

The Ravaged People of East Pakistan

By ALVIN TOFFLER

A planetary catastrophe is taking place in Asia, a human disaster so massive that it could bathe the future in blood, not just for Asians, but for those of us in the West as well. Yet the response of the global community has been minimal at best. In the United States, the official response has been worse than minimal and morally numb.

I have just returned from Calcutta and the border of East Pakistan, where I conducted interviews with refugees avalanching into India as a result of the West Pakistani's genocidal attack on them. Since March 25, West Pakistani troops have bombed, burned, looted and murdered the citizens of East Pakistan in what can only be a calculated campaign to decimate them or to drive them out of their villages and over the border into India.

Part of the time I traveled with a Canadian parliamentary delegation. We saw babies skin stretched tight, bones protruding, weeping women who told us they would rather die today in India than return to East Pakistan after the tragedies they had witnessed, total wretchedness of refugee camps, and the unbelievable magnitude of this forced human migration—6.7 million refugees pouring into India within a matter of four months.

I saw Indian villages deluged by masses of destitute refugees, every available inch crammed with bodies seeking shelter from the blistering sun and the torrential rain. I saw refugees still streaming along the roads unable to find even a resting place. I saw miserable Indian villagers sharing their meager food with the latest frightened and hungry arrivals. I saw thousands

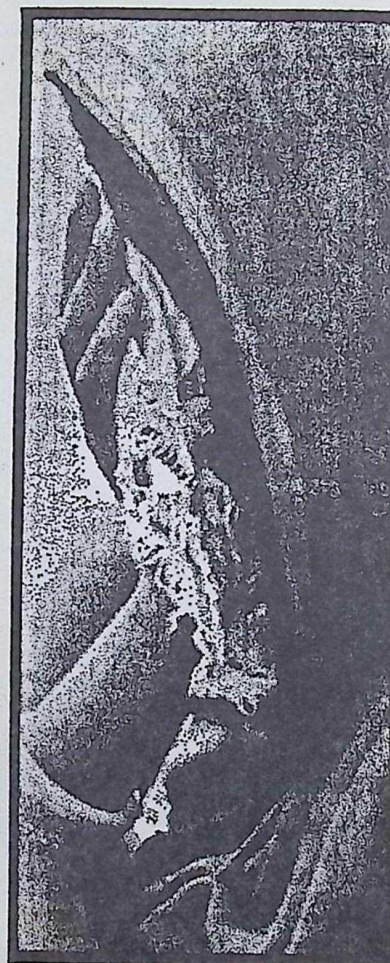
of men, women and babies lined up, waiting patiently under the sun for hours to get their rations. These pitiful few ounces of rice, wheat and dahl provide a level of nutrition so low that it will inevitably create protein breakdown, liver illness, and a variety of other diseases in addition to the cholera, pneumonia, bronchitis that are already rampant. I saw Indian relief officials struggling heroically, and with immense personal sympathy, to cope with the human tidal wave—and to do so on a budget of one rupee a day—about 13 cents per human.

It is now clear that famine will further devastate East Pakistan this fall, and that millions more will seek refuge in an India already staggering under the burden.

Under these circumstances, one is forced to protest the callousness and stupidity of American policy. On the one hand we promise India \$70 million in relief funds. On the other, we continue to supply arms to the same West Pakistani generals who launched the bloodbath, so that they can terrorize even more of their subjects into fleeing across the Indian border. The House vote this week to suspend aid, including military sales, to Pakistan is belated recognition of our sorry role.

In terms of *realpolitik*, the continuation of military aid to West Pakistan is supposed to buy us influence with the ruling junta, and help offset Red Chinese influence. (Ironically, the Red Chinese are also aiding the West Pakistani generals.)

Yet the heaviest stream of refugees is pouring into West Bengal, which is not only India's poorest and most overcrowded state, but the most politically unstable. Between Calcutta and Bon-



goan on the border, some 50 miles distant, I saw scarcely a house that didn't have a hammer and sickle painted on it. Maoists, anarchists, and conventional Marxists attack each other and the less radical parties with violence

as well as rhetoric. Strikes, demonstrations, and political assassinations are already a daily occurrence. West Bengal, even before the invasion of refugees, seemed about to explode.

By shipping arms to the West Pakistanis, we are partially responsible for pouring millions of hungry, sick and angry refugees directly into this tinderbox. This vastly increases the likelihood of a bloody upheaval on the Indian side of the border as well, in which the power of Maoist movements could only grow. Thus, even if one unquestioningly assumes the necessity to halt the spread of Chinese Communist influence, our policy seems idiotic. We hang on to the shreds of influence in West Pakistan at the cost of losing it in India. Worse, we pave the way for a bigger, bloodier and even more bitter Vietnam in Asia.

But there is a simpler, less political reason why our aid policy must be changed. On grounds of simple humanity, the failure of our Government to express official concern for the ravaged people of East Pakistan, its alliance with the undemocratic generals of Islamabad, and its cruel insistence on sending still more arms to the killers is morally repulsive.

The emergency in East Pakistan demands a more than minimal response. We need to pump immediate life-saving baby food, powdered milk, antibiotics, anticholera vaccines and similar supplies into India. But beyond that, decency and political realism both demand an immediate end to the arms shipments.

Alvin Toffler, writer and editor, is author of "Future Shock."

West Pakistan keeps grip on East

by Martin Woollacott in Karachi

While completing its proposals for a return to civilian rule in East and West Pakistan, the Pakistan military Government is taking steps to keep effective power in East Pakistan almost entirely in non-Bengali hands.

A recent martial law decree enables the central Government and the Governments of the Western provinces to draft any State employee for service in East Pakistan. Three thousand police of all ranks have already gone, few of them volunteers, in spite of salary and promotion inducements offered by the Government.

Civil servants of all kinds, particularly revenue and income tax officials and divisional and deputy commissioners, continue to go over to East Pakistan in considerable numbers. This forced drafting of West Pakistani civil servants and police, together with the hiring of Biharis in East Bengal, will soon refill the depleted ranks of the East Pakistan Administration, but it will, of course, be a wholly non-Bengali Administration.

In addition, Pakistan has apparently no intention of reducing the size of West Pakistan military and paramilitary forces in East Bengal. Estimates of their numbers range up to 100,000 for paramilitary forces such as the Tochi Scouts from the North-west frontier, and the Indus Rangers, and up to 80,000 in regular troops.

Two fresh regular divisions have already been raised in West Pakistan, bringing the size of the army up to 16 divisions, evidence not only of Pakistan's continued fear of India but of the Government's feeling that the stationing of a large military force in East Bengal will be a permanent commitment.

The flight of virtually the entire Bengali administrative and educated class to India means that, in a sense, the Pakistan Government has no option but to provide for the running of the province by non-Bengali soldiers, police, and civil servants. No option, that is, unless it is prepared to negotiate with the Awami League leadership, and this it is emphatically unwilling to do.

President Yahya Khan is due to announce his plans soon for the "transfer of power" and the return to civilian rule. Observers believe that this will take the form of the introduction of an interim Constitution enabling civil Cabinets to be set up at both provincial and central levels.

This could be fairly easily arranged in West Pakistan, with the People's Party taking the

Cabinet posts in the Punjab and Sind, the National Awami Party in Baluchistan, and either the National Awami Party or the Pakistan Muslim League in Frontier Province.

But in East Pakistan and for Bengali appointments to the central Cabinet, the Government would have to juggle with a handful of available Bengali politicians consisting of a few respected non-Awami Leaguers and the small group of Leaguers who have declared for the Government. In East Bengal itself, this small group, headed by a former Health Minister, Mr Zaheeruddin, who represents Bihari districts in Dacca and is half Bihari himself, could be used to make up a "Cabinet."

At the centre, Mr Bhutto and other Western politicians could be brought in, with, from Bengal, Nurul Amin, president of the Pakistan Democratic Party, and Fazul Quadir Chowdhury, and Abdus Sabur Khan, both ex-Ministers, among the principle possibilities.

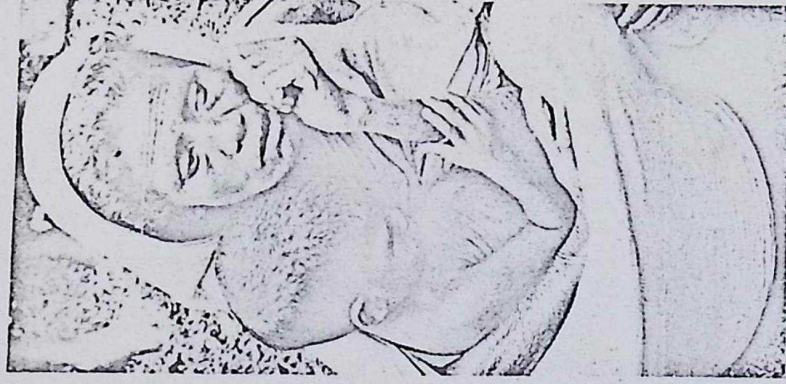
The Central Cabinet could be either presidential or parliamentary. In the latter case, observers believe the Premiership would probably be offered to Nurul Amin, which would enable the military Government to say that Pakistan's Prime Minister was a Bengali.

In the event of his refusal, the leadership could be offered to Mr Bhutto, who is at present stumping the country demanding a return to civilian rule. How to legitimise such appointments remains the principal problem. Of four likely choices for central office from Bengal, only Nurul Amin won a seat in last year's general election. The others either lost or did not stand.

Some of the small group of pro-Government Awami Leaguers, including some who did not stand, would probably also be chosen. To provide a genuine parliamentary base for such people would involve the holding of some 160 byelections in East Pakistan. As one West Pakistani said to me, "How? When? Who would supervise them? Who would stand? And who would vote?"

Byelections of a sort could be held in time, but with the Awami League banned, except for the new "denazified" party which is being formed by the Begum Akhtar Sulaiman (daughter of the league's founders), the results would hardly be representative.

The most likely outcome, whatever promises about the future may be made, is that a civilian



The face of despair—a mother who fled from East Pakistan.

Cabinet without a real parliamentary base will be simply stuck on the top of the structure of non-Bengali military and bureaucratic rule in East Pakistan which has already been brought into being and which continues to be strengthened. The most important question, of course, is not whether such arrangements, or something like them, will satisfy the aspirations of the Bengali people — they can hardly do that — but whether they will satisfy the principal aid-giving nations.

The Government is believed to be confident that something along these lines will be acceptable as the "framework" into which aid can be injected" of which Sir Alec Douglas-Home spoke recently. Whether that confidence is soundly based is not known.

The Government has presumably given considerable weight to the advice of M M Ahmed, the President's chief economic adviser, who recently returned from Washington with details of what sort of package would be acceptable to the United States. Her \$4,000 millions of aid in the past 14 years make her far and away the most important donor nation.

The Pakistan Government consists of men with a very special and narrow view of life, with very little grasp, for instance, of the romantic importance of linguistic nationalism to Western

minds. Puzzled articles appear daily in the Pakistani press, musing over Indian "success" in putting over its version of the East Pakistan crisis to the Big Powers.

The Government has given itself a certain amount of economic elbow room with its recent demonetisation of high-value rupee notes. The ostensible purpose of this manoeuvre was to cancel the value of notes looted from East Pakistan banks by the Awami League and carried off to India, but it will also cancel the value of tax evaders' and black marketeers' hoards.

Some observers believe the Government stands to gain as much as \$200 millions from demonetisation. Such gains cannot be enough, however. Quite apart from normal aid, Pakistan's planners were depending, for instance, on a projected \$80 million commodity import loan from Washington. The President recently told Pakistani journalists that the state of the economy was so bad he could not even describe how bad it was.

The question for the West (and the Soviet Union) remains whether they will allow themselves to be satisfied with what can only be described as a token civilisation of the administration in East Pakistan while the apparatus of an occupation regime remains very much in being.

Rumours that a serious clash with India on the Bengal border is in the offing are growing here on the basis of various hints in that direction in the Government-controlled press. The diplomatic correspondent of the newspaper "Dawn" has suggested that "even in foreign diplomatic circles no-one appears to be willing any more to bet against the possibility of India's getting involved against this country in a direct conflict."

He claimed that the sympathetic attitude towards India of the major Powers might well lead India to "direct armed support," presumably of the Bangla Desh guerrillas.

Whether these hints are part of the running propaganda war between the two countries, in which Pakistan has continually maintained that India has been and remains the main instigator of trouble in East Pakistan, or whether they are based on reports from Pakistan military intelligence, is not known. Observers who believe the latter to be the source say that what is being talked about is probably a planned stepping up of guerrilla activity across the border into East Bengal as the rains make conventional military activity difficult.