpur in the two days before 25th March to provoke clashes between locals and non-locals so as to provide a cover for military intervention.

As part of this strategy of deception Yahya adopted the most conciliatory posture in his talks with Mujib. In the talks beginning on 16th March, he expressed regrets for what had happened and his sincere desire for a political settlement. In a crucial meeting with Sheikh Mujib he was asked to positively state the Junta's position on the Awami League's 4-point proposal. He indicated that there were no serious objections and that an interim constitution could be worked out by the respective Advisers embodying the four points.

The basic points on which agreement was reached were:

- (1) Lifting of Martial Law and transfer of power to a Civilian Government by a Presidential Proclamation.
- (2) Transfer of power in the provinces to the majority parties.
- (3) Yahya to remain as President and in control of the Central Government.
- (4) Separate sittings of the National Assembly members from East and West Pakistan preparatory to a joint session of the House to finalise the Constitution.

Contrary to the distortions now put out by both Yahya and Bhutto, the proposal for separate sittings of the Assembly was suggested by Yahya to accommodate Mr. Bhutto. He cited the practical advantage that whilst 6-points provided a viable blueprint to regulate relations between Bangla Desh and the Centre, its application would raise serious difficulties in the West Wing. For this reason, West Wing MNAs must be permitted to get together to work out a new pattern of relationships in the context of a 6-point constitution and the dissolution of One-Unit.

Once this agreement in principle had been reached between Sheikh Mujib and Yahya, there was only the question of defining the powers of Bangla Desh 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 to the final constitution approved by the National Assembly which it was expected would be based on Six Points.

For working out this 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 the political agreement had been reached there were no insuperable problems to working out some version of Six Points even in 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 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 24th March accepted the amendments with certain minor changes of language and there was nothing to prevent the holding of a final drafting session between the advisers of Yahya and Mujib when the interim constitution would be finalised.

It must be made clear that at no stage was there any breakdown of talks or any indication by General Yahya or his team that they had a final position which could not be abandoned.

The question of legal cover for the transfer of power is merely 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 is not the slightest doubt that had Yahya indicated that a meeting of the National Assembly was essential to transfer power, the Awami League would not 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 a separate sitting was 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 25th March. It is not certain what passed in the separate session between General Yahya and Mr. Bhutto but there is evidence that deliberate falsehoods about the course of the talk with the Awami League were fed on the PPP who were told that Sheikh Mujib was determined to have a showdown and was daily escalating his demands. Needless to say not the slightest indication of these misgivings had been raised in the meetings between the Awami League team and General Yahya's advisers where amicability and optimism prevailed to the end.

Whilst hope for a settlement was being raised, more ominous signs of the intentions of the army were provided by their sudden decision to unload munition ships 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 24th night he 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 their way out. The issue was raised by the Awami League with General Peerzada as to why this escalation was being permitted whilst talks were still going on. He gave no answer beyond a promise to pass it on to General Yahya.

Following the final meeting between General Yahya's and Awami League's advisers on 24th March where Mr. M.M. Ahmed passed on his amendments, a call was awaited from General Peerzada for a final session where the draft could be finalised. No such call materialised and instead it was learnt that Mr. M.M. Amed, who was central to the negotiations, had suddenly left for Karachi on the 15th morning without any warning to the Awami League team.

By 11 P.M. of the 15th all preparations were ready and the troops began to take up their positions in the city. In an act of treachery unparalleled in contemporary history a programme of calculated genocide was unleashed on the peaceful and unsuspecting population of Dacca by midnight of 25th March. No ultimatum was given to the Awami League by Yahya, no curfew order was even issued when the Machine-guns artillery and cannon on the tanks unleashed their reign of death and destruction. By the time the first Martial Law proclamations issued by Lt. General Tikka Khan were broadcast the next morning some 50,000 people, most of them

without offering any resistance, and many women and children, had been butchered. Dacca had been turned into an inferno with fires raging in most corners of the city. Sleeping inhabitants who had been drawn from their homes by the fires started by the military, were machine-gunned as they ran to escape the flames.

Whilst the Police, EPR and armed volunteers put up a heroic resistance, the main victims remained the weak, the innocent and the unsuspecting who were killed at random in their thousands. We are compiling a first hand account of the details of genocide committed by the Pakistan Army on the orders of the President of Pakistan which we will publish shortly. The scale and brutality of the action exceeds anything perpetuated in the civilised world.

Yahya himself left Dacca on the night of 25th March after having unleashed the Pakistan Army, with an open licence to commit genocide on all Bengalis. His own justification for this act of barbarism was not forthcoming till 8 p.m. the next day when the world was given its first explanation for the unleashing of this holocaust. The statement was self-contradictory and laced with positive lies. His branding of a party as traitors and outlaws, with whom he had only 48 hours ago been negotiating for a peaceful transfer of power, bore no relationship to the situation in Bangla Desh or the course of the negotiations. His promise to hand over power to the elected representatives of the people after banning the Awami League which was the sole representative of Bangla Desh and held a majority of seats in the National Assembly was a mockery of the freely recorded voice of 75 million Bengalis. The crudity of the statement was clear evidence that Yahya was no longer interested in taking shelter behind either logic or morality and had reverted to the law of the jungle in his bid to crush the people of Bangla Desh.

Pakistan is now dead and buried under a mountain of corpses. The hundreds and thousands of people murdered by the army in Bangla Desh will act as an impenetrable barrier between West Pakistan and the people of Bangla Desh. By resorting to pre-planned genocide Yahya must have known that he was himself digging Pakistan's grave. The subsequent massacres perpetrated on his orders by his licensed killers on the people were not designed to preserve the unity of a nation. They were acts of racial hatred and sadism devoid of even the elements of humanity. Professional soldiers, on orders, violated their code of military honour and were seen as beasts of prey who indulged in an orgy of murder, rape, loot, arson and destruction unequalled in the annals of civilisation. These acts indicate that the concept of two countries is already deeply rooted in the minds of Yahya and his associates who would not dare commit such atrocities on their own countrymen.

Yahya's genocide is thus without political purpose. It serves only as the last act in the tragic history of Pakistan which Yahya has chosen to write with the blood of the people of Bangla Desh. The objective is genocide and scorched-earth before his troops are either driven out or perish. In this time he hopes to liquidate our political leadership, intelligentsia and administration, to destroy our industries and public amenities and as a final act he intends to raze our cities to the ground. Already his occupation Army has made substantial progress towards this objective. Bangla Desh will be set back 50 years as West Pakistan's parting gift, to a people they have exploited for twenty-three years for their own benefit.

This is a point of major significance to those great powers who choose to ignore this largest single act of genocide since the days of Belsen and Auschwitz. If they think they are preserving the unity of Pakistan, they

can forget it because Yahya himself has no illusion about the future of Pakistan.

They must realise that Pakistan is dead, murdered by Yahya--and that independent Bangla Desh is a reality sustained by the indestructible will and courage of 75 million Bengalis who are daily nurturing the roots of this new nationhood with their blood. No power on earth can unmake this new nation and sooner or later both big and small powers will have to accept it into the world fraternity.

It is, therefore, in the interest of politics as much as humanity for the big powers to put their full pressure on Yahya to cage his killers and bring them back to West Pakistan. We will be eternally grateful to the people of the USSR and India and the freedom loving people of all the countries for their full support they have already given us in this struggle. We would welcome similar support from the People's Republic of China, USA, France and Great Britain and others. Each in their own way should exercise considerable leverage on West Pakistan; and were they to exercise this influence, Yahya could not sustain his war of aggression against Bangla Desh for a single day longer.

Bangla Desh will be the eighth most populous country in the world. Its only goal will be to rebuild a new nation from the ashes and carnage left by Yahya's occupation army. It will be a stupendous task because we are already one of the world's poorest nations. But we now have a cause and a people who have been hardened in the resistance, who have shed their blood for their nation and won their freedom in an epic struggle which pitted unarmed people against a modern army. Such a nation cannot fail in its task of securing the foundations of its nationhood.

In our struggle for survival we seek the friendship of all people, the big powers and the small. We do not aspire to join any bloc or pact but will seek assistance from those who give it in a spirit of goodwill free from any desire to control our destinies. We have struggled far too long for our selfdetermination to permit ourselves to become anyone's satellite.

We now appeal to the nations of the world for recognition and assistance both material and moral in our struggle for nationhood. Every day this is delayed a thousand lives are lost and more of Bangla Desh's vital assets are destroyed. In the name of Humanity act now and earn our undying friendship.

This we now present to the world as the CASE of the people of Bangla Desh. No nation has a greater right to recognition, no people have fought harder for this right.

JOI BANGLA

President Yahya Khan's Address to the Nation

June 28, 1971

Recent happenings in East Pakistan have caused anguish to all of us. For me, personally, these tragic events have been a cause of distress and disappointment. Throughout these last two and a quarter years, my aim has been to bring back democracy in the country and to ensure justice for every region of Pakistan. In particular, I have been conscious of the legitimate demands of East Pakistanis. Many steps have been taken and planned towards meeting them. I have every reason to believe that my scheme to revive the democratic way of life was fully supported by the people and their political leaders in both wings of the country. They all took part in the elections on the basis of the Legal Framework Order of 1970 which provided for maximum autonomy to the provinces, within the concept of one Pakistan and adequate strength to the centre to carry out its functions.

The defunct Awami League also participated in the elections on the basis of the Legal Framework Order and therefore at that time it was felt that they too subscribed to the concept of one Pakistan. However, later their leadership gradually moved away from the principles of the Legal Framework Order and based their electioneering on hatred of West Pakistan and tried to cause tension and misunderstanding between the two wings.

When I questioned Mujibur Rahman on the Awami League's six points during some of our talks, he confirmed to me that these were negotiable. He also clearly indicated that all major provisions of the constitution would be settled by political parties in parleys outside the Assembly. This lobbying, he affirmed, was usual practice with politicians. After elections when I wanted the parties to get together and come to some consensus on the future constitution of Pakistan, it became quite clear that Mujibur Rahman was not going to budge from his position which, to put it bluntly, was tantamount to secession. Another indication of his evil design is the fact that he refused to visit West Pakistan and have talks in this wing despite repeated invitations. He had no intention of acting in a responsible and patriotic manner as leader of the majority party in the country as a whole. He had already made up his mind that he was going to break the country into two, preferably by trickery and if this did not succeed, by physical violence.

As I told you in my address of the 26th of March, I had a series of meetings with Mujibur Rahman and his advisers during my stay in Dacca from the 15th of March onwards. Whilst he was having these talks with us, he and his followers were secretly preparing for a final break, through physical violence. Towards the concluding sessions of the talks, it became quite clear that the intention of Mujibur Rahman and his advisers was not to come to an understanding on the basis of one Pakistan but was somehow to extract from me a "proclamation" which would, in effect, divide the National Assembly into two separate constituent assemblies, give birth to a confederation and, by removal of the authority of martial law, create complete chaos in the country. Through this plan he expected to establish a separate state of Bangla Desh. That, needless to say, would have been the end of Pakistan as created by the Father of the Nation.

Unscrupulous and secessionist elements of the defunct Awami League had brought the country to the brink of disintegration. Our dear homeland which symbolises fulfilment of our aspirations and the culmination of the relentless struggle of the Muslims of the sub-continent was in very grave danger of breaking up. The violent non-cooperation movement of Sheikh Mu-

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ibur Rahman and his clique for over three weeks had let loose elements which at once indulged in widespread looting arson and killing.

The people of East Pakistan had voted for provincial autonomy and not for the disintegration of the country. Instead of settling controversial political and constitutional issues with mutual understanding and in a spirit of give and take for the sake of national solidarity, some of the leading elements of the defunct Awami League chose a path of defiance, disruption and secession. All my efforts to help the political parties to arrive at a consensus over an acceptable and lasting constitutional framework were frustrated by certain leaders of the defunct Awami League. On the one hand they brought negotiations to an impasse by their persistent intransigence and obduracy and, on the other, intensified their nefarious activities of the country, for the creation of which thousands of our brethren laid down their lives and millions suffered untold miseries, was at stake. It was in these circumstances that I ordered the armed forces to restore the authority of the Government. No Government worth its name could allow the country to be destroyed by open and armed rebellion against the state.

The valiant armed forces of Pakistan who have always served the nation with devotion moved out with firm determination to put an end to the activities of the miscreants. They had a difficult task to perform. It is unfortunate that our neighbour which has never missed an opportunity to weaken or cripple our country rushed to help the secessionists with men and material to inflame the situation further. This was all pre-planned. As our troops moved forward and fanned out, the whole dark plan of collusion between the Awami League extremists, rebels and our hostile neighbour gradually unfolded itself. It became obvious that secessionists, miscreants, rebels, and intruders from across the border had planned their whole operation carefully and over a considerable period of time. Their aim was to destroy the integrity of Pakistan and force the eastern zone to secede from the rest of the country. While miscreants, rebels, and intruders were putting up physical resistance to the Pakistan army, the Indian radio and press launched a malicious campaign of falsehood against Pakistan. The Indian Government began to utilise every coercive measure, including diplomatic offensives, armed infiltration and actual threats of invasion. This open interference in our internal affairs could have had very grave consequences but by the grace of God our armed forces soon brought the situation under control, destroying the anti-national elements. The nation is proud of the armed forces who deserve all its admiration and appreciation. Let us on this occasion bow our heads in gratitude to the Almighty that our country has been saved from disintegration.

In my last address to the nation I had assured you that my main aim remained the transfer of power and I had further stated that I would take fresh steps towards the achievement of this aim. Let me at the outset say categorically that there is no question of holding fresh elections. The mischief of some misguided persons should not be allowed to nullify the entire results of the first-ever-election held in the country at enormous cost in terms of money, time and energy. I have banned the Awami League as a political party. However, members-elect of the National Assemblies of this defunct party retain their status as such, in their individual capacities. I may, however, add that those elected members who have taken part in anti-state activities or have committed criminal acts, or have indulged in anti-social activities, will be disqualified from membership of the National and Provincial Assemblies. I have not yet finally assessed the exact number of those who would be disqualified. After thorough investigation, a list of such persons will be published. Once this is done, vacancies caused would be filled through the usual method of by-elections.

In the meanwhile, I would ask those members of the National Assembly and members of the Provincial Assembly elect of the defunct Awami League,

who had nothing to do with the secessionist policies of the ruling clique of that party and who are not guilty of any criminal acts in pursuance of such policies, or who have not committed atrocities against their fellow Pakistani, to come forward and play their part in rebuilding the political structure in East Pakistan.

After a close and careful study of the situation, particularly of recent happenings, I have come to the conclusion that the task of framing a constitution-making in our country is not very encouraging, nor a happy one. Two constituent assemblies took nine years to produce a constitution (that is from 1947 to 1956). Leaders of the country spent an inordinately long period of time on the floor of the legislature in trying to produce a constitution, while urgent social and economic problems remained unattended and neglected. But the most regrettable phenomenon of constitution-making in Pakistan was that it gave vent to all sorts of regional and parochial sentiments. In fact, constitution-making gave rise to the worst type of political bickering and intrigue, which threatened the very existence of our country. And when in the end they at last produced a constitution in 1956, it was the product of all sorts of conflicting compromises and expediencies. The result was that the constitution was short lived and the country came under martial law from October 1958 to June 1962. After that the country was governed under a constitution which, for well known reasons, was unpopular right from the start. There was great resentment and a political upheaval in 1969 against this constitution. I, therefore, thought that the people's representatives should frame a constitution of their own, but in order to eliminate the unhappy aspects of the previous attempts at constitution-making in Pakistan, I put a limit of one hundred and twenty days for this exercise. And I also laid down some basic principles for the constitution in my Legal Framework Order. When I fixed the time limit of one hundred and twenty days, it was done in consultation with political leaders, including Mujibur Rahman, and it was expected that they would devote their full attention to the framing of the constitution and that general agreement on broad aspects of the constitution would be arrived at outside the assembly, so as to facilitate the task of constitution-making within the stipulated period. But unfortunately my hopes and plans were frustrated by the uncompromising and unpatriotic attitude of the defunct Awami League.

Against this background and in view of present circumstances, I find that there is no other alternative for me but to have the constitution prepared by a group of experts. This constitution will be subject to amendments by the National Assembly on the basis of an amending procedure, as will be laid down in the constitution itself. The constitution will be based on a careful study of a number of constitutions and will be based also on the aspirations of the people of various regions of Pakistan, as assessed by me over the last two years. I have already set up a constitution committee and a draft is being prepared by them. Once a draft is ready, I will consult various leaders of the assembly regarding the provisions of the draft. Final shape will be given to the constitution, in the light of my discussions and consultations with various experts and leaders.

I may add that certain guidelines with regard to the future constitution have already been spelled out in the Legal Framework Order of 1979, which were generally welcomed by the people. First, the constitution of Pakistan must be based on Islamic ideology, on the basis of which Pakistan was created, and on the basis of which it is still preserved. It must be the constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan in a true sense. The constitution shall also provide for full social and economic justice to various sections of our society. The constitution should be a federal one and it must have all its characteristics. As stated in the Legal Framework

Order, the provinces shall have maximum autonomy, including legislative, administrative and financial powers, but the federal government shall also have adequate powers, including legislative, administrative and financial powers to discharge its responsibilities in relation to external and internal affairs and to preserve the independence and territorial integrity of the country.

I have also indicated to the committee that, in the interest of the integrity of the country, it would be a good thing, if we ban any party which is confined to a specific region, and is not national in a practical sense. Then again, we must eschew this business of having two, three or four subparties within a party. In short it is my hope that this constitution will ensure that everything which tends to make our political life cumbersome, shaky, insecure and unpatriotic is eradicated and that it helps to infuse a right spirit in the people and the politicians. The constitution must serve Pakistan as a whole, and not any individual or group. It must allow each province to develop itself along the right lines without detracting, in any way, from the strength of the centre and the integrity of the nation as a whole. I might clarify here that this constitution will come into force with effect from the first session of the National Assembly. By-elections to be held before this will, however, be on the same basis as the general elections already held, namely, the Legal Framework Order of 1970.

So much for the future constitution of Pakistan. Now to continue with my plan of transfer of power. As I said earlier, by-elections will be held to fill vacant seats in the National as well as in the Provincial Assemblies. Considering the mood of the people, I feel sure that the campaign for these by-elections will be based on the principles contained in the Legal Framework Order. No one will tolerate propagation of views which tend to militate against the integrity of Pakistan. I also feel that the campaign should be a brief one. After these elections are completed, the National and Provincial Assemblies will be duly summoned and governments will be formed at the national as well as the provincial levels throughout the country. The National Assembly will not have to function as a constituent assembly but will become our central legislature as soon as it is sworn in.

Since the nation has recently been subjected to a very severe jolt, I have decided that the national and provincial governments will have at their disposal the cover of martial law for a period of time. In actual practice, martial law will not be operative in its present form, but we cannot allow chaos in any part of the country, and the hands of the governments need to be strengthened until things settle down.

In order to meet the requirements of this new plan, the Legal Framework Order of 1970 will be duly amended.

Let me now say a word about the time-frame of this plan. It is obvious that the plan, in its entirety, cannot be launched immediately because it is important that a reasonable amount of normalcy returns to the country before we think in terms of transferring power. But, on the other hand, the launching of the plan must not be delayed unduly. When we speak of normalcy, the main considerations are restoration of law and order, rehabilitation of the administrative structure which was badly disrupted, and a degree of economic rehabilitation.

As regards law and order, I am glad to be able to tell you that the army is in full control of the situation in East Pakistan. It has crushed the mischief mongers, saboteurs, and infiltrators. But it will take some time before the law and order situation becomes completely normal. The process is in full swing with the active cooperation of the people and their patriotic leaders. The people of East Pakistan have manifested a

great sense of patriotism and national unity in helping the armed forces to root out miscreants and infiltrators.

As a result of the noncooperation movement, the economy of East Pakistan had come to a standstill. Widespread arson, loot and intimidation resorted to by the Awami League secessionists, antisocial elements and infiltrators brought untold sufferings to innocent people. A large number of them were terrorised and uprooted and their properties were mercilessly destroyed. They have my fullest sympathy as also the sympathy of the entire nation. It would be inhuman if their speedy rehabilitation is not given priority and the attention it deserves. I would like to repeat once again that all citizens of Pakistan, of any religion, caste or creed, who crossed the border and went into India, because of the panic due to false propaganda by the rebels, miscreants and others, must return to their homes and hearths. The Government of East Pakistan have made all necessary arrangements for their reception and transportation. I would ask the Indian Government not to put impediments in the way of these unfortunate people, who want to be re-united with their near and dear ones. We shall gladly and gratefully accept any assistance that the United Nations can extend in facilitating the move of these displaced persons back to Pakistan.

I have heard a view being expressed that power should not be transferred to elected representatives of the people until complete normalcy has returned in every sphere. I am afraid I do not agree with this view, because it is utterly unrealistic and impractical. It also ignores one very important aspect of national life, which is that normalcy in its accepted meaning can never return to a country without full participation of the people in its administration. The very process of bringing back normalcy requires the active interest of people in the process and this can happen only when the representatives of the people assume responsibility for administration of the country.

I firmly believe that as soon as we have acquired a basic infrastructure of law and order and the various echelons of the administration gather full strength it will be possible for me to put my plan of transfer of power into operation. Appreciating the situation as it exists today and as it is likely to develop in the near future, it is my hope and belief that I would be able to achieve my goal in a matter of four months or so. The precise timing will naturally depend on the internal and external situation at the time. I am absolutely convinced that the country's integrity and well being lie in fulfilment of the plan that I have just outlined to you and in the achievement of the final objective.

Let me now turn to the vital subject of the economy. Recent events have cast their shadow on the general economic situation. The economy had been subjected to serious strains during a long period of political uncertainty before and after the elections. In March, the economy of East Pakistan was brought to a virtual standstill.

With the success of army action, the situation is generally returning to normal and economic activity is reviving in the province. I am sure that all patriotic elements in the province would rally round the forces of law and order to achieve complete normalcy and to restart the process of building up the economy of Pakistan.

Our plans for reconstruction of the economy and an early resumption of political activity in East Pakistan are threatened by India's continued interference in our internal affairs. Armed infiltration and open encouragement and assistance to secessionists have heightened tension between the two countries. There has also been a spate of unfriendly statements from responsible sources in India, threatening unilateral action against Pakistan if we did not yield to arbitrary demands. The need of the hour is to desist from such actions and statements as would further inflame the situ-

ation. It is through discussions and not through conflict that problems can be resolved. Statesmanship demands exercise of caution and restraint so that our problems are not further complicated.

As I have said before, armed conflict would solve nothing. On our part, we want to live in peace and harmony with all our neighbours. We do not interfere in the affairs of other people, and we will not allow anyone else to interfere in ours. If, however, a situation is forced upon us, we are fully prepared to defend our territorial integrity and sovereignty. Let there be no misunderstanding or miscalculation about our resolve to maintain the independence and solidarity of Pakistan.

My dear countrymen, in the end I would again like to impress upon you that this is an hour of trial for the nation. Each one of us has to do his utmost honestly and sincerely so that our homeland, which is so dear to us, continues its march on the path of progress. No sacrifice would be too great to bring back economic stability and to ensure the unity of Pakistan. What we need to meet this challenge is a revival of the spirit and enthusiasm with which we succeeded in establishing Pakistan, and firm determination and resolute will which we have on many occasions shown in defending our country from internal and external threats.

Our enemies are gloating on false hopes of disunity amongst our ranks. They have tried their level best to undo our dear country, but they forget that they are dealing with a people who have an unshakable reliance on the help of almighty God. Let us rise to the occasion, let us come up to the expectations of the Father of the Nation and once again prove it to our enemies that we are a united nation, always ready to frustrate their designs and foil their evil intentions, and that any effort to harm us will spell their own disaster.

I have full faith in the patriotism of our people and I am sure that every single Pakistani will cooperate with me whole-heartedly in the achievement of our common goal, namely the restoration of democracy in the country, preservation of its integrity and solidarity and betterment of the lot of the common man. May God grant us success in our efforts. God Bless you all.

Appendix I

Some Statistics on Regional Disparities1. Geographic (1970)

	<u>Bangla Desh</u>	<u>West Pakistan</u>	<u>Central Government</u>
Area	55,000 sq. miles	310,000 sq. miles	
Population	75 millions	60 millions	
2. <u>Government</u>	<u>Bangla Desh</u>	<u>West Pakistan</u>	<u>Central Government</u>
Capital	Dacca	Lahore	Karachi, Rawalpindi, Islamabad (all in West Pakistan.)

Governor (1971) West Pakistani West Pakistani West Pakistani

3. Administration Main Central Services (1968) (%)

	<u>from Bangla Desh</u>	<u>from West Pakistan</u>
Secretary	14	86
Joint Secretary	6	94
Deputy Secretary	18	82
Other Officers	20	80

4. Foreign Trade:- (figures in million rupees)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Exports</u>		<u>Imports</u>		<u>Balance (+ or -)</u>	
	B.D.	W.P.	B.D.	W.P.	B.D.	W.P.
1959-60	1080	763	655	1806	+425	-1043
1961-62	1300	543	873	2236	+427	-1693
1966-67	1680	1338	1567	3625	+113	-2287

(Ref: 20 Years of Pakistan in Statistics; C.S.O.)

(B.D. = Bangla Desh W.P. = West Pakistan)

5. Resource Distribution: (in million rupees)(a) Grants-in-aid to Provincial Government

<u>Period</u>	<u>Bangla Desh</u>	<u>West Pakistan</u>
1954-55 to 1959-60	15	217
1960-61 to 1964-65	121	929
1965-66 to 1966-67	71	343

(Source: Pakistan Economic Survey, 1968-69)

(b) Central Government Loans to Provincial Government

1954-55 to 1959-60	751	1207
1960-61 to 1964-65	1900	2555

(Source: Pakistan Economic Survey, 1968-69)

(c) Public Sector Development Expenditure (in millions of rupees)

1949-50	84	238
1959-60	675	1195
1963-64	1745	1755

(Source: Third Five-Year Plan Of Pakistan, 1960-61 to 1964-65)

(d) National Corporations: (in millions of rupees)

<u>Name of Corporation</u>	<u>Bangla Desh</u>	<u>West Pakistan</u>
IDBP	661	962
PICIC	739	1474

	<u>Bangla Desh</u>	<u>West Pakistan</u>
HBFC	189	285
ADBP	300	705

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

6. Defence

(a) <u>Establishment</u>	<u>Head Quarters</u>	<u>Commander-in-Chief</u>
Army	West Pakistan	West Pakistan
Air Force	West Pakistan	West Pakistan
Navy	West Pakistan	West Pakistan

(b) Expenditure: (in millions of rupees)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total Expenditure</u>	<u>Defence Expenditure</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
1949-50	856	625	73
1959-60	1847	1044	55
1965-66	4498	2886	64
1966-67	3776	2294	60

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

It is worthy of mention that the money spent on defence services is being earned as income by West Pakistanis alone. Again, from an employment point of view, defence services provide employment only for the West Pakistanis.

7. Income

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total Income</u>		<u>Difference</u>		<u>Per Capita Income</u>		<u>Disparity</u>
	<u>B.D.</u>	<u>W.P.</u>	<u>B.D.</u>	<u>W.P.</u>	<u>B.D.</u>	<u>W.P.</u>	
1949-50	12360	12106	+254		287	338	15%
(GNP)							
1959-60	14489	17253	-2764		278	366	31%
(GDP)							
1967-68	20235	28652	-8417		302	530	75%

(Abbreviations: B.D.= Bangla Desh, W.P.= West Pakistan.)

(Sources: (i) Third Five-Year Plan of Pakistan

(ii) Economic Survey of East Pakistan)

8. Education (1965-66)

<u>Institution</u>	<u>No. in Bangla Desh</u>	<u>No. in W. Pakistan</u>
Secondary Vocational School	17	34
(polytechnic & Commercial)		
Teachers' Training Inst'n	59	87
Affiliated Colleges:		
(a) Engineering	1	7
(b) Medical	7	9
(c) Law	5	8
(d) Commercial	2	5
(e) Agricultural	1	4
University	4	6

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

9. Transport and Communication (1966-67)

	<u>Bangla Desh</u>	<u>W. Pakistan</u>
(a) Track Mileage of Railways	2,600	7,599
(b) Route Mileage of Railways	1,713	5,335
(c) Road Mileage	2,588	22,508
(d) No. of registered motor vehicles	15,849	96,818

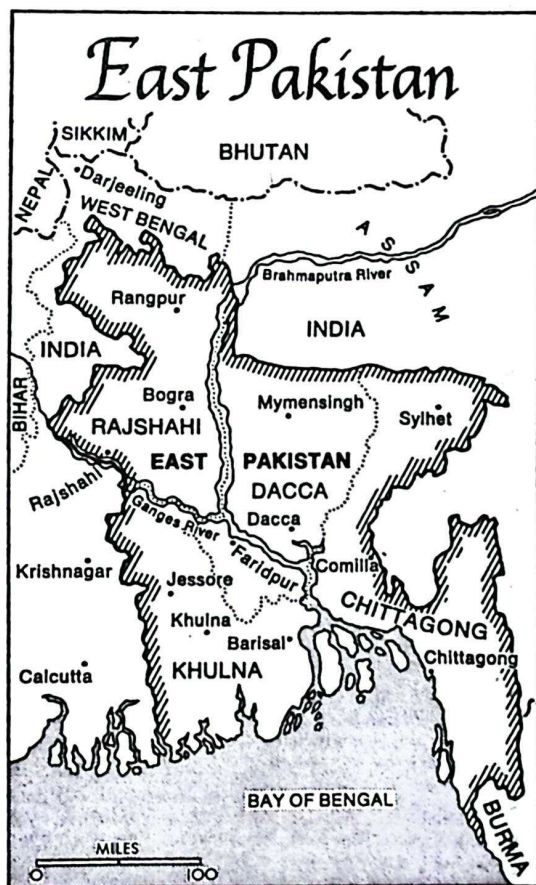
(Source: 20 Years of Pakistan in Statistics, C.S.O.)

An important part of the preceeding section is the Pakistan International Airlines (PIA). Of its 7,000 employees, only 280 are from Bengal. In all its foreign and regional branches, the top high salaried executives are all West Pakistanis.

10. Health (1966)

	No. in <u>Bangla Desh</u>	No. in <u>West Pakistan</u>
(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.)



Appendix II: Selected Reports from the International Press

'All Part Of a Game'--a Grim and Deadly One

Sydney H. Schanberg

reprinted from The New York Times, Sunday, April 4, 1971

"All of it's necessary, absolutely necessary," a West Pakistani stewardess lectured some expelled foreign newsmen about the Pakistani Army's offensive to crush the independence movement in East Pakistan. "If this happened in your country, you'd do the same thing. It's all part of the game."

A game? To foreign newsmen in Dacca, it looked like a surprise attack with tanks, artillery and heavy machine guns against a virtually unarmed population--a population using tactics of nonviolence, mostly strikes and other forms of noncooperation, to claim the political majority it had won in last December's elections. And by this weekend enough credible reports of indiscriminate killings had filtered out to leave little doubt, even in the minds of many dispassionate Indian officials and Western diplomats, that the Army of West Pakistan was under few restraints in putting down East Pakistani thoughts of autonomy.

The attack began on the night of March 25, after 10 days of political negotiations in which the army and the rest of the West Pakistani power establishment had lulled the East Pakistani nationalists into thinking their demands for greater self-rule would be granted.

It is clear now that the West Pakistanis never meant the talks to succeed, that they dragged them out only to buy time to get enough troop reinforcements over from West Pakistan to launch the attack. But while the talks went on, nearly every observer, from newsmen to diplomats, resisted the ugly thought that this might be true. The signs were all there--troops coming in by air and sea, the dismissal of a martial-law administrator who was too lenient and the uncharacteristic silence of the army while the East Pakistanis boycotted the military regime and followed instead the directives of their leader, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

The newsmen reported these signs but when talk of "some mess" came out of the negotiations, they grasped upon that, because as what should happen. They were wrong. Instead, the military mind led.

But in turning to force, the West Pakistan leaders apparently misjudged both its limitations and the depth of feeling of 75 million East Pakistanis.

"They thought that a few bullets would scare the people," said Ranjit Gupta, the police commissioner in Calcutta, just across the border in India. "It is silly--it shows you how little the West Pakistanis know about East Pakistanis."

Instead of the first shooting spree terrorizing the people into submission, it now seems apparent that while the Pakistani army may be able to establish a hold on the cities and towns, it cannot contain the widespread guerrilla activity in the primitive countryside. This could so undermine the supply lines and the loyalty of the Pakistani troops that the independence movement would win the day.

In India, many sympathizers with the East Pakistani cause are quick to compare West Pakistan's military actions to those of Hitler. "Pak Army's Inhuman Torture in East Pakistan," the headline of a Calcutta newspaper. "Butchery," said another. "The unleashed by the occupying Pakistani army in East Pakistan is darker than even the darkest chapter of Nazism." The British Parliament has called it "a massacre of defenseless people w to genocide."

Most of the other governments of the world have remained silent. "Why doesn't your country condemn this outrage?" one official in Calcutta asked an American. "This is no tidal wave, this is no act of nature--it is people slaughtering people."

The United States, which supplied the Pakistani military with its basic weapons and training from 1955 to 1965, has refused to release to the press accounts of army killings it has received from its consulate in Dacca, the East Pakistan capital.

Britain has said she regrets the situation, but considers it an internal matter.

The Soviet Union has remained officially silent, although segments of the Soviet press have called the army's action "crude arbitrariness and violence."

Communist China, which has also been supplying Pakistan with arms in recent years, and has been wooing Pakistan hard, has said nothing.

U Thant, Secretary General of the United Nations, said after several days of trouble in East Pakistan that he was "very much concerned about the loss of life and human suffering" and would help if the Pakistani Government asked him to assist "in humanitarian efforts." Such a request seemed highly unlikely.

One country, Ceylon, has helped the West Pakistani military offensive by granting refueling rights to planes flying to and from East Pakistan. The two wings of Pakistan are divided by over 1,000 miles of India, which banned Pakistani overflights in February. Without this assistance from Ceylon, military reinforcements and supplies for East Pakistan would have to be brought in by sea, and Indian officials and Western diplomats here believe this would severely hamper, if not cripple, the West Pakistani Army's campaign.

Regardless of Ceylon's help to West Pakistan and the lack of help thus far to East Pakistan, there seems to be agreement here on two points--that the chances of East and West Pakistan remaining united appear nil, and that in the long run the West Pakistani Army, attempting to impose its government's will on the East Pakistanis, has little chance of success.

The Muslims, as the people of East Pakistan are called, have stepped across a crucial line--a line that separated grumbling about their exploitation from fighting against the exploiters. The line may have been crossed on March 25, the night of the attack. Or perhaps it was crossed earlier, on March 1, when President Yahya Khan, Army Commander in Chief, presided over the session of the National Assembly that was to have convened to begin drafting a Constitution returning the nation to civilian rule. That Assembly, elected in December, was dominated by the Awami League party, which wanted a large measure of autonomy--leaving the Central Government with power only over foreign policy, but not foreign trade and foreign aid. The Awami League was anathema to the West Pakistani power establishment, the big-business interests and the politicians. In the negotiations over the crisis, they started off by making conciliatory overtures and then brought in the monkey wrench, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, political leader of West Pakistan. When he objected that the Awami League wanted too much autonomy--"bordering on sovereignty"--the negotiations came to a halt. Then, suddenly, came the army attack. Following the attack, Mr. Bhutto and his aides, under army protection, were flown to friendly territory in India, where the political situation promptly announced: "Pakistan is saved by the grace of Allah."

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Instead of the first shooting spree terrorizing the population into submission, it now seems apparent that while the army may be able initially to establish a hold on the cities and major towns, it will face widespread guerrilla activity in the primitive riverine countryside. This could so undermine the supply lines and mobility of the West Pakistani troops that the independence movement will succeed.

In India, many sympathizers with the East Pakistani cause were quick to compare West Pakistan's military actions in East Pakistan with those of Hitler. "Pak Army's Inhuman Torture," was the headline in one Calcutta newspaper. "Butchery," said another, adding: "The vandalism unleashed by the occupying Pakistani army in Bangla Desh (Bengal Nation) is darker than even the darkest chapter of Nazi terror." The Indian Parliament has called it "a massacre of defenseless people which amounts to genocide."

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The Bengalis, as the people of East Pakistan are called, have stepped across a crucial line--a line that separated grumbling about their exploitation to fighting against the exploiters. The line may have been crossed on March 25, the night of the attack. Or perhaps it was crossed earlier, on March 1, when President Yahya Khan, Army Commander in Chief, postponed a session of the National Assembly that was to have convened two days later to begin drafting a Constitution returning the nation to civilian rule. That Assembly, elected in December, was dominated by Sheikh Mujib's Awami League party, which wanted a large measure of provincial autonomy--leaving the Central Government with power only over defense and foreign policy, but not foreign trade and foreign aid.

These terms were anathema to the West Pakistani power establishment--the army, the big-business interests and the politicians. In the political negotiations over the crisis, they started off by making conciliatory sounds and then brought in the monkey wrench, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the dominant political leader of West Pakistan. When he objected that the Awami League wanted too much autonomy--"hording on sovereignty"--the talks began to stall. Then, suddenly, came the army attack.

The morning after the attack, Mr. Bhutto and his aides, under heavy military protection, were flown back to friendly territory in West Pakistan, where the political leader promptly announced: "Pakistan has been saved by the grace of the Almighty."

But it will take more than religious oratory to save Pakistan as a united Moslem country. Religion was the social glue that was supposed to have held the two wings together, but it was never enough.

Pakistan, carved out of the Indian subcontinent in 1947 as the child of Hindu-Moslem hostility, was intended as a homeland for the Moslem Bengalis of East Pakistan and the Moslem Punjabis, Sindhis and Pathans of West Pakistan. But the 55 million West Pakistanis held all the political, economic and military power, and East Pakistani, although the majority wing, quickly became what amounted almost to an exploited colony, a golden market for the manufactured products of the western wing. Prices were higher in the east, income lower.

A severe racial and cultural gap also festered. The two wings of Pakistan have always been further apart in most important respects than most independent countries. In that sense, the Bengalis are fighting to dislodge from their soil a foreign occupation army.

It may take a long time, but none of the witnesses to the recent upsurge of Bengali nationalism and to the barbarism of the army attack doubts that it will happen. In the meantime, as Sheik Mujib was fond of chatting with the adoring crowds that thronged to his now razed house: "Sangram, sangram. Chalbey, chalbey." "The fight will go on. The fight will go on."

Before The Floodgates Open

T.J.S. George

excerpted from Far Eastern Economic Review May 1, 1971

Time--both politically speaking and in terms of climate--is running out for Islamabad. This may be one reason for the ominous increase in accusations against India of "infiltration"--and for the carelessness at least of its capture of the border post of Benapole last weekend, when mortarfire reached Indian territory at Petrapole. A fullscale international conflagration is never far from this complex crisis.

Government troops were apparently trying to secure district towns and claimed early this week to have closed the border with West Bengal--although the flow of refugees into India shows little sign of abating. Significantly the Bengalis withdrew without a fight from the provisional capital of Chuadanga and have followed up with tactics suggestive of a switch to guerilla warfare.

In this they are likely to be relatively successful, particularly now that the rains are beginning. The Mukti Fauj and ordinary Bengalis are reported to have hidden large numbers of boats for use when the monsoon proper begins and the Pakistani army's tanks become more of a hindrance than the German tanks before Moscow; and the Bengalis are not as the Russians were then.

In the new phase of the struggle, logistics assume critical proportions for both sides. Perhaps the government's headaches are the worse if only because each day it must airfreight on an average 50 tons of vital supplies at a cost of Rs6 million to Rs7 million. Defence experts estimate that in the present state of Pakistan's economy the government can sustain the war for no more than four to six months.

The minimum requirements of government troops in Bengal, including supplies, ammunition and fuel, are believed to be around 120 tons a day. Eight C-130 transport planes have done twice their maximum permissible flying hours in the early weeks of the fighting and will now have to be grounded for servicing. Nine commercial Boeings have also been engaged in the airlift. And the expected reinforcements from Iran and Turkey may not materialise following Washington's discouragement. Ships carry the bulk of the supplies into Bengal but there is no dock labour to unload them.

Distribution within Bengal of army supplies is equally difficult. A small fleet of Fokkers and helicopters have been bearing the brunt of this burden. This has been growing less and less reliable with fuel hard to come by and some air fields put out of commission by the liberation units. When the rains set in next month, the fleet may be as good as useless.

Estimates of casualties among government troops are so far modest--3,000 by the best count. Military experts say if this figure touches 10,000 the army's strike capability will be grievously affected. West Pakistani forces in Bengal are put at anything between 50,000 and 80,000. If the government really intends to seal the border, at least 40,000 troops will be required for this purpose alone--which highlights the hopelessness of the objective.

The liberation forces will by comparison have a better time of it during the monsoon. But they must keep supply routes from India open--

and hold on to a firmly held territory as headquarters. Until this week, Faridpur in the south and Mymensingh 80 miles north of Dacca were both strongholds of the liberation forces. But Pakistan army units have reached Faridpur; and heavy fighting is going on around Mymensingh, which has suffered strafing and incendiary bombing and is being attacked by a three-pronged ground force backed by 24 Russian T-59 tanks. Army strength in the northwest, based on Rangpur, has been increased to over a division backed by armour and artillery.



Islamabad's Blind Alley

a correspondent

excerpted from Far Eastern Economic Review, May 15, 1971

Some seven weeks after General Yahya Khan struck at East Pakistan, in a military operation supposed to end within 72 hours, neither side is anywhere near the kind of victory that makes sense to the outside world. And it is almost impossible even to speculate what lies ahead, both for Bangla Desh and for West Pakistan's military regime.

At this stage, what matters most to Islamabad is a clear military victory over the liberation forces of the self-proclaimed Bangla Desh government. Without such a victory, there can be no attempt to restore any form of civil administration to the province, never mind establish the kind of puppet government which was attempted early in April with the help of some rightwing Dacca politicians, including former chief minister Nurul Amin and former foreign minister Hamidul Huq Chowdhury.

It is said that when Yahya launched his offensive, hoping to get the situation well under control in a matter of days, he still had a vague tentative political time table in mind. The formation of an interim government in East Pakistan headed by one of these rightwing leaders figured prominently in this schedule, which envisaged organising a fresh election in the province. A similar government would have been formed in West Pakistan, headed by PPP (Pakistan People's Party) leader Zulfikar Ali Bhutto or his nominee. Bhutto supported the plan because it offered him certain clear political advantages. Without the participation of the banned Awami League and National Awami Party in the election, the representatives elected from East Pakistan would probably be split into small factions. This would offer him an opportunity to form the government on the basis of a coalition with one or two East Pakistan groups.

For all practical purposes, this plan (disclosed by a non-Awami politician who has escaped to Calcutta) is now as good as dead. There can be no move in the political field prior to a military "solution".

The government troops have undeniably gained the upper hand, but it is anything but a victory. They have captured all the district headquarters and the majority of sub-divisional towns and have successfully sealed much of the border with the Indian state of West Bengal. But they have not yet established their authority on the border with the Indian province of Assam, where the frontier lies partly through the Khasi Jaintia hills and partly along the river Kushiara.

The extremist Naxalites, Maulana Ba'shani's organised peasantry and the militant Awami League workers are now consolidating their position in the countryside, organising the pockets of resistance, something they should have done right from the beginning, instead of fighting pitched battles against the federal troops in such big towns as Rajshahi, Jessore, Pabna and Sylhet and losing precious men and ammunition. Again, the border with Assam is essentially rural. The nearest towns are Sylhet and Maulvi Bazar, both some 30 miles from the frontier. In other words, if the Pakistani army wants to seal off the border with Assam, it must move into the villages.

This is easier said than done. The army can carry out a few raids on scattered villages as long as it does not go very far from its urban bases. The monsoon will affect road communications and the Pakistani

army has few motorised patrol boats. In monsoon conditions, government troops may only control areas within five or 10 miles of each major town. The rainy season will hamper troop movements, aerial bombardment and fire-power.

Another major problem is the usefulness of army raids. At this stage, pacification can hardly be the aim of an army which has already killed far too many people to inspire any kind of trust and confidence anywhere in East Bengal. Obviously it can hunt out pockets of resistance, hidden arms and rebel leaders. But civil intelligence and co-operation from the local population, both non-existent, would be essential for the troops to lay their hands on Maoist leaders--Toha or Abdul Huq, Rashid Menon or Sikdar, or countless others--who may well be hiding in the villages.

The villagers can shelter members of the liberation forces, hide arms and weapons in the paddyfields and, when necessary, transport them from place to place by river. In this respect, among others, Yahya Khan's troops operating in East Bengal are in an infinitely more difficult situation than the Saigon government troops which are out to destroy all the NLF (National Liberation Front) strongholds in South Vietnam.

The hazards government troops face in the second phase of their operation are pretty clear; the position of the Bangla Desh Mukti Fauj (liberation army) is vague. So far the Mukti Fauj is made up of scattered guerilla groups rather than an army taking its orders from a well-knit military command. "General" Usmani, named by the provisional government of Bangla Desh as the military commander, is operating without any communication facilities. He has developed a courier service of his own, but is may still be too slow-moving to help him maintain effective co-ordination with his "troops". Even when supplies are organised from outside, how can he ensure their use and distribution inside the country?

The liberation forces cannot yet work on the basis of a province-wide co-ordinated plan. The most they can do--and this would be worth while--is to develop local plans of action and carry out commando operations against government troops: ambushes, harassment and disruption of the army's communication lines. Success in these fields could mean the resistance fighters came to exercise control over hundreds of villages within a defined territory, perhaps in the district of Sylhet along the border of Assam, consolidating the position of the Bangla Desh government. At the moment, this is the best chance for Usmani's under-fed barefooted soldiers.

The supporters of Bangla Desh face more serious problems elsewhere--in the field of policy direction, and the ideological approach to the struggle. It was a tactical mistake on the part of the Awami League to exclude Maulana Bashani and Mohammad Toha from their provisional government set up in Mujibnagar early last month (in all probability, these two leaders were not then contactable); but at the local level all the groups appear to be working together. There may be some differences at the top, but probably not serious enough to cause serious concern to the leadership.

Despite their ideological differences, they obviously accept that the present struggle has all the characteristics of a national liberation movement calling for a unified national leadership. Toha, a highly educated, intelligent person, is unlikely to regard it as a socialist revolution (which it is not) just as Awami League leaders who have proclaimed the "independent republic of Bangla Desh" are no

longer in a position to return to a moderate approach.

However, it may prove hard to thrash out possible differences among these groups on the issues of military tactics, obtaining help from outside, relations with the big powers or even the kind of arms the liberation forces should use. The tactics of General Usmani, a retired trained military officer from the Pakistan army, may not always fit in within the framework of what could be loosely termed Maoist guerilla strategy--and vice versa.

Again, extreme leftist elements like Toha, Abdul Huq, Rashid Menon, and Sikdar may oppose attempts by the provisional government (and Maulana Bashani) to gain sympathy for the struggle from Delhi, Washington and Moscow. Their strong fear of big power intervention provides a psychological barrier between the militant left and the leadership of the provisional government.

With time, the militant millions in East Bengal may well develop a strategy of their own which can accommodate differences about tactics, political divergences and even the ideological clashes. The struggle is unlikely to follow any established pattern. In this sense, the extreme leftists may be totally mistaken in assuming that it will eventually develop into an out-and-out guerilla war, Vietnam style. To their dismay, they might discover many of the ingredients are absent. One thing is certain. The struggle will be long and bitter. Having raised a new flag over a devastated land, no one in East Bengal dares lower it.

Maoists on the Move

Nayan Chanda

excerpted from Far Eastern Economic Review, May 15, 1971

"In this cold world of diplomacy, nothing counts" said a student leader from Bangla Desh; "neither the electoral majority of a government nor the bloodbath of a people." If the euphoria which greeted the first split with West Pakistan, and which was sustained by last month's proclamation of the new state, has faded under the crushing artillery of Punjabi troops, courage and determination remain. But resistance is falling in political terms ever more under a leftist influence.

The first organised move to override the Awami League and establish a National Liberation Front took place in Bangla Desh in the last week of April. While the League and the government it has set up are busy trying to win diplomatic recognition, the leftist groups under the banner of the Liberation Front are preparing for "protracted people's war."

The only absentee at the April 25 meeting of leftist parties was Mohammed Toha's EPCP-ML (East Pakistan Communist Party-Marxist Leninist). Participating were Maulana Bashani's NAP (National Awami Party), and the Zafar-Menon group which had always been particularly militant and operated underground. Leaders of some peasants' and workers' unions were also present.

The meeting is reported to have drawn up a broad programme which listed imperialism and feudalism as enemies to be fought. According to an EBCP leader, "the primary contradiction at this stage is between the West Pakistani army and big bourgeoisies and the East Bengal people as a whole. The contradiction between feudalism and the people takes second place, the orientation of the whole fight being anti-imperialistic."

This leader was critical of Mohammed Toha for relegating the struggle against West Pakistan to second place, but he refused to criticise Peking. "The Chinese stand is perfectly logical and consistent," he said. "In their recent statements they have scrupulously avoided pledging support to the integrity of Pakistan. Peking will certainly support a genuine anti-imperialistic people's war by the Bangla Desh people." (It seems this particular leader had not heard Chou En-lai's message to Yahya Khan in which he said "the unification of Pakistan and the unity of the people of East and West Pakistan are the best guarantees for Pakistan to attain prosperity and strength".) However, the formal coming together of the left parties shows that events are moving towards what many commentators had predicted: development of a guerilla situation, ideological radicalisation of the struggle and the eventual takeover of the leadership by hardened revolutionaries, possibly even Maoists.

U.S. Military Goods Sent To Pakistan Despite Ban

Tad Szulc

excerpted from The New York Times, June 22, 1971

A freighter flying the flag of Pakistan was preparing today to sail from New York for Karachi with a cargo of United States military equipment for Pakistan, apparently in violation of the Administration's officially proclaimed ban on such shipments.

Senior State Department officials, in response to inquiries, acknowledged that at least one other ship was now on the way from the United States to Pakistan carrying what they described as "foreign military sales" items.

These items, they indicated, came from excess Defense Department stocks and apparently were shipped as a result of confusion within the Administration as to how the three-month-old ban on shipments of military equipment to Pakistan should be applied.

"There has evidently been some kind of slippage here," an official said.

The Padma, the ship that was preparing to sail from New York, is scheduled to arrive in Karachi in mid-August with a cargo that is said to include eight aircraft, parachutes and hundreds of thousands of pounds of spare parts and accessories for planes and military vehicles.

The Sunderbans, another ship of Pakistani registry, sailed from New York on May 8 with other items of military equipment for Pakistan, including parts for armored personnel carriers, according to the ship's manifesto and the accompanying State Department export license. She is due to arrive in Karachi Wednesday.

All this equipment has been sold to Pakistan by the United States Air Force under provisions of the Foreign Military Sales Act.

After troops of the Pakistani Army, mainly West Pakistanis, were ordered to crush the self-rule movement in East Pakistan last March 25, the State Department announced that all sales of military equipment to Pakistan had been suspended and that the program, initiated in 1967, had been placed "under review."

Today, State Department officials, responding to queries about the sailings of the Padma and the Sunderbans, said that it remained the official policy of the Administration that sales of all types of military equipment to Pakistan were prohibited under the ban imposed shortly after the severe repression of the East Pakistani independence movement began early in the spring. The State Department estimates that at least 200,000 East Pakistanis have died in the subsequent fighting and that about six million refugees have fled to India.

Senior State Department officials said in interviews today, that they were not aware of shipments of military equipment to Pakistan after March 25.

They acknowledged that such shipments would constitute a violation of the proclaimed policy.

The State Department officials said they had been informed by the Defense Department that no military equipment under the foreign sales program had been delivered "to the Government of Pakistan or agents of the Government of Pakistan" since March 25.

They said the Defense Department "reaffirmed" this policy today in discussions with the State Department. They could not explain how this Pentagon statement could be reconciled with the fact that, according to

the bills of lading submitted to the Pakistani Embassy here, the equipment to be loaded on the Sunderbans was received at the dock in New York on April 23 and the equipment for the Padma on May 21.

A communication from the shippers to Lieut. Col. M. Amram Raja at the defense procurement division of the Pakistani Embassy covering the dock receipts for the two ships was sent on May 21.

The Defense Department, asked about the shipments last Saturday and again today, referred all inquiries to the State Department. Officials appeared to be at a loss for an explanation of the shipments.

State Department sources quoted the Defense Department as saying that no sales or deliveries to Pakistan had been authorized since March 25 and that the equipment aboard the two freighters had been purchased prior to the official prohibition.

But they offered no comment as to why the dockside deliveries and actual shipments had been made after March 25.

The State Department has not yet replied to a letter sent on June 17 by Senator Frank Church, Democrat of Idaho, to Secretary of State William P. Rogers requesting information about "certain items of military equipment" being shipped to Pakistan under State Department licenses.

Senator Church, who is a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, advised Mr. Rogers that he understood that the State Department had issued License No. 19242 for some of this equipment.

A check of the bills of lading of the cargo aboard the Sunderbans showed that this license covered an item described as "28 skids, parts," weighing 11,895 pounds. No further description of these items was available.

The another license issued by the State Department for the Sunderbans's cargo specified "parts and accessories for military vehicles." The Sunderbans carries a total of 21 items, according to the dockside delivery listings, identified on these documents only as cases and cartons of "auto parts and accessories," "skids and parts," "boxes" and "parts."

The dockside delivery listings for the Padma include two entries of "four aircraft" each, 113 parachutes and parts, and auto parts, accessories, skids and wooden boxes."

An item described as "crates, bundles and parts" is listed as weighing 14,133 pounds.

The program of military sales to Pakistan, begun in 1967, had been running at nearly \$10 million a year, according to Robert J. McCloskey, the State Department spokesman. The United States agreed in that year to sell "nonlethal" equipment to both Pakistan and India, lifting in part the embargo placed on military deliveries after the 1965 Indian Pakistani war.

In October, 1970, the Administration agreed, as an "exception," to sell Pakistan an undisclosed number of F-104 fighter planes, B-57 bombers, and armored personnel carriers. However, the State Department said today that none of this 'exception' equipment had been delivered.

But authoritative sources here, who cannot be identified, said that the flow of military equipment to Pakistan from Air Force sales alone had reached \$47,944,781 between 1967 and April 30, 1970.

A communication sent on May 28 to the defense procurement division of the Pakistani Embassy by the headquarters of the Air Force accounting and finance center in Denver enclosed a "status report...listing all your open foreign military sales cases, showing case value, amounts collected, delivered and undelivered."

The letter--signed by Elaine B. Loventhal, chief foreign military sales branch controller at the Denver headquarters--was headed: "USAF statement of military sales transactions and detail delivery listings."

The "status report" noted that previous charges on Pakistani military purchases were \$25,679,654.10, that delivered items totaled \$21,730,740.07 and that "cash received to date" was \$24,342,782.37.

State Department officials were unable to say precisely what period this report covered.

The Air Force report said, however, that the Pakistani Government had to remit "on or before May 31, 1971" the sum of \$3,376,253.51 for further "total cash requirements."

A notation on the report showed that a check from Pakistan for \$404,116.49 had been received "in May, 1971."

Authoritative sources here said that "in all likelihood" additional sales to Pakistan might have been made by the Army and the Navy.

Spokesmen for the East West Shipping Agency, the New York agents for the Padma and the Sunderbans, indicated that the Padma had carried military equipment to Pakistan on a number of recent voyages, most recently delivering it in Karachi on March 22, three days before the troop action in East Pakistan.

The voyage for which the Padma is now preparing is her first to Karachi carrying military equipment since the ban was imposed after March 25. The current trip by the Sunderbans is also her first with such equipment since the ban. But other ships with military equipment for Pakistan might have sailed since March 25 from East and West Coast ports.

Waiting For Godot

A Pakistani Correspondent

excerpted from New Statesman July 2, 1971

There is one thing that unites Pakistan's President, India's Prime Minister and Britain's Foreign Secretary as they contemplate the political and economic chaos of Pakistan: the desire for a 'political settlement'. Of course, it means different things to different people. To President Yahya Khan, it means the eventual concession of very limited power to politicians prepared to maintain 'the integrity and solidarity' of Pakistan. To Mrs. Gandhi, it means the release of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his accession to power in Bangla Desh. It is hard to know what it can mean to Sir Alec Douglas-Home. For if there is one certainty about Pakistan's future it is that there is no hope whatever of a political settlement thinkable to Yahya and acceptable to the Bengalis.

Nothing short of an independent Bangla Desh and the withdrawal of West Pakistan's army of occupation will end a state of near anarchy in East Pakistan and permit reconstruction of its shattered economy. The Bengali resistance can ensure anarchy but not compel withdrawal. Only Indian intervention has that power. Yet fear of Chinese support for Pakistan and of the cutting-off of Western aid continues to stiffen Mrs. Gandhi's resistance to pressure with India for military action. Besides, while the Bengali refugees are a major political problem, and an expensive one, India has the consolation of standing by and watching her main enemy eliminate itself as a threat to her power through internal conflict.

Power in Pakistan rests firmly in the hands of a group of six generals, totally committed to the military control of the East and illfitted to comprehend its economic or political implications. Yahya's precedence among them is in name only. Since February, he has been outnumbered by the hawkish majority who saw strong action as necessary to bring the East back into line, and increasingly regretted the relative freedom of the President's elections, which had led to a situation they could not control. Open rejection of Yahya's weak persistence in seeking negotiated solutions was unnecessary as long as he consented to the preparations required for sterner action. Since March, the story has been the same: Yahya has been prepared to concede most of the autonomy demanded by the East and to contemplate the removal of Tikka Khan from the governorship of East Pakistan. But the other generals have stood firm in opposing any slackening of military control. As long as Yahya retains the personal loyalty of the Chief of Staff, General Hamid Khan, his replacement as President is unlikely. But he has never known the strength necessary to impose his own views on the junta.

There is complete popular support in West Pakistan for the military action, although the effectiveness of censorship in concealing the extent of resistance in the East has been undermined as the villages of the Punjab and the Northwest Frontier Province have received back the bodies of family members killed in the fighting. However, economic discontent is increasing. The growth rate for the past year slumped

well below the rate of population growth, so that the standard of living has actually declined. In recent months, prices--especially the most significant in stirring unrest, food prices,--have been rising fast.

An inflation of Latin American proportions is soberly contemplated by State Bank officials, for deficit financing is inevitable while major foreign aid is denied. The dimensions of growing unemployment are hard to determine in a society where village families embrace many of its casualties. But two industries have taken to the advertising columns of government newspapers to appeal to the President to save them from complete collapse. In the new industrial centres of Punjab, immediate action has been demanded to stop 'mass dismissals' of laborers.

Can these discontents be channelled into a successful challenge to the powers of the generals? A military regime has fallen in Pakistan before. It was not only in East Pakistan that the government of Ayub Khan and its inegalitarian economic strategy were decisively rejected. The demonstrations that led to Ayub's downfall in March 1969 began among the students and urban workers of West Pakistan. This sudden eruption of discontent subsided with Yahya's peaceful coup and the promise of elections. But the elections themselves showed how widely the causes of that unrest were felt.

It is worth remembering that the main surprise of the election of last December was not the triumph of the Awami League in the East, but the success of Z.A. Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party (PPP) in winning a majority of West Pakistan's Assembly seats. It was 'Islamic socialism' rather than Bengali nationalism that the government press had attacked most vigorously.

The PPP's electoral appeal combined extreme anti-Indian chauvinism in foreign policy with a radical attack upon concentration of wealth at home. The party's leadership includes a number of big landowners (of whom Bhutto himself is one), and it soon calmed the post-election fears of Karachi industrialists. Nevertheless, if in his own province Bhutto profited from the support of the feudal power structure, in the Punjab he triumphed despite its opposition. The obliteration of the Muslim League and the Islamic Right stemmed from discontent with stagnant real wages, the dispossession of tenants and the enrichment of a small elite through Pakistan's corrupt and distorted industrial sector. Bhutto's victory revealed the same ill-directed but growing radicalism that was to give Mrs. Gandhi her won triumph a few months later.

Six months after the elections, the PPP has no immediate prospect of taking power and there is no prospect of the radical policies advocated being realised. Bhutto is constantly on the move throughout West Pakistan, attempting to maintain his political supporters while unable to offer them power, patronage or reform. His pro-Chinese and anti-Indian foreign policy is palatable to the army, but even his personal supporters among the generals have come to share the military irritation with his demands for early political power.

Thus Bhutto is impotent--caught between the refusal of the generals to hurry the return to civilian government and the discontent of his own supporters. While he remains a firm supporter of one Pakistan (and it was Yahya's capitulation to his threats to boycott the National Assembly that precipitated the tragedy in the East) he knows his popular support will be eroded if he remains silent in the face of unchecked economic distress. But although susceptible to the political pressures from which the generals are isolated, he shows no sign of being ready

to prepare the West for the psychological shock of withdrawal from the East. Perhaps rhetorical egalitarianism could make hardship acceptable for a longer period of time. But one fact is inescapable: economic revival in the West cannot precede acceptance of the independence of Bangla Desh. Yet relinquishing the East remains unthinkable to every military and political leader with any prospect of controlling the apparatus of government.

The outside world can do no more than watch as the turmoil in the East and the descent into economic and political chaos in the West continue. Pakistan, East and West, seems destined to become yet another area of the world where the poor suffer amid the impotent concern of governments.



BENGALI LIBERATION ARMY FIGHTING PARTISAN WAR

reprinted from Intercontinental Press, July 5, 1971

The partisans known as the Mukti Fouj in East Bengal are estimated at about 30,000 men at present. Of these at least 20,000 are former personnel of the East Pakistani Rifles (EPR), the Bengal Regiment (BR), and the auxiliary forces like the police, Ansars, and Mujjahids. About 10,000 newly trained guerrillas have joined the Fouj since April--mostly students and youth who crossed into India as refugees. Another 30,000 guerrillas are under training.

Four former majors of the EPR and BR are providing the general command for the Fouj: Majors Zia-ur-Rehman (Chittagong-Comilla region), Usman (Nadia-24 Paaragana region), Khaled Musharaf (Meghalaya-Assam region), and Shafi Ullah (North Bengal region). The entire border of Bangla Desh is divided into fifteen sectors for operational and recruitment purposes.

The Fouj is not in physical possession of any big area in East Bengal. It has withdrawn into the borders for tactical reasons. Its main strategy is of guerrilla action--hit and run. Since the Pakistani army, estimated at about 60,000 combat troops, is concentrated only in major cities, cantonments, and towns, the Fouj has easy access to vast rural areas. There are about 62,000 villages in Bangla Desh, of which about 30,000 have been fully or partially destroyed by the Pakistani army.

The Fouj commanders claim that with their present strength and equipment they can easily capture some districts like Sylhet, Comilla, Mymensingh, or Kushtia, but they cannot retain control of these areas against a concentrated attack by the Pakistani army without heavy mortars, artillery, and antiaircraft guns to meet aerial bombings.

The Mukti Fouj has the support of more than 80 percent of the Bengali population despite the attempts by the army to strike terror among the people. Their support is the main strength of the Fouj. The Pakistani army is surrounded by an entirely hostile population of Bengali-speaking people. Non-Bengalis who might help the army constitute less than 5 percent of the population, but are concentrated in big urban centers.

The army is subjected to constant harassment by guerrillas. A number of soldiers are killed by partisans almost daily. Means of communication between different districts have been disrupted. Agricultural and industrial operations have almost come to a standstill. The army has failed to create even the semblance of a civil administration with the help of quislings.

Judging from a purely military point of view, the Fouj has enough strength and organisational sweep to win the liberation war, provided: (1) it is able to replenish its stock of arms and ammunition, and (2) India continues to provide shelter and food supplies to the guerrillas. The Fouj commanders, who owe allegiance to the Awami League politically, are afraid that the five million refugees who have crossed into India might create political problems for them with the Indian authorities.

The FOUJ can establish a base in "liberated territory" inside East Bengal if it is supplied with an adequate number of fighter planes and antiaircraft guns, which they do not possess at present. They have small weapons, some supplied by India and the bulk captured from the Pakistan army. If the Bangla Desh government is recognised by India or any of the "major powers," the character of the freedom struggle will change rapidly. But the fighting forces do not feel demoralised because of the apathy shown by various governments in relation to their struggle.

The Awami League of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman still commands the support of the majority of the people in Bangla Desh, although most of the leaders of the party elected to the National and Provincial Assemblies fled the country after the army operations began. Some of them including Mujib, are in prison.

As a party committed to parliamentary methods, the Awami League was totally unprepared for the situation created by the brutal armed confrontation. It was not at all acquainted with the techniques of partisan warfare, unlike parties such as the Communist party of East Bengal (CPEB) (Pro-Moscow), which has been banned since 1952; the leftist National Awami party (NAP) led by Professor Muzaffar Ahmed; the National Awami party led by Maulana Bhashani; and the various Maoist groups (that have broken with Maulana Bhashani), which have worked underground for many years.

All these parties are actively participating in the resistance movement. Maulana Bhashani, once considered pro-Peking (though not a Marxist), is unconditionally supporting the leadership of Sheikh Mujib. The CPEB, led by Moni Singh (recently liberated by Mukti FOUJ from Rajshahi jail), and the NAP of Professor Ahmed have been demanding the formation of a "National Liberation Front" of all the partisan forces. The proposal for a front is being resisted by the bourgeois leadership of the Awami League so far, on the ground that it is the only democratically elected leadership of the people that could constitute a government.

Inside Bangla Desh, however, all-party resistance committees, known as "Sangharsh Samities," have been formed at different levels. Initially only the supporters of the Awami League were allowed to join the Mukti FOUJ, but now all those who want to join are encouraged.

The Indian government preferred to deal only with the Awami League, for obvious political reasons. New Delhi's policy has been that of "containing" the Bangla Desh revolution within the framework of bourgeois property relations.

There are three known "pro-Chinese" groups in East Bengal. Until recently, all of them were working inside the NAP led by Maulana Bhashani. In fact, Mohamed Toaha, leader of the Maoist group known as the Communist party of East Pakistan (Marxist-Leninist) (CPEP ML), the counterpart of the Communist party of India (Marxist-Leninist), was the general secretary of Bhashani's NAP. His group broke with the parent organisation when Bhashani decided to put up some candidates to contest the 1970 general elections. Toaha favored boycotting the elections.

The Toaha group appears to be taking a "neutralist" stand in the present war. It has not openly supported the Yahya regime, as the Chinese government has done. The group characterises Sheikh Mujib as an American agent and a bourgeois leader, and has accused him of sabotaging the class struggle by raising the secessionist demand for an independent Bangla Desh. The Toaha group is said to be active in

Sylhet and Mymensingh districts in the north, where Bhashani is also powerful.

There are two other pro-Chinese groups, both calling themselves Communist party of East Bengal--one led by Matin Aliuddin, a 42-year old peasant leader who seems to have some base among the peasantry and industrial workers in the Pabna area. The other group is led by Kazi Jafer and Rashid Khan Menon, and has some influence among workers, but more among students in Dacca and Chittagong districts.

The Jafer-Menon group controls the Chhatra (Student Union) of East Pakistan, as opposed to a rival Student Union led by Mrs. Motia Choudhary (belonging to the CPEB). The largest student organisation, the Chhatra League, is led by the Awami League. Both of these one-time Maoist groups are now extremely critical of the Chinese leadership and are supporting the liberation war. Political differences dividing these groups are not clearly known as yet.

As an old colleague of Suhrawardy and Fazlul Haque, Bhashani commands great popularity among the peasantry. But he has no organisation of his own, apart from those built by the Maoists who were with him. The general secretary of his NAP, Mashi-ur-Rehman, for example, is considered to be an opportunist not trusted by his own followers. Bhashani's friendly relations with the Chinese were largely influenced by the Maoist groups who were working with him during a period when the Chinese were openly fraternising with Islamabad--especially under Ayub Khan. After the 1968-69 popular upsurge, when Yahya stepped in to replace Ayub, this relationship changed.

By the eve of the 1970 election, Bhashani broke with his Maoist supporters and called for an "independent Bangla Desh" when Sheik Mujib and his Awami League were not prepared to go beyond the demand for autonomy.

After the army launched its offensive on March 25, Bhashani publicly criticised the Chinese support to Yahya Khan. He wrote a personal letter to Mao Tsetung, demanding that the Chinese support the liberation war of Bangla Desh. Some of Bhashani's supporters believe that China has not specifically condemned the liberation movement and that the Chinese leadership might even now change their stand if a new leadership emerges in Bangla Desh.

The leaders of the Communist party of India (Marxist) (CPI M) in West Bengal have established contacts with Bhashani and are supposed to be assisting his supporters. The Maulana is understood to have assured the Indian authorities that he would not seek any relations with left parties in India. He is now staying somewhere near Calcutta along the Bangla Desh border.

As a regional bourgeois party opposed to communism and communists, the Awami League enjoyed good relations with U.S. imperialism, which has big stakes in East Bengal. American capital investments in the region are estimated at 30,000,000,000 rupees (7.5 rupees equal US\$1).

It has even been reported that Mujib was in constant contact with the American consulate in Dacca during his negotiations with Yahya in January and March. The U.S. officials are said to have a tape recording of the Yahya-Mujib talks. The Americans supposedly gave Mujib every assurance that they would stand by him in the event the negotiations broke down.

When the talks collapsed March 25 and the masses chose independence for Bangla Desh, the U.S. government evidently changed its policy. Washington was not prepared to antagonise Islamabad at that juncture without knowing the future relationship of forces. This has caused a great deal of bitterness among Mujib's supporters, who think that

American advice restrained him from countering Yahya's manoeuvres.

Mujib's military experts had two plans. One was to arrest Yahya, Bhutto, and others and to hold them as hostages during negotiations for the withdrawal of the Pakistani army. The second was to capture the Chittagong region with all its military installations and supplies of arms and ammunition (including the ship M.V. Swat, which had anchored in Chittagong harbor) on March 23, when a Bengali officer, Brigadier Mazumdar, was in command of the military in the region. Both these plans were rejected by Mujib, supposedly on the advice of the Americans.

When one meets Awami League leaders today, they ask one question repeatedly: "What are the Americans doing?" There is a great deal of bitterness and disappointment among them over the U.S. role.

They had been led to believe that the Soviet Union and China, as "communist countries," could not be trusted. Soviet President Podgorny's statement condemning the genocide has been well received by the Awami League leaders, but the leftist parties, including the CPB, are disillusioned that the Soviet Union has not extended any material support in the form of arms. Moscow's reluctance to recognise the Bangla Desh government is also criticised.

The situation along the border is very bad, with more than 5,000,000 refugees having crowded into camps in West Bengal, Assam, Meghalaya, and Tripura. Already there is a great deal of resentment in the border states against the refugees being settled in their midst. The resentment is particularly vocal in Meghalaya and Assam, where anti-Bengali sentiments are predominant. There are fears of communal and language riots breaking out in these states. This is one of the reasons that compelled the Indian government to shift the refugees to other states. The reactionary capitalist parties in India are trying to give a communal twist to the whole situation.

Will Bhutto End Up In Jail With The Sheikh?

Colin Smith

reprinted from The Observer, July 24, 1971

In an atmosphere of political suppression and rigid censorship of the domestic Press, President General Yahya Khan and his military junta now seem more determined than ever to hang on to power.

Like a man with gold dust leaking through his fingers, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto--Chairman of the left-wing Pakistan People's Party and the most popular politician in West Pakistan--sees his political fortune wasting away as the General delays his promised transfer of limited power to the people.

With the Awami League declared an illegal organisation, the People's Party, runners-up in the December national election, have now become the majority party of Pakistan, though they didn't win one seat in East Pakistan, just as the Awami League didn't win one in the West.

The promised transfer of power by November begins to look more and more like a sham. It now seems only a device to buy time during which a pro-military coalition of minor parties can be organised. Its candidates will then be thrown into the East Pakistan by elections caused by the ban on Awami Leaguers, the obvious aim being to whittle away Bhutto's majority. President Yahya is expected to visit East Pakistan at the beginning of next month--for the first time since his Army opened fire on March 25th--to set this plan in motion.

Mr. Bhutto has so far replied to all this with the slogan "Power or Prison by November." He hastily adds he doesn't want to give the impression that he is handing out ultimatums. But brinkmanship is clearly developing and the Chairman of the People's Party isn't doing a bad job for a man performing his balancing act on bayonets.

Yet on the face of it, he is hopelessly outgunned. The chance seems fairly high that the second part of his slogan will come true and that he will join his old rival, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the captive leader of the Awami League, in some dusty Frontier Province jail.

Even so, Bhutto is far from beaten and the armour he may use to topple Yahya is already being forged. There are indications that the worsening economic situation, partly brought about by the loss of East Pakistan markets, will cause many redundancies among the industrial workers of Karachi and Lahore.

Some diplomats here think there could be considerable industrial unrest by the autumn--and much of the People's Party's support comes from West Pakistan's new proletariat.

It would be unlike Mr. Bhutto not to exploit any unrest in this sector of society. If it blossomed into the rioting which toppled the last military ruler, Ayub Khan, from power, there is no telling which way events might turn. It is uncertain if the West Pakistan Army would use the same ferocity against West Pakistanis as they used against the Bengalis. "It's a bit like the question of using British troops against White Rhodesians," said one diplomat.

Pakistan's economy has always been blatantly bourgeois. In the cities, people are surrounded by most of the paraphernalia of modern living. Karachi has a veneer of affluence. Its traffic jams of private vehicles indicate where much of the country's precious foreign exchange went before import restrictions were made tougher, and the spectacular daring of passengers hanging grimly to the outside of crowded buses

shows where the money might have been better spent.

There are neon signs and cinemas and long-haired, Zapata-moustached young men who roar around in foreign sports cars looking for foreign birds to sit in them.

But most of the population live away from the cities, scraping a living as peasant farmers on land irrigated by the Indus. Others survive as nomadic herdsmen, smugglers or bandits--sometimes as all three. And finally there is the Army, living isolated in its cantonments in the style of regular soldiers of the British Indian Army and having about as much in common with the rest of Pakistan as the inhabitants of Aldershot.

Apart from the top 10 percent or so, who generally live very well, most Pakistanis exist in a world in many ways less advanced than sixteenth century England. Some of the nomads live a life which is almost completely Old Testament, except for a liberal use of firearms.

Few roads are safe to travel after dark. From the North-West Frontier to the deserts of Sind, banditry is life.

Take a domestic flight anywhere in West Pakistan and, as likely as not, at the end of it an air hostess will come off the aircraft looking like a Dodge City hat-stand draped with pistols and cartridge belts to be returned to nervous businessmen continuing their journey by road. Mr. Bhutto, who 12 months ago was ambushed by tribesmen in the Sind Desert, rarely travels unarmed, despite a police bodyguard. He once told me he was a very good shot.

There are two views about how economic disaster affects this sort of society. One is that the margin between subsistence and starvation is close and it doesn't take much to push people over the line. The other view is that such a society has far more resilience than its complex Western counterpart. At the moment, Pakistani farmers are having a good year. For many of them, it has been their first harvest with the Nobel prize-winning Mexi-Dashpa wheat and some of them have already doubled their normal production.

But in the commercial and industrial sectors it is far from a good year, despite patriotic assurances that business is booming from industrialists who would rather serve visiting reporters tea and biscuits than facts and figures.

The two main industries of East Pakistan, tea and jute, are both seriously hit. Bengali guerrillas blow bridges, mine roads and make it generally impossible to send goods to Chittagong for export or for shipping to West Pakistan. Jute is one of Pakistan's biggest exports. Much of it goes to Scotland.

But since the Second World War, jute has been fighting a losing battle against synthetics in the bagging business; it has been kept alive by the ingenuity of West Pakistani and British businessmen who keep dreaming up other uses for it, like carpet backing and trendy curtains for Bed-sitter-land. But its main use has always been in sacking and it's here that it is most vulnerable. Already the Japanese are trying to move into the Australian wool market with synthetic sacks and this was previously almost a Pakistan monopoly.

East Pakistan tea from Sylhet is low hill tea, not as good as high hill tea, from Assam and Ceylon. Because of this, in recent years most of it has been consumed in West Pakistan. Even so, it was invaluable as an import-saver. Now more tea has to be imported from Ceylon.

It is doubtful if either the tea or the jute industry will ever fully recover from the crisis in East Pakistan. The Bengalis are applying a scorched-earth policy which could be disastrous.

In West Pakistan, industries are affected by the loss of a protected East Pakistan market, the loss of raw material from East Pakistan, and the necessity to pay cash for imported chemicals and machinery. Some Japanese companies have refused to give credit without guarantees from British banks.

British exporters were put off when the Board of Trade declined to underwrite new contracts with Pakistan, though they are honouring existing agreements.

Despite this, Mr. Ahmed Abdullah, President of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Karachi, assures me that "not a single letter of credit payment has been refused by Pakistan." But diplomats confirm that there have been no aid loan repayments since May.

The question of cutting off foreign aid to Pakistan leads to ambiguous answers. Both the British and Americans here say they are not planning any fresh projects, but there is still plenty in cash or kind in the pipeline. It could be several years before this runs out.

Meanwhile, fresh political headaches are developing for Yahya Khan. With the Army fully occupied with East Pakistan local leaders in Baluchistan and the Frontier have started agitating for more autonomy or complete independence. A Baluchi tribal leader I met in Karachi told me the situation in Baluchistan was growing "tense." It is perhaps worth recalling that before he dealt with the Bengalis, General Tikka Khan, now military Governor of East Pakistan, earned himself the title "the Bomber of Baluchistan" for similar action he took against nomadic tribes in that area in 1966.

On the North-West Frontier, the Pakhtunistan issue--an autonomous homeland for the Pathans--is said to have been resurrected. There are rumours of 20,000 men taking to the hills in the tribal territory around the Khyber Pass, with the object of waging guerrilla war against Afghanistan as well as Pakistan.

It is now Mr. Bhutto's task to persuade the military that as a first step at least, it would be sensible for them to share with civilian politicians these menacing problems. In the past Mr. Bhutto has been criticised as a "playboy from Sind," but few deny his obvious talents as a leader. And there seems to be nobody else around capable of dragging Pakistan by its beard into the second half of the twentieth century.

The 'Plot' Against Yahya Khan

Murray Sayle

excerpted from The Sunday Times, August 1, 1971

Minutes before the Boeing 707's of Pakistan International Airlines take off from Dacca airport for the long, long flight round India to Karachi, a military ambulance backs up to the rear door of each aircraft and stretchers are hurriedly, even furtively carried aboard.

The patients are soldiers, going home to West Pakistan because the military hospitals in Dacca are full. These sad cargoes are concealed, more or less, from the people of Dacca, for no Bengalis are allowed on, or anywhere near, the airport; but once the plane is airborne non-military passengers can see the wounded soldiers and talk to the doctor escorting them.

On my flight this week there were six; two had had legs blown off by mines, and the other four, caught in ambushes, had bullet wounds in the upper body. Sometimes, I was told, the PIA planes are a quarterfull of badly wounded men. Clearly it is too late to talk about the danger of war over Bangla Desh. The Bengal war is now in full swing, with no end in sight. All that remains to be settled is who is silly enough to get involved in it.

The parallels with Vietnam are the more striking the closer you look. The incoming PIA planes, for instance, now mostly bring soldiers, in uniform or plain clothes; but they also bring civilians, or people trying to pass for civilians, and the PIA stewards solemnly collect pistols and revolvers from them and return them at Dacca airport. The weapons themselves are a study in the grim comedy of 'special warfare': pearl-handled revolvers, nickelled automatics, and snub-nosed Bankers' Specials as used by James Bond, Mafia hit men and CIA "contractors" in Vietnam.

The 'civilians' joking with the soldiers guarding the airport as they wait for their sidearms to be returned are out of the same seamier Vietnam mould; heavily built bruiser types with gold rings, big moustaches and the thick-soled squeaking 'chappli' sandals worn on the North-West Frontier.

They collect their weapons, check that they are loaded, and slip them into holsters which bulge under their loose-hanging tropical shirts. Outside the air terminal they are picked up by men in similarly unconvincing civilian turnouts, submachine guns slung over their shoulders, and driven away in looted cars whose numberplates are covered with black paint.

There is a good reason why this sounds like a bad parody of Vietnam. These men belong to the Pakistan Special Forces, established by men who trained with the U.S. Special Forces at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, in the days when Pakistan was America's "free-world" ally against Communism and Gary Powers was flying over the Soviet Union from Peshawar.

The Pakistan Special Forces are a 'rechauffee' of the American original, John Wayne in curry sauce, with 50 ten-man teams trained in sabotage, demolition, interrogation, assassination and other useful kinds of dirty work. Parachuted into the Indian-held part of Kashmir or slipping over the border, they triggered off the Indo-Pakistan war of 1965, but totally failed to arouse the hoped-for Kashmir insurrection.

Proudly wearing their jaunty green berets, they would, until a few

months ago, show visitors to their camp at Cherat near Peshawar how they could climb ropes and correspond in secret inks. Now Cherat is empty; they are all in East Bengal.

The fact that the U.S. Special Forces, having been a costly flop in Vietnam, and having been closely associated with many of the nastiest and most counter-productive episodes of torture and assassination in all that ghastly war, were finally all withdrawn last year, has apparently not got through to the military chiefs here. The Pakistan Special Forces' presence in East Bengal is a sure guarantee of more atrocities, and ever-mounting resistance.

For, despite General Yahya Khan's claim that the military situation in East Bengal is "under control," the Pakistan army is in fact making feverish preparations to meet the guerrilla challenge which is growing every day. Two more divisions are being hastily raised in West Pakistan and the staff officers' course at Quetta has been cut from two years to one to double the output of junior officers. But, in relation to the size of their problem, these reinforcements are chicken feed.

All the requirements of textbook guerrilla warfare are present in Bengal; a 1,500 mile border with India, almost all river, swamp, jungle or rice paddy; sanctuaries on the other side defended by the Indian Army eager for a fight; and a civil population friendly to the guerrillas and physically easy to distinguish from the army of occupation. No Glap, Grivas or Guevara ever had it so good.

The signs of the growing conflict are everywhere in East Pakistan: sandbagged strongpoints at police stations, military posts and government offices, even the ones which issue driving licences and rate demands. Soldiers standing by bridges, ferry crossings and railway junctions, or conducting meaningless "identity checks" at improvised roadblocks. (I showed one soldier my driving licence: he asked me to read it out to him.)

But this counter-insurgency network, already absorbing 80,000 men, is pitifully thin, even though Gen. Tikka Khan has had to strip the border with India of troops to sustain it (despite the proclaimed aim of defending East Pakistan against Indian invaders and infiltrators) and it is clear that East Bengal will soak up soldiers like blotting paper with no noticeable reduction in guerrilla activities.

The guerrillas have already scored successes which any Viet Cong commander would regard as a highly promising start to a protracted war. The East Pakistan tea industry has been brought to a halt: most of the Hindu tea pickers fled, the mainly British and West Pakistan tea estate managers have followed, and the remaining tea estates have ceased production after widespread guerrilla attacks destroyed the tea processing machinery. One stick of gelignite in the power plant brings a 5,000 acre tea garden to a halt. It is almost ridiculously easy.

Such stocks of tea as were held in the gardens up country no longer move down the rivers to market: three weeks ago the only yard repairing river tugboats in all East Pakistan, the Pak Bay company plant near Dacca, was put out of action by a guerrilla-set fire. The jute and oil seed crops, the other mainstays of the economy, seem destined to join tea in the process of economic strangulation.

Dozens of road and railway bridges have been blown, and hastily repaired, and will no doubt be blown again; and the boats, barges and slipways of the vital river communications system are even more vulnerable to guerrilla attack.

Not is there necessarily a widespread and complex organisation behind these attacks which General Tikka Khan and his Special Forces

might be able to winkle out and disrupt: there are only a few hundred young Maoists in East Pakistan, but they now have tempting opportunities to kill landlords and money lenders and sabotage mills and factories in a situation which is becoming every day more radicalised. The resort to violence on one side has inevitably brought out the men of violence on the other.

The absolute minimum hard core of guerrillas the Pakistan Army has to deal with is the 2,000 surviving mutineers from the East Bengal Regiment and East Pakistan Rifles now in India, trained and embittered soldiers. Even supposing no one joins them, a very modest 100 to 1 ratio will need at least 200,000 West Pakistan troops, with 1,000,000 a more realistic level. (Colonel Grivas in Cyprus, bad guerrilla country, never had more than 400 men able and ready to use a gun. He won.) In counterinsurgency, the Pakistan Army has it all to learn; like most beginners, they have started with the least effective of all methods, crude terrorism.

But the field where Pakistan even more desperately needs foreign advisers is that of propaganda. Somewhere, Goebbels, Senator Joe McCarthy and even Horatio Bottomley must be shaking their heads sadly; at least, their stuff had a certain internal consistency, and those who badly wanted to believe could do so without feeling that they were going out of their minds. The Pakistan propaganda effort is, in contrast, clearly the work of untalented amateurs.

The operation is in the hands of Amanullah Sardar, a civil servant who was dragged away from his job as Chief Film Censor of Pakistan ("I used to make sure there was no kissing or Indian propaganda") to take charge of the image-improving operation in Dacca. His boss is Lieut-General Farman Ali, head of civil affairs in East Pakistan.

Both give frequent Press conferences and are available for background briefing sessions, which are like playing chess with an opponent who loses his queen on the second move, snatches it back and indignantly continues the game. I take both of them to be fundamentally decent men, like many Americans I have met in Vietnam, caught up in a lunatic policy under the impression that they are doing their patriotic duty.

Sardar, the PR chief, has if anything the stickier wicket to play, as he has to meet the foreign Press face to face, on the basis that the Pakistan Government has nothing to hide, without a general's stars or, it seems, any influence with the military whatever. (He assured me, for instance, that I was free to photograph anything I liked. As I left Dacca an eager Customs man seized 31 unexposed films from my luggage. "Strict orders not to let journalists take any films out of the country," he explained. "Doesn't say here anything about exposed or unexposed.")

The wretched Sardar faces the daunting task of convincing foreign reporters that the military regime has not, in fact, crushed a political party, the Awami League, which has just won an overwhelming vote in a free election, conducted by the regime itself. Even without documentary evidence, this would be hard sledding: but Sardar happens to be one of the authors of "Elections in the World's Third Largest Democracy," a persuasive booklet put out by his own department in Karachi last February.

"The elections had several unique features, quite apart from the obvious one where a military regime was surrendering power to a civilian government," wrote the enthusiastic Sardar and his colleagues less than six months ago. "This itself is a dramatic reversal of the familiar pattern where the army usually takes over civilian regimes, snuffing out democratic liberties. President Yahya Khan kept faith with the people

and fulfilled his promise to turn over the reins of office to a civilian democratic government voted into office in a free and fair election...."

As I read this eloquent passage aloud, Sardar ran an anxious finger round the inside of his collar and smiled a strained smile, an unspoken appeal of "how-would-you-like-my-job?"--rather like the demeanour of a cancer researcher employed by a cigarette company. "But you must remember that the Awami League used Fascist terror tactics so that loyal people opposed to them were afraid to come to the polls and vote..." he explained.

"But it says on page 2 of 'Elections in the World's Third Largest Democracy,' 'the turnout was large by any standard; around 60% of the registered voters....'"

"The people were misled," said Sardar earnestly. "They believed they were voting for reforms, not secession and treason."

"But you write here, 'the election results underlined the political maturity, sound common sense and the practicality of the average voter....Parties preaching regionalism, tribalism, racialism and religious bigotry have been given short shrift.'"

"It was all part of the Indian plot," said Sardar, barely getting the ball back over the net by a superhuman effort. "Even I was deceived. It shows the lengths these Hindus will go to...." "But you say you are not conducting a campaign of persecution against Hindus...."

"There is nothing wrong with the Hindus as long as they behave themselves. But when they try to destroy our dear homeland on the orders of their masters in India...."

Even this sad stuff, persecution denied in the language of program, is comparatively rational when compared with the explanations which the government is offering its own people through the tightly controlled Pakistan Press. Everyone is plotting against Pakistan; the Indians are plotting with the British, the BBC is plotting with Zionists, the Russians are plotting with Israel(!), only China is standing loyally alongside Pakistan to defend Islam (!!!).

The Pakistan Army is in fact, the courageous underdog, wrote Z.A. Suleri in the government - controlled Pakistan Times last Sunday, tracing the basic source of the BBC-Zionist plot to "the historic conflict between Christendom and the world of Islam."

Suleri explains: "On the eve of the D-Day for UDI, nearly two Lakh (200,000) armed personnel of the East Pakistan Rifles, the East Bengal Regiment and police stood at the beck and call of the Awami League and over and above the Indian infiltrators were poised for the kill...Against the formidable array of these forces were only the few thousand men of 12 battalions.... To the small band of defenders of national integrity applies the Churchillian description: 'Never was so much owed by so many to so few.'"

The Prospects of any negotiated settlement seem, I am afraid, to be zero. East Bengal is in south-east Asia, in its outlook; West Pakistan is in the Middle East. All they ever had in common was the shared consciousness of being part of the Muslim minority in India; exactly enough time has passed for a generation to emerge who cannot remember ever being Indians, with entirely predictable results. Islam, as a unifying force for Pakistan, is simply not a runner, any more than it is among the Arab countries of the Middle East.

So both sides have reverted to local nationalisms. In East Bengal, which has been ruled in turn by Hindus, Moguls, British and West Pakistanis, it is the ancient and irresistible cry of "out with the foreign oppressor." Hatred of India has no part of this feeling: the Army-

inspired "crush India" campaign in recent months has had no success in East Bengal. The foreign oppressor in East Pakistan is...West Pakistan.

But the conflict with India is the heart of West Pakistan nationalism, concentrated in the dream of expelling the Indians from Kashmir by force.

The Pakistanis were, in my view, in the right over Kashmir, as the ground rules stood in 1948; and it has been the Kashmir issue, built upon the recollection that Muslims once ruled all Hindustan, which generated the enormous West Pakistan army and bureaucratic establishment, which in turn need the taxes and foreign exchange from East Bengal to pay for it. In a last irrational turn of the screw, the tribute from East Bengal is needed to maintain the army of occupation - to keep East Bengal in Pakistan so that the confrontation with India can be sustained.

Every West Pakistani I talked to in East Bengal seemed mentally stalled in the hopeless closed circle of these emotions and arguments drawn from the trauma of partition, yet convinced that this was patriotic thinking.

The outlook of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the Awami League towards India was quite different. If tension with India was lowered, said the Sheikh, Pakistan would not need such a big army; trade with India could be resumed, and the resulting resources could be used to develop the economy.

I don't think the Sheikh cared very much whether East Bengal was in Pakistan or not (he certainly did not when I last talked to him, 18 months ago) but he cared very much that the future policies of Pakistan, or of an autonomous East Bengal, should be much more in the interests of Bengalis.

Big army, small army; crush India, improve relations with India; military power or economic growth: I don't see how any compromise is possible on any of these fundamental issues.

The final absurdity is that the Bengal war, which is now being fought to maintain Pakistan's strength in the conflict with India, weakens it to vanishing point. There is every sign of a long and bloody war of attrition. The most probably ultimate result, for West Pakistan, is a Pakistan of 40 million people, confronting an India of 600 million, which would mean an end for all time to the dream of serious rivalry for Kashmir. It is this spectacle of people rushing into the war for an aim which can never be achieved, even more than the aircraft full of wounded soldiers, which gave me the most haunting echoes of the murderous misunderstanding of Vietnam.



निका आर्काइव्ज
७७२५



This book presents a Radical critique of the progressive disintegration of Pakistan's political culture, caused as much by the rise of a military-bureaucratic ruling elite as by regional disparities, and caused above all by the U.S. intervention in Pakistan's internal policy...

The U.S. has invested close to \$5 billion in nurturing the military-industrialist elite in Pakistan. In return, Pakistan has accepted membership in U.S.-sponsored alliances in both Southeast Asia and the Middle East. Today this whole system of neo-colonial relationships is falling apart. In Southeast Asia, a new Viet Nam is taking shape. And a movement that started merely as a drive for regional autonomy is being quickly radicalised.

Ours is not a dogmatic or even a plainly theoretical book. It brings together a number of brief pieces, all written by reputable scholars, that work as quick stabs of recognition of the empirical facts in the political as well as the economic domain.

These articles are then followed by statements by the Prime Minister of the Provisional Government of Bangla Desh and by the President of West Pakistan. The last one third of the book consists of reports published in some of the most prestigious magazines and newspapers of the world.

In tears and blood, a new nation is being born. Will it lead to a genuine emancipation of the suffering masses of East Bengal? Or, will the new state become merely one more client of Western imperialism? We hope our little book will go at least a little way in providing some of the information and perspectives necessary to understand and answer these questions.