

The Destruction of Democracy in Pakistan and Emergence of a ‘Client State’ (1953-54)

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Abstract

This paper evaluates the destruction of democracy and consolidation of an authoritarian state in the context of Cold War. Pakistan’s emergence as a ‘Client State’ of the United States in the early period of Cold War and consolidation of authoritarian structures are interrelated developments, which are examined in this paper. In the period between April 1953 and October 1954, Pakistan leaving her policy of non-alignment took the shape of a ‘client state’ of the U.S. This process began with the unconstitutional dismissal of the Prime Minister Nazimuddin in April 1953 and concluded in dissolution of the first Constituent Assembly of Pakistan in October 1954, finally leading towards the first ‘Martial Law’ government in 1958 and setting a trend for intervention of army in political domain at the cost of collapse of democracy. In this course, the defense establishment emerged as the most powerful institution of the state overshadowing the democratic institutions. The interplay of domestic and international actors in demolishing democratic institutions is the most intriguing chapter of Pakistan’s history which resulted in loss of half of the country and is being repeated at regular intervals posing a permanent threat to the identity of the state.

Introduction

Fifty years on following its creation, Pakistan has been labeled ‘unstable state’.¹ The history of the first half-century reveals a chain of traumatic and tragic events and the beginning of the second half is not very promising. A general in uniform is the President of Pakistan which clearly denotes the fragility of democratic institutions. In Pakistan, the army has penetrated so deeply into the civilian economy that the civilian sector is loosing ground and it is improbable that the army will ‘withdraw from power because of its institutional involvement in the

¹ Hassan Gardezi, and Jamil.Rashid, Eds. *Pakistan: The Unstable State* (Lahore: Vanguard Books, 1983).

economy and Pakistani society'.² With military in control of state's resources in alliance of bureaucracy and landed class, and steering political and economic processes according to their needs, there is little chance for democracy to grow. The culture of authoritarianism cultivated in the period between April 1953 and October 1954 is so deeply rooted that 'a full-blown democracy, in which the armed forces come under firm civilian control, will be impossible until Pakistan's strategic environment alters in such a way that the army retreats from its role as guardian of the state'.³

Pakistan was created on 14 August 1947 as a nation-state in the aftermath of World War II,⁴ an ideal yet to be realized. Its strategic location played the most dominant part in its creation. Pakistan was seen as a buffer state between the Soviet Union and India, and a barrier for the Soviets to have access to the warm waters of the Indian Ocean. The March Truman Doctrine establishing American containment policy, 'centered on checking the spread of Soviet influence ...had suddenly become a factor in the equation of Indian independence'.⁵ Its colonial role to watch and ward the northern frontiers of the British colonial empire was ensured to be continued in the Cold War era, which started at the end of World War II. The imperial defense policy was going to become American policy of containment in the Cold War era. Because of Pakistan's proximity to the Soviet Union and China the emerging Communist Block, and the Middle East and Iran, the center of oil resources or 'wells of power', she was persuaded to become an ally of the United States. Pakistan was secured as a 'bulwark' having the shield of Islamic ideology against the communist threat and locked into a

² Stephen P. Cohen, 2005. *The Idea of Pakistan* (Lahore: Vanguard Books, 2005), pp. 274-75.

³ *Ibid.*, p.278.

⁴ Pakistan was created as a federation of two wings including East Bengal (a single province) with 41.9 million population and West Pakistan having four provinces and a number of states with total population of 33.7 million. In 1954, East Bengal was renamed as East Pakistan. In 1971 a civil war broke in East Pakistan as a result of Pakistan's army operation that led to a war between India and Pakistan and concluded in declaration of independence and creation of Bangladesh.

⁵ Lawrence Ziring, *Pakistan in the Twentieth Century: A Political History* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1999) p. 52.

‘client-patron’ relationship with the United States while a non-aligned India was seen to do little damage to ‘substantive American interests’.⁶

The domestic argument for spending on defense establishment beyond resources was the ‘security’ against India in the context of Kashmir conflict, the cause of fighting between two countries that began ‘almost immediately after India and Pakistan gained their independence, and it has proceeded intermittently ever since’. ‘India and Pakistan have adopted opposing strategies for dealing with their security problems...In its first 15 years of independence, India under Nehru tried to put together a nonaligned movement that would stand above and outside the Cold War. Pakistan attached itself to the United States through Cold War alliances-the Baghdad Pact, SEATO, CENTO- that were building along the Soviet Union’s southern rim. Regionally that meant India versus Pakistan and the United States’.⁷

Emphasis on Islamic Ideology with the fear of ‘Indian hegemony’ helped building a defense establishment out of line with the available resources and proposing a strong center with such slogans, one religion, one center, one economy ignoring the divergence in social, cultural and economic needs of the different provinces of Pakistan. Difference of opinion on major policy making issues expressed by provinces was called ‘provincialism’, and considered a dangerous trend for the unity and security of the state and was dealt with an iron hand, a tendency still in practice. This thinking was adopted to protect the negotiating role of the Punjab in any constitutional framework and its ability to influence the policy making be it political or economic on domestic or foreign front. In this process, Punjab became the upholder of the strategic interests of Neo-Colonialism in a similar manner that was hallmark of its colonial legacy. ‘The fact that Pakistan Army has remained a predominantly Punjabi force has intensified the feelings of the smaller provinces [after the loss of East Pakistan] that they are colonized by a Punjabi province which both befits from this policy and has a stake in its continuation’.⁸

This paper investigates the circumstances, which led to the destruction of democratic institutions in Pakistan beginning with the

⁶ Stephen P. Cohen, in Harrison, Selig S. et al, (ed.) *India and Pakistan: The First Fifty Years* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1999), p. 191..

⁷ Thomas W. Simons JR., ‘India and Pakistan: Mutually Assured Destruction, South Asian Style’, *Hoover Digest*, (2000) 4. Retrieved 10 May 2004. < <http://www.hooverdigest.org/> >

⁸ Stephen P. Cohen, 2005. *The Idea of Pakistan*, *op.cit.*, p. 371

unconstitutional dismissal of the Prime Minister Nazimuddin in 1953 and concluded in dissolution of the first Constituent Assembly of Pakistan in October 1954, finally leading towards the first ‘Martial Law’. The first major blow to democracy came when Governor General Ghulam Muhammad assisted by army and with the approval of U.S. dismissed Prime Minister Nazimuddin and appointed Muhammad Ali Bogra as the new Prime Minister for its pro-American stance. This unconstitutional act of the Governor General was to be followed by the dismissal of the first Constituent Assembly in October 1954. ‘There have indeed been times-such as the October Night in 1954-when with a General to the right and a General to the left of him, a half-mad Governor General imposed upon a captured Prime Minister the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly and the virtual setting up of semi-dictatorial Executive’.⁹ These unconstitutional acts of a ‘half mad’ Governor-General got legitimization by the judiciary under his control, and initiated a ‘chair game’ of appointing and removing prime ministers. In a short period of four years following the dismissal of the first Constituent Assembly in 1954 and imposing of first Martial Law in 1958, there were five prime ministers appointed and removed. Instability of democratic institutions ultimately cleared the path for the direct military rule, which has characterized much of Pakistan’s history.

The Destruction of Democracy and Emergence of a Client State (1953-1954)

Dismissal of Nazimuddin was the beginning of a power struggle in which democratic institutions of the state became hostage to non democratic forces and the state took a shape of an authoritarian character that was consolidated by the external pressures created in the Cold War era. By dismissing the Prime Minister Nazimuddin, ‘the Governor-General had taken an action that was clearly political and beyond the normal scope of a constitutional head of state’.¹⁰ The Governor-General stepping out of his constitutional limits paved the way for authoritarian government in Pakistan concentrating the power in the hands of bureaucratic-army elite committed to bolster defense establishment in alliance with the American Power System. The Governor-General’s unconstitutional action ‘destroyed or gravely weakened’ three major conventions of cabinet government. ‘First, the tradition of impartiality of the Governor-General had been demolished. Second, the convention of cabinet and party solidarity had been disregarded. Third, the role of the

⁹ *Dawn*, 11 August 1957.

¹⁰ *Dawn*, 11 August 1957.

Legislature as the maker of and sustainer of governments had been impugned'.¹¹ By destroying these three major conventions of the cabinet government, the Governor-General strengthened the non-democratic institutions like army to interfere in the political domain and dominate the policy making in Pakistan.

Apparently, there was no indication of any political difficulty prior to Ghulam Muhammad's actions against Nazimuddin. Only a week before the dismissal, the Governor General had defended the policies of the government in a speech given to the Karachi Rotary Club. The important question to answer is why then Nazimuddin was dismissed. The answer does not lie in domestic politics rather it involves global politics and needs to be examined beyond the internal dynamics of political process. Religious fanaticism was used to remove a Prime Minister whose power was being expanded through legislative measures and who was able to provide a draft constitution after a lengthy and extensive exercise of five years. 'In April Nazimuddin was in command of the Muslim League both nationally and in Parliament'.¹² 'What better explains Ghulam Muhammad's action was the fact that the new budget proposed by Nazimuddin called for a cut in defense expenditure by one third. This was an unprecedented move, and was bound to alarm Ayub¹³ and the army'.¹⁴ A strong democratic government with a power seat in East Bengal could pose a threat to American interests in this region at the time when 'The Americans had only then inaugurated a new President Dwight Eisenhower, and a New Vice-President Nixon, both of whom were interested in pursuing a United-States-Pakistan mutual Security agreement'.¹⁵

With Eisenhower in office, the U.S. Defense Policy took a more offensive 'New Look'. His Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, 'a patrician, visceral anticommunist closely tied to the nation's financial

¹¹ Allen McGrath, 1996. *The Destruction of Pakistan's Democracy* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 97.

¹² Keith Callard, *Pakistan –A Political Study* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1957), p. 135.

¹³ General Muhammad Ayub Khan was the first Pakistani C-I-C in the post-colonial scenario, he was elevated to this position in 1951 and remained in this position till 1964 when he made himself elected as President of Pakistan in an indirect election by an electorate of 80,000 "Basic Democracies". He was overthrown by another military coup in 1969 after a country wide protest against his economic policies.

¹⁴ Keith Callard, *Pakistan –A Political Study*, *op.cit.*, p. 137.

¹⁵ Lawrence Ziring, *Pakistan in the Twentieth Century: A Political History*, *op. cit.*, pp. 150-51.

establishment, was obsessed with communism's challenge to the U.S. corporate power in the Third World.¹⁶ Dulles criticized the foreign policy of Truman and argued that the policy of 'containment' should be replaced by a policy of 'liberation'. Dulles considered neutrality as an obsolete and an immoral and shortsighted conception. Alliances such as NATO, SEATO and Baghdad Pact (later re-named as CENTO) were the part of his 'liberation strategy' in addition to 'McCarthyism'. Pakistan's civil and military elite under Ghulam Muhammad was more than willing to join hands with Dulles in his war against Communism. Dulles conceived the concept of Northern Tier of states running along Soviet Asia including Turkey, Pakistan, Iraq and Iran.

To secure Pakistan's assistance, some domestic changes were required. Those changes included removal of Prime Minister Nazimuddin in April 1953 under the pretext of religious riots in Punjab and selection of Muhammad Ali Bogra as the new Prime Minister, who was described a 'pathologically pro-American' non-political entity chosen for 'his popularity in Washington'.¹⁷ Later, Army Chief, Ayub Khan's inclusion in the cabinet as Defense Minister ensured Pakistan's smooth entry into Dulles's strategic plans. Bogra was installed as a civilian President of a country where the military was made to take 'indirect control' of the government affairs. The general public opinion was not in favor of any military alliance with the U.S., and it was felt necessary to make any military pact under the auspices of a 'civilian government'.¹⁸ Bogra's presence was an assurance for such an alliance. It was not the appropriate time for assuming the 'direct control', for that Pakistan army had to wait. Particularly, at a time when Pakistan's C-in-C was eager to join the Middle East Defense Organization (MEDO) against the careful approach of Nazimuddin's Government. Nazimuddin was considered 'non-committal' on Middle Eastern defense.¹⁹ Ziring observes that it was not public knowledge at that time 'that Bogra had

¹⁶ 'Cold War (1953-1962)'- [Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/cold_war), Retrieved 26 June 2004. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/cold_war>

¹⁷ Allen McGrath, 1996. *The Destruction of Pakistan's Democracy*, op. cit., p. 108.

¹⁸ Emerson to the Secretary of State, Telegram No. 55, 15 July 1953, NDD. 842430, RG 84, Box 36, File 360-Govt. General, National Archives, Washington {Henceforth NA}.

¹⁹ Karachi to CRO, 23rd October 1951, FL 1027/17/G, FO 371/ 92876, The National Archives, Public Record Office, London {henceforth TNA: PRO}.

worked with General Ayub Khan and Defense Secretary Iskanadar Mirza in approaching the United States government for military assistance'.²⁰

Pakistan's participation in a defense pact regarding Middle Eastern defense had become a bone of contention between American and British policy makers. Britain was reluctant to involve Pakistan on the grounds that it might invite a strong reaction from India. On the other hand, the U.S. was keen to persuade Pakistan into accepting some form of the military alliance since 1951. In November 1951, the State Department formally requested the British Government to re-evaluate their attitude regarding India and demanded an 'immediate approach to Pakistan to ask them to join the Middle East Command and to provide forces for the defense of the Middle East in the event of War'.²¹ Under American pressure and due to political upheaval in Iran and Egypt, Britain was forced to review its position about Pakistan's participation in MEDO. In August 1952, the Foreign Office invited Pakistan to participate in MEDO, recognizing her unique position in the Commonwealth as one of the world's leading Muslim states, which had strategic interests in the proposed plan.²² Pakistan's membership to the organization was considered useful for her strategic position with her bases and airfields. To persuade Pakistan to participate in the organization, she was assured increased security on her western border and an opportunity to play a leading role in the region with British and American support.

In 1952, a barter agreement between Russia and Pakistan was very disturbing for the U.S. Embassy in Karachi that viewed this agreement as reorientation of Pakistan's foreign policy.²³ Concerned with this development, American Embassy in Karachi reviewed the possible reaction of Pakistan's participation in MEDO. Officials in foreign and defense ministries were seen in favor of such participation, but the Cabinet's reaction was found uncertain.²⁴ In an early analysis, Nazimuddin was described as 'unimaginative man' doing a job that was 'too big for him' and under his leadership Pakistan had 'no prospect to

²⁰ Lawrence Ziring, *Pakistan in the Twentieth Century: A Political History*, *op.cit.*, p. 150.

²¹ Karachi to CRO, FL 1027/17/G, FO 371/ 92876, TNA: PRO.

²² Foreign Office London [henceforth FO], Memo, 16th August 1952, FY 1023/14, FO 371/ 101198, TNA: PRO.

²³ American Embassy to the Department of State, 13 November 1952, NDD.842430, RG 84, Box 42, File 350-Pak. Pol., NA.

²⁴ Ibid.

be drawn into closer formal relationships with the Western powers'.²⁵ Pakistan's request for a one million ton wheat grant could not be considered unless a more reliable pro-West government was guaranteed. Generals and bureaucrats were anxious to guarantee such a government. General Ayub Khan, the Commander-in-Chief of Pakistan's army who was being groomed as insurance to protect American and British strategic interests in this region, in a meeting with the US Counsel General in Lahore, assured that 'the Pakistan Army ...[would] not allow the political leaders or the people of Pakistan to get out of hand'. He informed the Counsel General that he had told 'leading politicians to make up their minds to go whole-heartedly with the West'.²⁶ In February 1953, Ayub Khan again met the U.S. Counsel General in Lahore and complained that the Cabinet's priority was import of wheat from America instead of requesting for military aid. Ayub was quick to remind Gibson that the U.S. had not approached Pakistan for MEDO's membership while the Pakistan army was ready to play its role in Middle Eastern Defense against Communism. He reported that 'the Communists in Pakistan were conducting a propaganda war against MEDO and warned the longer the wait was the more time the Communists would have for campaigning'.²⁷ Ayub confirmed that Pakistan was a friend of the U.S. and reminded the U.S. Consul General that the U.S. had a strategic interest in Pakistan.²⁸

'It ...[was] believed that Pakistan's active cooperation in defense of the Middle East might be obtained...The strengthening of Pakistan on the Eastern flank of Iran, in conjunction with Turkish strength on the Northwest, might add to Iranian self-confidence and would exercise a stabilizing influence in the area'.²⁹ Pakistan's army and bureaucracy were quite enthusiastic to provide active cooperation. According to Akhtar Hussain, the Acting Foreign Secretary, 'the leaders of Pakistan were on the verge of openly aligning themselves with the West'. He held the view that Pakistan would 'jump at ...[the] chance of

²⁵ Perkins to the Department of State, 27 September 1952 in *ibid.*

²⁶ Memorandum of Conversation between General Ayub and Raleigh A. Gibson, 23 December 1952 in *ibid.*

²⁷ Memorandum of Conversation between General Ayub and Raleigh A. Gibson, 13 February 1953, in *ibid.*

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ 'A Report to the NSC by the Secretaries of State and Defense and the Director of Mutual Security on Reexamination of United States Programs for National Security', 19 January 1953, cited in M. S. Venkartamani, *The American Role in Pakistan*, op. cit., pp. 200-01.

joining the Middle East Defense Organization. However, he was not sure if Nazimuddin 'kn[ew] the score'. But he assured that the influence of the foreign office and ministry of defense 'would be decisive'.³⁰ In this situation, a change at the center was unavoidable. In March 1953, the eruption of religious riots in Punjab provided an opportunity to the nexus of army and bureaucracy to remove Nazimuddin from the scene and bring in a reliable prime minister who was willing to cooperate with Washington. Nazimuddin's dismissal was planned and accomplished through [the] combined efforts of [the] Army leadership...particularly...Iskandar Mirza and ...General Ayub...and [the] Governor-General himself'.³¹ General Ayub made a clean breast that 'he had worked hard to have something along this line accomplished'.³² The Governor-General with the aid of army establishment had 'brought about one of the most popular coups in history'.³³ McGrath observed that 'it was, however, a coup that was not recognized as a coup at that time'.³⁴

It is interesting to note that 'on April 4, 1953, the U.S. Central Intelligence Director, Allen W. Dulles approved \$1 million to be used "in any way that would bring about the fall of Mossadegh", the Prime Minister of Iran whose 'socialist reforms and increasingly close partnership with the Iranian Communist Party... prompted fears that Iran might develop close ties with the Soviet Union'. Aided by the CIA and British M5, Mossadegh was arrested on 19 August 1953. The extent of the U.S. role in Mossadegh's overthrow was formally acknowledged for many years. 'In March 2000, then Secretary of State Madeleine Albright stated her regret that Mossadegh was ousted'. In the same year, the *New York Times* published a detailed report about the coup based on CIA documents.³⁵ Although, there is no available documentary evidence to suggest the CIA's involvement in overthrow of Nazimuddin's government in Pakistan, but, the weak government of Nazimuddin was considered to 'stir up anti-imperialistic sentiment which in different ways

³⁰ Emmerson to the Secretary of State, Telegram No. 941, 22 December 1952, NDD.842430, RG 84, Box 12, File 320-Pak-Egypt, NA.

³¹ Emmerson to the Secretary of State, 20 April 1953, NDD.842430, RG 84, Box 42, File 350-Pak-Pol. NA

³² Memorandum of conversation between General Ayub and Gibson in Lahore, 28 April 1953, in *ibid*.

³³ Emmerson to the Department of State, 23 April 1953, in *ibid*.

³⁴ Allen McGrath, 1996. *The Destruction of Pakistan's Democracy*, *op.cit.*, p. 97.

³⁵ See 'Mohammed Mossadegh'. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Retrieved 26 June 2004, *op.cit*.

and degrees, consciously or unconsciously ...strongly influence[ed] the thinking of most Pakistanis'.³⁶ The change of governments in Iran and Pakistan during the same period of time, suggests a relationship between these two events at a time when 'friendly' governments were required in Iran and Pakistan for moving towards Dulles's defense strategic plans. Anti- West governments in Iran and Pakistan could endanger the strategic interests of the U.S. and her allies in the region.

Therefore, the change in government was seen as 'great opportunities' and believed that through 'tactful guidance' and 'firm example' would 'do much to develop the stability of this area so important to the foreign policy of the United States'.³⁷ Installing a prime minister who had no base in Pakistani politics, generals and bureaucrats were in firm position to lead Pakistan on the path marked by the neo-colonial forces. 'Mohammad Ali Bogra was not chosen by the people nor did he represent any political party, but was the personal choice of the Governor General'.³⁸ What made him attractive to Ghulam Mohammad and his allies was that he had strong links with Washington and lacked any independent constituency. 'Moreover, he was a Bengali, and the government desperately needed evidence that it represented Bengal',³⁹ particularly in a situation when the whole cabinet was from West Pakistan. 'Without ...[any]... base it was thought that he could not be other than a tool of Ghulam Mohammad'.⁴⁰ He has been described a "pathologically pro-American" political non-entity who was primarily chosen for 'his popularity in Washington'.⁴¹ 'This made him the right man to redirect the foreign policy of Pakistan into close military and economic alliance with that country'.⁴² John Foster Dulles, wasted no time in declaring that Pakistan 'was most friendly to us [and] needed immediate assurance of our aid'.⁴³

As a gesture of goodwill, wheat grant was sent to Karachi. Bogra reciprocated the feelings by showing his gratitude in a most

³⁶ Perkins to the Department of State, 27 September 1952, NDD.842430, RG 84, Box 42, File 350-Pak. Pol., NA.

³⁷ Emmerson to the Department of State, 23 April 1953, in *ibid.*

³⁸ Allen McGrath, 1996. *The Destruction of Pakistan's Democracy*, *op.cit.*, p.108.

³⁹ Keith Callard, *Pakistan –A Political Study*, *op.cit.*, p.138.

⁴⁰ Allen McGrath, 1996. *The Destruction of Pakistan's Democracy*, *op.cit.*, p.108.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² Keith Callard, *Pakistan –A Political Study*, *op.cit.*, p.138.

⁴³ John Foster Comments on the 'The Food situation in Pakistan', NDD.842909, RG 59, Box 5545, 890D.03/4-2853, NA.

‘embarrassing’ manner. Camels carrying ‘Thank You America’ play-cards strolled on the beaches of Karachi. This reception was the mirror image of Pakistan’s new face in the coming years, of a ‘client state’ economically, politically and militarily dependent on the United States. A popular democratic government had no role in this emerging scenario. Bogra was made a leader of the political party Muslim League that was speedily losing its grip over the control of affairs and was made a hostage to the ambitions of generals and bureaucrats. Bogra was given a very specific objective, to ensure Pakistan’s participation in defense pacts against Communism. It was not an easy task. The majority of Pakistani people were not in favor of any pro-West alliance. Anti-imperialistic feelings were high, particularly in East Bengal where army and bureaucracy were viewed as partners of ‘imperialism’. Americans were fully aware of these facts. Dulles’s advice to the U.S. Embassy in Karachi for ‘continuing evaluation [of the] Prime Minister’s position’, not only reveals Bogra’s delicate position, it also suggests the extent of U.S. involvement in political affairs of Pakistan.⁴⁴ Bogra appeared to be more tragic figure than Nazimuddin. ‘Many decisions of government were effectively taken by a group that included the Governor-General and [some] influential ministers...There is nothing about new or important about an “inner cabinet”. What was unusual was that it appeared to centre on the Governor-General rather than the Prime Minister’.⁴⁵

Dulles arrived in Karachi on 22 May 1953 as a part of an exceptional tour of the Middle East and South Asia with the aim to get familiarized with the people and leaders of the most strategically important region. The armed guard arranged for his reception mostly impressed Dulles. Reporting to the Senate Committee of Foreign Relations, he remarked that ‘they had an armed guard for my visit which ...[was] one of the finest I ...[had] ever seen in the world’.⁴⁶ Venkartamani wrote that Dulles was full of praises for the ‘carriage and demeanor of ...[the] people and ...[the] army’. Dulles’s meetings with Ghulam Muhammad and Bogra were very encouraging, however, the most important talks were held with General Ayub, recognizing him as the real power broker in the emerging framework. Dulles met Ayub at the residence of the American Ambassador. The record of this meeting

⁴⁴ Dulles to Karachi, 1 September 1953, NDD.842430, RG 84, Box 12, File 320-Pak, India, NA.

⁴⁵ Keith Callard, *Pakistan – A Political Study*, op.cit., p.139.

⁴⁶ M.S. Venkartamani, 1987. *The American Role in Pakistan* (Lahore: Vanguard Books, 1987), p.203.

reveals very interesting facts; the most significant is the Dulles's inquiry about the state of Pakistan's Army, Air Force and the air bases in Pakistan, and the state of Navy.⁴⁷ Relations between India and Pakistan were discussed and General Ayub assured Dulles if any military aid were given to Pakistan, it would not be used against India, rather, Pakistan was willing to help India if she was attacked by another country.⁴⁸ Ayub affirmed that the government in Pakistan was 'extremely anxious' to cooperate with the U.S.

Dulles returned home from this trip convinced that Pakistan and Turkey were the potential guardians of U.S. interests in the region. The 'Northern Tier' concept seemed to be the result of this trip when Dulles realized the Soviet threat was more imminent near its borders. Dulles's message to the Prime Minister of Pakistan, at the end of his tour, sets the stage for the role assigned to Pakistan in the war against Soviet Union. Pakistan was seen 'as one of the great bulwarks in that area against Communism'. Dulles confessed that he had 'strong feelings that the combination of strength of religious feeling and martial spirit of ...[Pakistani] people ...[would make] Pakistan a country that ...[could] be relied upon as one of the great bulwarks in that area against Communism'. In this message important to be noted are Dulles's reference to the combination of strength of religious feeling and martial spirit of Pakistani people. It was the re-claimant of the old imperial policy. He assured the Prime Minister of Pakistan that:

'I shall continue to follow this matter, urging quick action, as I completely share your view that it is in our common interests to assist your country in this regard'.⁴⁹

Dulles felt necessary to send such a message to Pakistan, because Nehru 'made it plain [in his meeting with Dulles] that any military block violating the fundamentals of India's policy of non-alignment' was not acceptable to India. It was made clear to Dulles that 'India would not be carried along with Dulles's enthusiasm for fighting the "menace" of international communism and abandon its cherished policy, a policy endorsed in Moscow, accepted in Peking, and embraced in the new countries of Asia'.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Memo of Conversation, State Department, 23 May 1953, NDD.842909, RG 59, 37D-MUHP-1953, NA.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ G.W. Choudhury, 1975. *India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and the Major Powers* (New York: Free Press, 1975), p. 82.

The quick action, Dulles promised came in the form of invitation for General Ayub to visit Washington to discuss regional defense problems since he was viewed the 'strongest individual in Pakistan'. It was confirmed that 'if the U.S. believed in any closer arrangements with Pakistan then the right person to talk to was Ayub'.⁵¹ Ayub reached Washington in September 1953 and held crucial discussions with Dulles who was reporting the details of the discussions to President Eisenhower. General Ayub was more interested in bilateral agreement with the United States for receiving military aid than to participate in a large defense pact. For Americans, military aid to Pakistan was an integral part of a larger defense strategy with immediate focus on the 'Northern Tier' organization. The idea was to link countries of the northern tier including Iran, Turkey and Pakistan with each other and with the U.S. creating a 'barrier against Soviet encroachment'.⁵² Negotiations were not completed and Ayub was invited to have a return visit in mid-October. Dulles recommended a meeting between General Ayub and President Eisenhower to be arranged in his return visit.⁵³ Ayub's return visit started with his meeting with the Assistant Secretary of State on 21 October 1953, in which, the U.S. officials from the Defense Department, South Asia Desk and Mutual Security Program, also participated. In this meeting, a possible contract of Mutual Assistance Agreement was discussed, that ensured strengthening of Pakistan's defense capabilities, her association with the West and her acceptance of the political assurances contained in the agreement.⁵⁴ Soon, the Governor General Ghulam Muhammad, who was gone to Washington for 'medical treatment' joined the negotiations that were being carried out without the knowledge of the Pakistan's Parliament and the cabinet.⁵⁵ Surprisingly, the political decision to grant military aid to Pakistan was approved formally by President Eisenhower on 31 September, before the beginning of Ayub's return visit. However, the

⁵¹ Hildreth to Dulles, 15 August 1953, NDD.842430, RG 84, Box 42, File 350-Pak. Pol., NA.

⁵² G.W. Choudhury, 1975. *India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and the Major Powers*, *op.cit.*, p. 84.

⁵³ Dulles to Under Secretary, 1 October 1953, NDD.842909, RG 59, A-67-28, NA.

⁵⁴ Memo of Conversation, 21 October 1953, NDD.842909, RG 59, 790D.5 MSP/10-2153, NA.

⁵⁵ G.W. Choudhury, 1975. *India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and the Major Powers*, *op.cit.*, p. 84.

decision was not made public.⁵⁶ The probable reasons appeared the difference of opinion between Britain and United States over the question of military aid to Pakistan and lack of Pakistan's firm commitment to participate in defense pacts. Britain argued that she would also like to see the Pakistan military strengthened, but the fear of India's strong reaction was her major concern. The U.K. government observed that 'broadly speaking, London did not like the U.S. proposal' on the grounds that India would regard the military aid to Pakistan as spreading the Cold War to the subcontinent.⁵⁷ Though, there was no public announcing about President Eisenhower's decision to provide military aid to Pakistan, the news had traveled to Moscow. Moscow expressed her profound anger and concern over the possible military assistance and some kind of a defense pact between Pakistan and U.S.⁵⁸

On 7 December 1953, Vice- President Richard Nixon arrived in Karachi for his three days visit to Pakistan. The aim was to evaluate the situation in Pakistan before attaining the approval of the National Security Council regarding the Mutual Defense Agreement between Pakistan and U.S.⁵⁹ Nixon proved to be the most instrumental in bringing Pakistan into close alliance with the U.S. His biographer wrote that Nixon not only supported Pakistan's position in the defense against Soviet Union, he also strengthened Pakistan 'as a counter force to the confirmed neutralism of Jawaharlal Nehru's India'.⁶⁰ On 25 February 1954, Eisenhower declared that his government was ready to give military aid to Pakistan on the condition that Pakistan and Turkey should agree on a defense strategy. On 27 February 1954, without consulting the cabinet, Ghulam Muhammad sent a letter to Dulles, congratulating him

⁵⁶ Memo of Conversation, State Department, 16 October 1953, NDD.842909, RG 59, 790D.5 MSP/10-1653, NA.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ Prime Minister Bogra showed a note to American Ambassador, sent by the Soviets expressing their anger and warning. See Hildreth to Dulles, 2 December 1953, telegram no. 399, NDD.842430, RG 84, Box 42, File 350-Pak. Pol., NA.

⁵⁹ Dulles was requested by Nixon to delay the decision of the National Security Council till the report of his visit was made available. Nixon was assured that no decision would be taken until his report. See State Department Memo, 9 December 1953, NDD.842909, RG 59, 790D.5 MSP/12-953, NA.

⁶⁰ G.W. Choudhury, 1975. *India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and the Major Powers*, *op.cit.*, p. 86.

on the declaration of arms aid to Pakistan.⁶¹ Pakistan's policy of aligning with the U.S. was a decision taken by the generals and bureaucrats ignoring the popular mood in the streets, especially in East Bengal.

Crisis in East Bengal and signing of mutual defense agreement

After stripping the Muslim Leagues of its political power, and selecting a cabinet of his own choice mostly from the West Pakistan, the Governor-General wished to control the Constituent Assembly dominated by the members from East Bengal by proposing his own constitutional formula. At a time when bureaucratic-army alliance under the leadership of the Governor-General was engaged in negotiations with the U.S. government for a possible mutual defense agreement, any resistance from East Bengal could not be tolerated. The Governor-General's constitutional formula envisaged the unification of all the provinces and states of West Pakistan into 'One Unit' with the aim to balance the domination of East Bengal in the Assembly and, 'election of a new constituent assembly which would not be a sovereign body and over which the Governor-General would have a right of veto'.⁶² The Prime Minister Mohammad Ali Bogra very faithfully presented the Governor-General's constitutional formula in the Constituent Assembly, which was rejected by the majority of the members. The Constituent Assembly was now under great pressure to formulate a constitution as soon as possible to prove its writ. The Basic Principles Committee Report submitted by Nazimuddin along with the amendments suggested by the new Prime Minister Mohammad Ali Bogra was taken up by the Assembly to finalize a constitution for Pakistan. On 7 October 1953, Bogra reintroduced the Basic Principles Committee Report. The report was the same presented by Nazimuddin except two amendments. These amendments included a compromise on Assembly Representation, popularly known as Mohammad Ali Formula, 'to which the politicians of the east and west wings had succeeded in reaching agreement'.⁶³ Mohammad Ali Formula provided that the lower house was to consist of 300 members elected on the basis of population, and the upper house would consist of 50 members equally divided among the five units, who would be elected by the legislatures of the units, each unit having equal voting weight. East Bengal, as one of the five units, would have a minority in the upper

⁶¹ Ghulam Muhammad to Dulles, 27 February 1954, NDD.842909, RG 59, 790D. 5-MSP/2-2054, NA.

⁶² Allen McGrath, 1996. *The Destruction of Pakistan's Democracy*, op.cit., p.112.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

house, but, would continue to have a majority in the lower house on the basis of population. By 14 November 1953, the Assembly had approved 130 paragraphs of the new constitution after sitting for fifty-five days, when it was adjourned.

The Bengali members had to return home to campaign for the provincial elections scheduled in March 1954 for the Bengal Assembly. The politicians from East Bengal were now convinced that the Governor-General with the assistance of the defense establishment had all the intentions to keep away the East Bengal from participating in the formulation of major policy decisions. To assert their voice, all political parties got united on one platform under the banner of the United Front. The United Front composed of more than half a dozen political parties fought the election on a twenty- one point agenda. The union of these political parties was the threatening call for the brokers of state power. The Front included pro-Beijing Pakistan Awami League, the East Bengal Communist Party, the left-leaning Ganatantri Dal, Krishak Sramik party and a fragment of left-wing student groups. The most critical demands of the twenty- one point agenda were the call for the nationalization of jute and demand for provincial autonomy restricting the central government's authority to three subjects only; defense, foreign affairs and currency. The United Front polled 64 per cent of the popular vote and secured 223 seats out of the total of 309 seats.⁶⁴ The Muslim League was not able to secure more than 10 seats.⁶⁵ This was a hammer blow to the policies of the central government led by the Muslim League that was reduced to a puppet party with its reigns in the hands of the Governor-General. This was a vote of no confidence given by the majority population against the central government's policies. On 3 April 1954, Fazul Huq leading the United Front formed the ministry in East Bengal.⁶⁶ After the formation of the ministry in East Bengal, the United Front unanimously demanded the immediate dissolution of the Constituent Assembly on the grounds that it was no longer representative of East Bengal's people and called for an immediate national election on the basis of adult franchise. An appeal was made to organize a 'peoples' movement' against the central government of Muslim League.⁶⁷ The demand for the national election was obviously a blowing threat to the U.S. interests in the region. Bogra's government was committed to have a Mutual Defense

⁶⁴ Rafique Afzal, 1998. *Political Parties in Pakistan, Vol.1* (Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, 1998), pp. 197-.98.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ *Dawn*, 3 April 1954.

⁶⁷ *Dawn*, 12 April 1953.

Agreement with America and at this stage dissolution of the Constituent Assembly in accordance with the United Front's demand would have certainly shackled the progress on the Agreement. Then, there was no guarantee that the newly elected popular government would continue the policy of alignment with the U.S. However, the Governor-General and his aides were not yet given the directions to dissolve the Assembly.

The situation became alarming when 162 members of the newly elected Bengal provincial assembly reacting to the signing of the United States-Pakistan Military Aid Pact on 19 April 1954, showed their 'grave concern' over the undermining of Pakistan's freedom and sovereignty'.⁶⁸ This was followed by a call given by almost all political parties in East Bengal to observe 'Anti-United States-Pakistan Military Pact Day'.⁶⁹ The *Dawn* reported that soon, they were joined by some voices from the West Pakistan. This resulted in a chase of arresting political opponents in Punjab and Karachi using the Public Safety Acts in order to strengthen the central government's grip on West Pakistan. On May 29 1954, the United Front Ministry was dismissed and the Governor-General using Section 92A of the Government of India Act assumed the provincial administration and put the province under the control of the Governor, Major General Iskandar Mirza, who was known for his espousal of 'controlled democracy'. The *Dawn* observed that to check the growing resentment among the masses, the ministry of the United Front had to be sent home at the 'pretext of the Red scare'.⁷⁰ Mirza alleged that parliamentary government had failed in East Bengal and announced that it would be restored only when he determined the province was ready. The East Bengal Assembly was not allowed to meet until 22 May 1956. Iskandar Mirza declared in his first press conference that Pakistan was faced with the danger of 'Communism in East Pakistan' and called for a permanent ban on the Communist Party.⁷¹ Air Force was utilized to drop leaflets and 10,000 troops and a Navy frigate were reportedly sent to East Bengal.⁷² Mirza threatened to impose martial law and warned there were enough troops plus 40,000 police available to meet any 'protest'.⁷³ Censorship was passed on the press and a hunt for political arrests under the Public Safety Act was launched. Under his instructions, 'screening committees' were formed in all the industrial units 'to weed out' all

⁶⁸ Rafique Afzal, 1998. *Political Parties in Pakistan, Vol. I, op.cit.*, p. 203.

⁶⁹ *Dawn*, 12 April 1953.

⁷⁰ *Dawn*, 2 June 1954.

⁷¹ *Dawn*, June 11 1954.

⁷² *New York Times*, 31 May 1954.

⁷³ *Dawn* 30 June 1954 and *Pakistan Times*, 7 June 1954.

communist elements'.⁷⁴ Approximately 200,000 industrial workers were to be screened. On 6 July 1954, the Communist Party in West Pakistan was also banned. The suppression of the United Front removed the pressure for changes in the Constituent Assembly.

This was all being done in the wake of Pakistan signing the Mutual Defense Agreement with the United States in Karachi on 19 May 1954. The main terms of the Agreement included that 'the Government of Pakistan ...[would] use the assistance exclusively to maintain its internal security, its legitimate self-defense, or to permit it to participate in the defense of the area', would 'not take any act of aggression against any other nation' and 'join in promoting international understanding and goodwill, and maintaining world peace' and also 'take such actions as may be mutually agreed upon to eliminate causes of international tension'. Pakistan was expected to develop and maintain 'its own defensive strength and the defensive strength of the world'. Pakistan was not permitted to do trade 'with nations which threaten[ed] the maintenance of world peace'.

This agreement 'besides establishing a close military, political and economic alliance with the United States also allowed her military bases in Northern Pakistan to spy on the Soviet Union'.⁷⁵ By signing the Mutual Defense Agreement, Pakistan had not only made the Soviet Union and China hostile, it also sealed all the hopes for resolving the conflict of Kashmir. In August 1953, after bilateral talks lasting over some months, Nehru and Bogra agreed to issue a joint communiqué on Kashmir declaring that 'it was their firm opinion that [Kashmir dispute] should be settled in accordance with the wishes of the people of that State...The most feasible way of ascertaining the wishes of the people was by fair and impartial plebiscite'. Further, 'it was decided that the plebiscite Administrator should be appointed by the end of April 1954...He ...[would] then make such proposals as he ...[thought] proper for preparations to be made for the holding of a fair and impartial plebiscite in the entire State and take such other steps as may be considered necessary'.⁷⁶ At that time Nehru had no knowledge of the negotiations going on between Pakistan and the United States for a

⁷⁴ See *Dawn* 2, 19 and 21 June 1954 and *Pakistan Times* 27 May, 1, 2 and 6 June 1954.

⁷⁵ 'Cold War Policies'- [Wikipedia – The Free Encyclopedia](#), *op.cit.* Retrieved 26 June 2004.

⁷⁶ Mohammad Ayub Khan, n.d. p. President of Pakistan. *Pakistan Perspective: A Collection of Important Articles and Excerpts from Major Addresses* (Washington: The Embassy of Pakistan), p.17.

Mutual Defense Agreement. After receiving the news that Pakistan was likely to enter into an alliance with the United States, Nehru protested strongly in his letter written to Bogra on 21 December 1953, stating that:

‘We, in India, have endeavored to follow a foreign policy which we feel is not only in the interests of world peace but is particularly indicated for the countries of Asia. That policy is an independent one and of nonalignment with any power block. It is clear that the policy which Pakistan intends to pursue is different...It means that Pakistan is tied up with in a military sense with the U.S.A. and is aligned to that particular group of powers of imperialism. This produces a qualitative change in the existing situation and therefore, it affects Indo-Pakistan relations, and more especially the Kashmir problem.’⁷⁷

Again, speaking in the Indian Parliament, Nehru observed that ‘the whole context in which these agreements were made ...[would] change if military aid ...[came] from America’.⁷⁸ Reacting to Nehru’s reaction, General Ayub was anxious to convince India that ‘Pakistan could not possibly pose any threat to India’ by assuring India that the military aid provided under the agreement was not to be used against her.⁷⁹ He argued that it should be in the interest of the world peace, ‘particularly of India’s security that Pakistan remain[ed] strong and stable’. The question needs to explore is then why Pakistan needed any military assistance if it was not to be used against India which was being perceived as the only enemy of Pakistan. If, in accordance with the communiqué, the plebiscite was carried on as agreed resolving the Kashmir conflict, there was no need for any defense establishment in Pakistan. But, that was not in line with the strategic designs planned for Pakistan in the Cold War era. Pakistan’s defense establishment had to serve as the ‘bulwark’ against communism and therefore, had to be strengthened. The Mutual Defense Agreement was the guarantee for ensuring Pakistan’s entrance in the defense alliances conceived by Dulles in his efforts to contain Communism.

Defense Pacts and Consolidation of Authoritarianism in Pakistan

As planned, the Mutual Defense Agreement resulted in Pakistan’s signing the SEATO (South East Asia Treaty Organization) and the Baghdad Pact also referred to as the Middle East Treaty Organization (METO). SEATO was established by the Southeast Asia Collective

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p.19.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p.20.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p.18.

Defense Treaty (Manila Pact), which was signed at Manila in September 1954. The South East Asia Organization (SEATO) became effective on 19 February 1955 and was signed by Pakistan, Australia, France, Great Britain, New Zealand, the Philippines, Thailand and United States. Pakistan was included in the alliance though it was not part of South East Asia.

Baghdad Pact was adopted by Iraq, Turkey, Pakistan and Iran, as well as Great Britain in 1955. The Baghdad Pact represented a Western effort to build a Middle Eastern Organization to link NATO with SEATO. It failed that purpose and turned instead, as John Foster Dulles put it, 'into a forum for Arab politics and intrigues'.⁸⁰ Its name was changed to CENTO (Central Treaty Organization) in 1959, when Iraq left the pact, 'it continued to comprise Turkey, Iran and Pakistan as its regional members. Early in 1959, Pakistan signed (as did Turkey and Iran) a bilateral agreement of cooperation with the United States, which was designed further to reinforce the defensive purposes of CENTO'.⁸¹

Reinforcing Pakistan's alliance with the United States, General Ayub Khan very proudly claimed that 'Pakistan ...[was] associated with the United States through not one, but four mutual security arrangements. In this sense, it ...[had] been sometimes termed "American most allied ally in Asia". It ...[was] the only Asian country which ...[was] a member both of SEATO and CENTO'.⁸² By signing these defense pacts, Pakistan became one of the first few allies of the American Power System in its war against Communism in an environment when most of the Third World countries were campaigning for nationalism, social reformism and anti-imperialism and refused to be part of the American Power System in the Cold War era. In the previous discussion, we have seen how in Pakistan any such movement was not allowed to grow and in the process democratic institutions were destroyed to facilitate the alliance of army and bureaucracy dominating the state policies in favor of Dulles's system of mutual defense pacts. A popular democratic government with its power seat in East Bengal following a policy of non-alignment or tilting towards the Soviet Union did not fit into the strategic design of Dulles, who is known in history for his efforts to 'integrate the entire noncommunist Third World into a system of mutual defense pacts,

⁸⁰ Elie, Poteh, 1995. *The Quest for Hegemony in the Arab World: The Struggle over the Baghdad Pact* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995).

⁸¹ Mohammad Ayub Khan, n.d. p. President of Pakistan. *Pakistan Perspective: A Collection of Important Articles and Excerpts from Major Addresses, op.cit.*, p. 17.

⁸² *Ibid.*

traveling almost 500,000 miles in order to cement new alliances that were modeled after (NATO)'.⁸³ The emphasis on pacts was a logical culmination of Truman-Acheson containment, which called for strong alliance systems directed by the U.S. and collective security pacts. Dulles, along-with most U.S. foreign policy-makers of the era, failed to distinguish indigenous Third World social revolutionaries and nationalists from the Soviet influence. Neutrality for Dulles was 'an obsolete, immoral and shortsighted conception'.⁸⁴

As discussed the key event in the South Asian arena of Cold War competition was the signing of the Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement between Pakistan and the United States with the major objective to build defense establishment in Pakistan to be used to block any Soviet thrust into the crucial Middle East and provide United States with valuable military bases against Soviet Union. In its war against Communism, Dulles found cooperative partners- generals and bureaucrats who were trained by the British colonial strategist minds believing in a concept of a security state and groomed in a colonial tradition of 'controlled democracy'. They were put in control of affairs at the expense of the democratic institutions to steer Pakistan towards Dulles's collective security pacts. We have discussed how the Governor General destroying the notion of the cabinet government dismissed the Prime Minister Nazimuddin in April 1953 to pave the way for negotiating the Mutual Defense Agreement under an 'authoritarian regime' which was unaccountable to the people of Pakistan and backed by the army. This authoritarian regime led by the Governor-General Ghulam Muhammad was again successful in dismissing the provincial government of East Bengal when it voiced against the signing of the Mutual Defense Agreement. An authoritarian regime under the disguise of a democratic set up was felt necessary to influence Pakistan to join the Defense Pacts, SEATO and Baghdad Pact, since the majority of the parliamentarians and the people of Pakistan were not in favor of joining these defense pacts. The fear of widespread public protest over the question of Pakistan's joining these defense pact and support of Soviet Union for any such popular movement was keeping Pakistan's authoritarian regime in a dilemma to publicly announce its intentions to join any defense pact against Communism.

Prime Minister Bogra was in a critical position due to the increasing pressure from the Bengali members of the Constituent

⁸³ 'Dulles', Wikipedia – The Free Encyclopedia, *op.cit.* Retrieved 26 June 2004.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

Assembly. These members were not only opposing any defense pacts, they were also in the process of finalizing the future constitution of Pakistan. The Constituent Assembly that was reconvened on 14 March 1954 after a long break of four months and had resumed the work on the finalization of the remaining clauses of the Basic Principles Committee Report. The Governor-General, who was in control of the central executive but was unable to extend its authority over the Constituent Assembly, was not pleased with these developments. Once the constitution was framed, the Governor-General's position was about to change and the focus of the power had to shift to the representative forces. In July, Sir Ivor Jennings arrived in Pakistan to assist in the drafting of the constitution at the invitation of the Assembly's constitutional drafting committee. On 15 September, Bogra announced in the Assembly that, 'he [was] grateful to God that at long last [they had]... crossed the last hurdle in Pakistan'.⁸⁵ On 20 September, the Assembly abolished the Public and Representative Offices (Disqualification) Act (PRODA), the most powerful executive weapon, in the hands of the central ministry. The next day, the Constituent Assembly amended the Government of India Act, which prevented the Governor-General from dismissing the cabinet, which was made responsible to the National Assembly through this amendment. Callard observed that 'this was the move to make the government completely dependent upon the Assembly and to prevent the repetition of the exercise of the Governor-General's power of intervention'.⁸⁶ According to the 5th Amendment only members of the Assembly were to be selected as cabinet ministers and could continue to hold only as long as they retained the confidence of the legislature and similarly, the Prime Minister was required to be a member of the Assembly at the time of his appointment.⁸⁷ Furthermore, the Cabinet was decided to be collectively responsible to the Assembly, and would be required to resign if any one of its members lost the confidence of the Assembly. By making these amendments, the Assembly declared its supremacy and its objective to ensure that 'formation and working of government' should be in accordance with the 'accepted principles and conventions' of a

⁸⁵ XVI Constitutional Assembly Debates {henceforth CAD} (Con.), pp.353-65.

⁸⁶ Keith Callard, *Pakistan – A Political Study*, op.cit., p.105.

⁸⁷ XVI CAD (Con.), p.251 Government of India (5th Amendment) Act, 1954, amending Sections 9, 10, 10A, 10 B, and 17. *Pakistan Times*, 22 September 1954; *Dawn*, 21 September 1954.

parliamentary system of government'.⁸⁸ Under the headlines, 'Parliament Made Supreme Body', *Dawn* stated that 'the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan yesterday laid down in clear and unambiguous terms that from that day the supreme authority in the country shall be the Parliament'.⁸⁹

On 21 September, the Assembly voted its approval of the constitution in the form of the Basic Principles Committee Report as amended.⁹⁰ Out of 40 votes polled, 27 votes were in favor, 11 Hindu members voted against and none of the members from the Punjab voted on the constitution. The Assembly then was adjourned until 27 October, concluding what was called a 'historical session'.⁹¹ In contrast, this was seen as 'veritable coup' carried out by Bengali members of the assembly backed by 'some have-nots' of the Muslim League.⁹² The British High Commissioner observed that 'one result [of the constitutional changes was] to bring a step nearer the possibility that the Army and the higher Civil Services...[might] one day come to the conclusion that the politicians have made such a mess that it is necessary for non-political forces to take over'.⁹³ This observation was the mirror image of the thinking of the 'neo-colonial powers', who claimed to be the champions of democracy and protectors of the 'free world' but to secure their strategic interests found justification in promoting the non-political and non-democratic forces at the expense of derailing the democratic process in Pakistan. 'Pakistan's international supporters were ambivalent about democracy too. The American Agenda was clear: a pro-Western Pakistan, a stable Pakistan, prosperous Pakistan, and a democratic Pakistan were all desirable, but in that order. When democracy threatened to remove a leadership that was less than pro-America, the U.S. Embassy conveyed this priority to Pakistanis'.⁹⁴ Supported by these protectors of the 'free world', the Governor General ordered the police to bar the members of the Constituent Assembly from attending the session of the Assembly on 27 October 1954 which was called specifically to vote on the draft constitution approved in the Assembly's previous session.⁹⁵ The next day, the Governor General dissolved the Constituent

⁸⁸ Keith Callard, *Pakistan – A Political Study*, op.cit., p. 107.

⁸⁹ *Dawn*, 22 September 1954.

⁹⁰ XVI CAD (Con.), pp. 499-510, 570-72.

⁹¹ *Dawn*, 22 September 1954.

⁹² Karachi to CRO, 30th September 1954, DO35/5135, TNA: PRO.

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ Stephen P. Cohen, 2005. *The Idea of Pakistan*, op.cit., p. 56.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

Assembly, and appointed a 'semi dictatorial executive' praised as a 'cabinet of talents' dominated by 'a non-Muslim League, civil-military complex'⁹⁶, in which the Army Chief, General Ayub was included as the Defense Minister. 'From all accounts available, it seems clear that Ghulam Muhammad's plan to dismiss the Constituent Assembly once and for all and to start again was worked out with General Ayub's prior knowledge. It is, moreover, probable that without the assurance of the Army's support, Ghulam Muhammad might have hesitated'.⁹⁷ General Ayub's inclusion in the cabinet was the indication to suggest that 'this was no time for none-sense'⁹⁸ and that there should be no doubt left that the Army was the negotiating power in the state construction and the real partner in Dulles's defense strategic plans. 'On 28 October 1954, the Assembly, which until then had been an operating political body and had produced a new constitution, became a 'failure'. But it was the success not the failure, which brought about its demise'.⁹⁹ Confirming the success of the Assembly, Ziring observed that 'The record ...reveals that the Constituent Assembly had finally resolved most of its constitution-making problems and that the Prime Minister anticipated presenting the constitution to the nation in December. Ignoring these development, Ghulam Muhammad, but in essence Iskandar Mirza, supported by his like-minded colleagues in the army and civil bureaucracy, opted for a controlled democracy'.¹⁰⁰

Thus, the termination of parliamentary democracy was not the result of 'failure' within the Assembly or defects in the new constitutional changes as suggested by the British High Commissioner and campaigned by the Governor General and his associates, but the outcome of the strategic partnership with the U.S. which could only be achieved in an authoritarian culture. The bureaucratic- military alliance with the support of their strategic partners was successful in eroding the democratic institutions and establishing a 'constitutional dictatorship' in Pakistan. This constitutional dictatorship was the vehicle to be used for ensuring Pakistan's membership in SEATO and Baghdad Pacts. 'The

⁹⁶ Lawrence Ziring, *Pakistan in the Twentieth Century: A Political History*, *op.cit.*, p. 169.

⁹⁷ Herbert Feldman, 1967. *Revolution in Pakistan* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), p.41.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ Allen McGrath, 1996. *The Destruction of Pakistan's Democracy*, *op.cit.*, p.218.

¹⁰⁰ Lawrence Ziring, *Pakistan in the Twentieth Century: A Political History*, *op.cit.*, p.169.

interplay of domestic, regional and international factors had brought about a decisive shift in the institutional balance of power; bureaucrats and generals had triumphed over politicians'.¹⁰¹

Conclusion

Pakistan had to pay a very heavy price for leaving her non-aligned policy and becoming a client state of the United States in its very early period of state construction. By dissolving the first Constituent Assembly of Pakistan in alliance with the U.S. strategic planners and the Chief of the Pakistan army, the Governor General Ghulam Muhammad not only deprived the Pakistani people to have its long-debated Constitution but destroyed the democratic institutions to the extent that till today, Pakistan is not capable having a full-blown democracy. Governor General's action of dissolving the Constituent Assembly got the judicial legitimacy by the Federal Court's theory of 'Law of Necessity' declaring 'that which otherwise is not lawful, necessity makes lawful'.¹⁰² The effect of this theory was that those in command of coercive powers of the state had the right to suspend constitutional government when and for however long they thought necessary. The subsequent courts in Pakistan have retroactively cited the theory of Law of Necessity 'to justify coups against civilian governments by generals Ayub, Yahya, Zia and Musharraf'.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ Ayesha.Jalal, *The State of Martial Rule: The Origins of Pakistan's Political Economy of Defense* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p.193.

¹⁰² Stephen P. Cohen, 2005. *The Idea of Pakistan*, *op.cit.*, p.58.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p.56.