THE SOCIAL BACKGROUND AND SOCIAL CHARACTER OF BANGLADESH NATIONALISM

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ABSTRACT

The emergence of nationalism in the Indian sub-continent was determined and conditioned by the nature of the transformation of the Indian economy under the British Rule. The stability of the Indian social structure, based on the Asiatic mode of production, was disrupted by the capitalist penetration of the British imperialism. This led to the formation of new social classes. The uneven development of the bourgeoisie among the Hindus and Muslims in India resulted in the creation of two states -- India and Pakistan. The same phenomenon -- the underdevelopment of the capitalist class in East Pakistan -- led to the emergence of Bangladesh nationalism.

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INTRODUCTION

The roots of Bangladesh Nationalism lie deep in the peculiar nature of the social economy that has prevailed in India for thousands of years. The dynamics that led to the partition of India into two independent states, India and Pakistan, and then created Bangladesh, are the dynamics of class formations determined by the historic process of the Indian social economy which, in the last two hundred years, was conditioned by colonial rule. Unless we understand the process of these dynamics, it will never be clear why a state, which came into existence with a great amount of enthusiasm on the basis of a new conception of nationhood, could not last a quarter of a century.

In our attempt to understand these phenomena, we must be careful, however, to point out here that the term, social economy, is not employed in a deterministic sense. "Social economy" not only includes the base upon which stands the social superstructure, but is also influenced by it in the form of religion, law, literature, etc. In the growth of Bangladesh nationalism, as we shall see later, these factors played a tremendous role, one of these being that Bangladesh does not include the whole of the Bengali-speaking area, because her emergence as a historical entity was conditioned by religious factors. However, the case of Bangladesh clearly demonstrates that, in the ultimate analysis, the determining factor is the social economy.

The emergence of nationalism in India was conditioned by the differential development of social classes, particularly the professional middle class, in the two major communities -- the Muslims and the Hindus. The reason why the professional middle class played such an important role in the evolution of Indian nationalism is that, in India, nationalism did not grow organically as an appendage of capitalism as it did in the West. The emergence of an indigenous bourgeoisie was nipped in the bud with the cnnquest of political power by the British. Indeed, the first act of the drama of Bangladesh nationalism was enacted in 1757 when, in the battle of Plassey, the East India Company defeated the Nawab of Bengal. Till then Bengal, nay the whole of India, to use an expression of Marx, was an 'oriental despotic state' based on a static social structure. The indigenous bourgeoisie, which was gradually gaining strength, could not until then overcome the fetters of traditionalism which were embedded in the social economy of Asia. These fetters, these social relations, distorted by the British rule, to a great extent determined the growth of social classes during the colonial era.

As we have already mentioned, nationalism appeared in Europe as an appendage of capitalism. The process of decay of feudalism and the development of capitalism was at the same time a process of amalgamation of people into nations. As feudalism in the proper sense of the term never grew in India, and an indigenous capitalism did not displace it, nationalism in India began to emerge in a distorted form only when capitalism was transplanted on its soil. The dis-

tortion was the result of an uneven growth of the indigenous bourgeoisies in the two major communities -- the Hindus and the Muslims.

This uneven growth was conditioned by the continuing existence of the remnants of the Asiatic relations of production which, in their turn, determined the development of nationalism in the two communities. Commenting on the impact of the Asiatic despotic state on nationalism, Lenin said "... the more rapidly ... capitalism develops, the greater will be the antagonism between it and the pre-capitalist state system, and the more likely will be the separation of the progressive region from the whole -- with which it is connected, not by 'modern capitalistic' but by 'Asiatically despotic' ties."[1] This statement has a few ramifications. First, it means that nationalism will emerge in that community or region which is more developed. It also means that nationalism will emerge in the less developed region if it considers itself oppressed by the more developed segment of the economy.

In the first chapter, we discuss in detail the socio-economic formations that determined the growth of nationalism among the Hindus and the Muslims. It may be mentioned in this connection that, in the present study, nationalism (without undertaking a detailed discussion of the definition of nationalism) has been viewed as a "set of beliefs which support the creation or strengthening of a state, in contradistinction to an existing state, to correspond to an actual or hypothetical national community in a multistate nation or a multinational state or a multinational multistate."[2]

In the second and third chapters, those socio-economic factors have been analysed, in particular the cultural and economic exploitations of East Pakistan by a West Pakistani ruling elite mainly composed of the civil-military bureaucracy, which stood in the way of the development of a national community or a national consciousness in a multinational state of Pakistan. Bangladesh nationalism, as in many third world countries, would appear, in the final analysis, as a response to the challenge of colonial exploitation.

References

1 - Lenin, V. I., National Liberation, Socialism and Imperialism, p. 54.

2 - Carl J. Cuneo, Social Class, and the National Question in Canada, p. 11.

CHAPTER I

THE SOCIAL ECONOMY OF PRE-BRITISH INDIA

The difference between the Asiatic economy and the economy that developed in the West is that, in the East, 'absolute private ownership' and 'feudalism' did not emerge as in the West. "A closer study of the Asiatic, especially of Indian forms of communal ownership, would show how, from the different forms of primitive communism, different forms of its dissolution have developed. Thus, for example, the various original types of Roman and Teutonic private property can be traced back to various forms of Indian communism."[1] But what was the different form of dissolution that gave birth to the 'Asiatic economy'? The answer can be found in a famous letter written by Engels to Marx on June 6, 1853. "How comes it that the orientals did not reach to landed property or feudalism? I think the reason lies principally in the climate, combined with the conditions of the soil, especially the great desert stretches which reach from the Sahara right through Arabia, Persia, India and Tartary to the highest Asiatic uplands. Artificial irrigation is here the first condition of cultivation and this is the concern either of the communes, the provinces or the central government."[2]

Irrigation (and also errigation) necessitated a centralised bureaucracy upon which grew a strong state. Most of India being semi-arid, and monsoons — the sources of

rainfall — being limited to some parts, agriculture in India was totally dependent on irrigation. To meet this demand for water, the state had to undertake and maintain huge irrigational networks. To control, regulate and supervise these public works, the state had to station its employees at various centres throughout the country. Thus a centralised bureaucratic state emerged on the basis of water-economy (flood control or errigation was also a very important function of the state). The royal official and the army came to occupy pivotal positions in the apparatus of the state. Max Weber has described the reasons for the differential growth of society in the East and West in the following words:

> "The distinction is based on the fact that in the cultural evolution of Egypt, Western Asia, India and China, the question of irrigation was crucial. The water question conditioned the existence of bureaucracy, the compulsory services of the dependent classes upon the functioning of the bureaucracy of the King. That the King also expressed his power in the form of military monopoly is the basis of the distinction between the military organization of Asia and that of the West. In the first case the royal official and the army are from the beginning the central figure of the process, while in the West, both were originally different."[3]

The military monopoly of the royal power or state negated the growth of feudalism in India in the western sense of the term. So, in India there was no decentralisation of military or political power as in feudal Europe. In India the feudal lords, unlike in the West, were not juridically

the owners of the land. Simply, the King delegated to some persons the specific and individual rights of zamin, i.e., the revenue collecting power. These zamindars and jahgirdars (revenue collectors) were created by the state and could be removed by the state at any moment.

> "In the Moghul revenue administration, the zamindar was ... an agent of the Emperor for making due collections on behalf of the Emperor and was remunerated with a percentage out of his collections for his labour. The term 'zamindar' was a later development in the land system of the country. In the Ayeen-i-Akbari, he was the Amul-Guzar or collector of the revenues and he was directed annually to assist the husbandmen with loans of money and to receive payment at distant and convenient periods. ... certain allotments of land were usually given to him rent free for his maintenance known as nankar."[4]

This unique nature of tax-farming was noted by Francois Bernier, the great sociological-minded traveller who came to India in the seventeenth century. "The King as the proprietor of the land, makes over a certain quantity to military men, as an equivalent for their pay; and this grant is called jah-ghir, or as in Turkey, timar; the word jah-ghir signifies the spot from which to draw, or the place of salary. Similar grants are made to governors, also for the support of their troops, on condition that they pay certain sums annually to the King out of any surplus revenue that the land may yield."[5] These jah-ghirdars and zamindars were not feudal lords in the western sense of the term. In the words of Max Weber, they were the holders of 'office prebend'. The

distinctive characteristic of the land relationship in the East was that it was 'prebendalization', not feudalization. "In India, as in the Orient generally, a characteristic siegniory developed rather out of tax farming and the military and tax prebends of a far more bureaucratic state. The oriental seigniory therefore remained in essence a 'prebend' and did not become a 'fief'; not feudalizatinn but prebendalization of the patrimonial state occurred."[6]

The power of these patrimonial states, which Marx calls 'Oriental despotism', was further strengthened by the presence of village communities (as they negated the emergence of countervailing force against the state). The village community contained in itself the unity of manufacturing and industry. To quote, in brief, the classic description of the village system given by Marx (in Capital):

> "The constitution of these communities varies in different parts of India. In those of the simplest form, the land is tilled in common, and the produce divided among the members. At the same time, spinning and weaving are carried on in each family as subsidiary industries. Side by side with the masses thus occupied with one and the same work we find the inhabitant, who is judge, police and taxgatherer in one; the bookkeeper who keeps the accounts of the village ... the overseer who distributes the water from the common tanks for irrigation ... the schoolmaster who on the sand teaches the children reading and writing ... a smith and a carpenter, who make and repair all the agricultural implements; the potter who makes all the pottery of the village; the barber, the washerman;... the silversmith, here and there the poet. This dozen of the individuals is maintained at the expense of

> the whole community.... The simplicity of the organization for production in these self-sufficing communities that constantly reproduce themselves in the same form, and when accidentally destroyed, spring up again on the same spot and with the same name — this simplicity supplies the key to the secret of the unchangeableness in such striking contrast with the constant dissolution and refounding of Asiatic states, the never ceasing changes of dynasty. The superstructure of the economic element of society remains untouched by the storm clouds of the political sky."[7]

Probably commenting on this description of the village community, Weber has opined: "Karl Marx has characterised the peculiar position of the artisan in the Indian village — his dependence upon fixed payment in kind instead of upon production for the market — as the reason for the specific stability of the Asiatic peoples. In his Marx was correct."[8] Evidently, production relations in these small communities were not based on exchange but on use value. In fact, the artisans in a sense were the employees of the village; craft production could function only as a subsidiary to agriculture. The artisans and other professionals were maintained at the expense of the whole community. They used to receive a fixed share of the produce from each cultivator for the services they rendered.

There is no doubt that this kind of payment stood in the way of the emergence of wage labour in the East. "One of the prerequisites of wage labour and one of the historic conditi ns for capital is free labour and the exchange of free labour against money, in order to reproduce and to

convert it into values, in order to be consumed by money, not as use value for enjoyment, but as use value for money."[9]

But why could not wage labour emerge in the East? Here Weber missed the real point which is, as Marx emphasized, the natural unity of labour with its material prerequisites.

> "Another pre-requisite is the separation of free labour from the objective conditions of its realisation — from the means and material of labour. This means above all that the worker must be separated from the land, which functions as his natural laboratory. This menas the dissolution both of free petty land-ownership and of the communal landed property, based on the oriental commune."[10]

In the evolution of Western society, we find, the transition from feudalism to capitalism was a product of feudal evolution. One of the significant factors in the development of Western society was the emergence of serfdom and the appropriation of land by the feudal lords. This led to a sharp polarization of interests between the claimants of the sword and the claimants of the soil. In the Orient, because of the absence of legal ownership, or the communal ownership of the village community, the tax collector, as in the West, was not a co-sharer of sovereignity with the King. Therefore there was no conflict between the peasantry and the landlord "over the disposal and cultivation of the land and of labour services which agitated Europe from the twelfth to the eighteenth centuries."[11]

The conflicts, of course, were there between the

vo;;age amd tje state but they were confined to the share of the agricultural produce. The foundations of agriculture themselves were not affected. So, Marx says, in spite of incessant changes of the dynasties, the superstructure of the economic element of society, i.e., the village community, remains untouched by the political sky. This is also the reason why there was no fundamental change in the nature of the state structure.

The absence of conflict of interests between the peasants and the claimants of the sword did not lead to the workers' separation from the land. For this reason, one of the important preconditions for the emergence of wage labour was non-existent in Eastern society.

Furthermore, the self-sustaining unity of agriculture and manufacturing "contained all the conditions for reproduction and surplus production within itself."[12] Where such small self-sufficient units exist as part of a larger unity, it is very natural that they would provide a part of their surplus products to the larger unity for maintaining communication, irrigation, etc. A part of the surplus is also spent by the larger unity for such items as war, religious worship, etc.

Thus, it is evident, herein lies the secret — the unity of manufacturing and agriculture — of how the Asiatic society resisted disintegration and economic evolution. As Marx says:

> "This prime necessity of an economical and common use of water, which in the occident drove private enterprise to voluntary association, as in Flanders and Italy, necessitated in the orient, where civilisation was too low and the territorial extent too vast to call into life voluntary association, the interference of the centralising power of government. Hence an economic function devolved upon all Asiatic governments, the function of providing public works. These two circumstances — the Hindu, on the one hand, leaving, like all oriental peoples, to the central government the care of the great public works, the prime condition of his agriculture and commerce, dispersed, on theother hand, over the surface of the country, and agglomerated in small centres by the domestic union of agricultural and manufacturing pursuits — these two circumstances had brought about, since the remotest times, a social system of particular features — the so-called village which gave to each of these small unions their independent organisation and distinct life."[14]

Pointing out the importance of the public works for agriculture in India, Dr. K. S. Shelvanker says: "For the agrarian system of India, public works and irrigation works were a necessity. It could only be met by an organization with the resources and the authority of the State."[15] Thus, the inability of Indian agrarian economy to develop a manorial system originated from its dependence on the state bureaucracy.

This weakness of the feudal lords, because of their inability to control the water structure, made the state all-powerful and despotic. The same factors also made the emergence of a town bourgeoisie on a Western line impossible. As Marx said, "The communal conditions for real appropriation

through labour, such as irrigation systems (very important among the Asian peoples), means of communication, etc., will then appear as the work of the higher unity — the despotic government which is poised above the lesser communities."[16]

This higher unity also stood in the way of the development of the cities on the Western line, a necessary precondition for the emergence of the bourgeoisie. The cities in India, and also in other countries in Asia, were mostly centres of pilgrimage and administration. According to Dr. D. R. Gadgill:

> "Most of the towns in India owed their existence to one of the three following reasons: (1) They were places of pilgrimage or sacred places of some sort; (2) they were the seat of a court or the capital of a province; (3) they were commercial depots, owing their importance to their peculiar position along trade routes. Of these reasons the first two were by far the most important."[17]

On the development of cities in History, Marx says:

> "Ancient classical history is the history of cities based on land ownership and agriculture; Asian history is a kind of undifferentiated unity of town and country (the large city properly speaking, must be regarded merely as a princely camp, super-imposed on the real economic structure); the Middle Ages (Germanic Period) starts with the countryside as the locus of history, whose further development then proceeds through the opposition of town and country; modern (history) is the urbanisation of the countryside, not, as among the ancients, the ruralisation of the city."[18]

By this it is not meant that Indian or Asian towns at this

time had not industries, but rather that the industries were not the cause of their importance. Industries grew in these towns to satisfy the needs of the courts, the nobility, the fauzdars, subadars (Governors), etc., who were the agents of the despotic state. So, when the court moved, the industries also moved. To quote Sir Henry Maine, one of the ablest authorities on the village community in the East and West, "Nearly all the movable capital of the empire or kingdom was at once swept away to its temporary centre, which became the exclusive seat of skilled manufacture or decorative art. Every man who claimed to belong to higher class of artificers took his loom or tools and followed in the train of the King."[19]

Marx also noted this dependency of the merchants and artisans on the nobility in the following words:

> (And) "this will not appear so very astonishing to one who understands the particular condition and the government of the country, namely that the King is the one and only proprietor of all the land in the kingdom, from which it follows as a necessary consequence, that the whole capital city, like Delhi or Agra, lives almost entirely on the army and is therefore obliged to follow the King if he takes the field for any length of time. For these towns neither are, nor can be, anything like a Paris, being virtually nothing but military camps.... Moreover, the same merchants who keep the bazaars in Delhi are forced to maintain them during a campaign."[20]

In the development of the cities in the West, the significant factor was the opposition between the town and the country. The feudal lords in the tenth, eleventh

and twelfth centuries encouraged town development within their areas because it brought them increased revenue. But the bourgeoisie soon became powerful enought to challenge the power of the feudal princes. In the West, a three-fold conflict between the crown, the feudal lords and the bourgeoisie paved the way for the bourgeoisie to consolidate its power, by aligning itself first with the crown against the feudal lords, and then by curtailing the power of the crown itself. Morton has given a graphic description of how the English bourgeoisie consolidated its power in the battle against the Spanish Armada:

> "Up to 1588, the English bourgeoisie were fighting for existence: after that they fought for power. For this reason the defeat of the Armada is a turning point in the internal history of England as well as in foreign affairs. It was the merchants with their own ships and their money, who had won the victory and they had won it almost in spite of the half-heartedness and ineptitude of the crown and council, whose enthusiasm diminished as the war assumed a more revolutionary character. The victory transformed the whole character of the class relations that had existed for a century. The bourgeoisie became aware of their strength and with the coming of this awareness the long alliance between them and the monarchy began to dissolve. It might still need their support but they no longer needed its protection. Even before the death of Elizabeth, Parliament began to show an independence previously unknown."[21]

Thus we find, in the Western situation, that there were three forces which facilitated in the capture of political power by the bourgeoisie: the King, the feudal lords,

and the serfs. In its struggle against the feudal lords, the King had to surrender to its ally, the bourgeoisie, the legal and functional sovereignity of the city. The attainment of charters, in particular for the states in Southern Europe, ensured to the bourgeoisie its victory against the feudal fetters. No such development occurred in India. India's development was similar to China's, as described in the following words:

> "In contrast to the Occident, the cities in China and throughout the Orient lacked political autonomy. The Oriental city was not a polis, in the sense of antiquity, and it knew nothing of the 'city law' of the Middle Ages, for it was not a "commune" with political privileges of its own. Nor was there a citizenry in the sense of a self-equipped military estate such as existed in Occidental antiquity. No military oath-bound communities like the Campagna communes of Genoa or other coniurationes ever sprang up to fight or ally themselves with the feudal lords of the city in order to attain autonomy. No forces emerged like the consuls, councils, or political associations of merchant and craft guilds such as Mercanza which were based upon the military independence of the city district. Revolts of the urban populace which forced the officials to flee into the citadels had always been the order of the day. But they always aimed at removing a concrete official or a concrete decree, especially a new tax, never at gaining a charter which might at least in the relative way, guarantee the freedom of the city."[22]

In the absence of feudalism in the East, the merchants and artisans in the city could not play the feudal forces against the King in their attempt at consolidation of power. The nobility, however powerful they might have been in their area of operation, were nothing but mere tax-

collectors and public functionaries entrusted with the functions of maintaining irrigation, communication, etc. Hence, the merchants and artisans in the Oriental cities had to remain satisfied with playing a role subordinate to the courts, noblemen, priests and soldiers. In the East, the bourgeoisie thus failed to overcome the fetters of the state.

The Rise and Decline of a Nascent Bourgeoisie

However, just before the rise of the British power, we find in India many industries which could compare favourably with the most flourishing industries of Europe of that period. To cite a few examples, Delhi, Agra, Meerut, Lucknow, Lahore, Patna Ahmedabad, Dacca and many other cities were great industrial centres in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eithteenth centuries, just as they are today. How could they have become so great if they depended, as we mentioned earlier, only on the favour of the court? As Henry Maine has rightly observed, these industries sometimes outgrew the needs of the court. "Some peculiar manufacture had sometimes so firmly established itself as to survive the desertion, and these manufacturing towns sometimes threw out colonies."[23]

Usually a particular industry flourished in a particular city, for example, muslins at Dacca, silk at Murshidabad, chintzes at Lucknow, dhotis and dopattas at Ahmedabad,

shawls at Srinagar. The cotton manufacturers were, of course, the most widespread; next to them in importance were the manufacturers of silk cloths. The towns in Bengal, especially Dacca, Murshidabad, and Malda, excelled in the production of both textile and silk. The muslin of Dacca was the finest and best known of all these. It was of the Dacca muslin that a Manchester manufacturer, when he could not rival its fineness, said deprecatingly that it was but 'a shadow of a commodity'.

In Clive's (the first Governor-General of Bengal) opinion, Murshidabad, the capital of Bengal, was more prosperous than the city of London, with this difference that there were individuals in the former possessing infinitely greater prosperity than in the latter city.[24] According to Edmund Burke, "there are to be found (in India) a multitude of cities not exceeded in population and trade by those of the first class in Europe: merchants and bankers who have once vied in capital with the Bank of England, whose money had often supported a tottering state and preserved their governments in the midst of war and desolation; millions of indigenous manufacturers and mechanics."[25] Thus we find, just before the rise of the British, a new bourgeoisie that was coming into its own in the emerging trading cities of India.

But, how could this class grow without weakening the central bureaucracy of the State? In fact, India's social

structure was undergoing a significant change at this period. As M. N. Roy says, "In the later part of the eighteenth century, there came into existence in India a prosperous trading class with considerable capital accumulated in its hands. This trading class was largely responsible for undermining the foundations of feudalism (office-prebend — A.S.) in the days of the decay of the Moghul power. All the big landowners, as well as the rulers of the various independent states that sprang up on the ruins of the Moghul Empire, were heavily indebted to this class of usurious traders."[26*]

Dr. Granguly has more succinctly described how a new kind of feudalism was emerging on the ruins of the central authority of the state:

> "So long as there was a strong central authority, the revenue farmers were mere government officials. But when, after the death of Aurongzeb, the authority of the king began to wane, the local officers and assignees declared themselves independent of the central authority. Since time immemorial, the right to demand and collect revenue, had been, in the minds of the Indian rural population, regarded as an attribute of sovereignity. The revenue farmers made use of this popular idea and began to exercise not only rights of ownership of land but also magisterial and administrative powers."[27]

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* — It is interesting to note that, unlike in Europe, the emerging bourgeoisie was not aligning with the king to undermine the feudal lords but with the feudal lords, as in Japan, to weaken the state which was the greatest obstacle in its development.

Thus we find, in India's land relations, a significant change taking place at this period; it was a transition from prebendalization to feudalization. According to Weber, prebendal organization of office means "Payments which are somehow fixed to objects or which are essentially economic usufruct from lands or other sources. They must be compensation for the fulfillment of actual or fictitious office duties; they are goods permanently set aside for the economic assurance of the office. The transition from such prebendal organization of office to salaried officialdom is quite fluid."[28]

Moreover, as has been hinted by Weber, prebendalization can either transform itself into pure bureaucracy with the development of the money economy or into landlordism with the consolidation of power by the tax farmers. In the case of England, France and other West European nations, 'the sale of office' was gradually replaced by pure bureaucracy; in India the bureaucrats were transforming their 'office prebends' into hereditary estates.

In the development of capitalism in the West, the bourgeoisie at first sided with the crown or the state because the feudal relations were fetters on its growth; in the East, the state was the greatest obstacle which had to be overcome for its emancipation. How irritating was the hold of the bureaucracy on the bourgeoisie can be understood from the following description:

> "It is mentioned that Mir Jumla once demanded Rs 50,000 from the merchant of Dacca. On refusal, they were threatended with death by being trampled by elephants and compromised for Rs 25,000, while the bankers of the city appeased his wrath by paying Rs 300,000 without much further ado. Occasionally, however, the mercantile community could protest successfully against the exactions of a governor or high administrative officer by hartal or suppression of business."29*

So it was not surprising that this rising merchant class would try to undermine the authority of the state. They did this by forming an alliance with the tax-farmers, or office-prebend holders metamorphosed into landlords. However, the weakening of the state did not lead to the consolidation of power by the bourgeoisie. Before the bourgeoisie could form its own state, the internecine warfare among the feudal lords and the consequent decline of the central authority created a power vacuum into which the British stepped. Thus the emerging bourgeoisie of India was defeated by the established bourgeoisie of England which enjoyed the backing of its own state power. The Indian nascent bourgeoisie could have succeeded in overcoming the obstacles of the state power and the rising feudal elements if they could have maintained their commercial superiority a little longer.

Before we discuss the decline of the Indian bourgeoisie, let us first find out what factors were responsible for the growing prosperity of the Indian merchant class. The

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* — Mir Jumla was governor of Bengal. He held this office during the reign of the last great Moghul Emperor, Aurongzeb. (— A.S.)

principle dynamic in the formation of this class was international trade. Since the beginning of the sixteenth century, Indian goods began to enter Europe.

> "Tavernier estimates that the Dutch took from Bengal 6,000 to 7,000 bales of silk annually and the merchants of Tartary took another 6,000 to 7,000 bales. Reckoning a bale at about 1400 square yards, the Bengal silk trade alone may be taken as somewhere about 19.6 million square yards. Stavorinus also estimates that 300,000 to 400,000 lbs. of unrought silk from Kasimbazar was consumed in the European manufactories. This excludes the silk fabrics exported to that centre."[30]

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the amount of bullion exported by the East India Company to India was valued at £22,000 annually. By 1616, the value had risen to £52,000, while at the end of the century the export totalled annually about £800,000. Bengal alone absorbed, in 1681, bullion worth £320,000. At the end of the eighteenth century (1786-1790) the annual average value of Indian cotton piece goods by the East India Company in the English market was £1.4 million. France was also importing annually, at that time (1791), £1.2 million worth of Indian cotton piece goods, while a considerable quantity of these was also exported in American vessels (valued at Rs 5,600,000 in 1816-17).[31] Ten years before the battle of Plassey, an examination of the trade with Britain reveals that India exported to Britain goods worth £1,098,712, while her import was only

£127,224.

This efflorescence of trade and industry continued until the victory of the British power. The towns which were centres of administration were transforming gradually into flourishing trade centres. Merchant capital also took the fundamental step towards manufacturing industry by separating the producers from the products. "The merchant capitalist advanced funds to the weavers with which they bought the necessary material and supported themselves while at work. Thus, when they handed over their products to the merchant capitalist, they were no longer owners of their own produce. The product was alienated from the producer. The merchant capitalist derived not the usual profit out of buying cheap and selling dear; he was already exploiting the labour power of the producer."[32] Under such circumstances, it was not impossible that the Indian bourgeoisie could have triumphed and caused the birth of industrial capitalism.

The development of the new form of commerce and industry was also working as a disintegrating force in the village community. The production of the village artisans, particularly in Bengal and other advanced areas, was no longer oriented to meet the needs of the village; it was being produced for the world market.

> "His production was no longer the property of the community to be exchanged by himself into other necessities produced by equally independent members of the community. Arts and

> crafts, which centuries ago had arisen as a part of the village economy within the bonds of castes, had long ceased to be the exclusive concern of the isolated villages, but was taken from one province to another in order to be sold and resold by a prosperous trading class with considerable capital accumulated in its hand. The principal industries had been commercialized and their base had been removed from the village confines to the towns, hundreds of which flourished all over the country. Still confined to the caste guilds in so far as labour was concerned, the social and economic control of the industrial products had gone out of the hands of the artisan. Instead of completely controlling production and distribution as before, the craftsman was supplied with raw materials by the trading middleman, who took the finished products out of the former's hand, not to distribute it according to the needs of the community, but to sell it for a profit."[33]

In this connection, this statement of Marx in Grundrisse is very significant:

> "In the periods of the pre-bourgeois relations, there sporadically occur free workers whose services are bought for purposes not for consumption, but of production; but, firstly, even if on a large scale, for the production only of direct use values, not of values; and secondly, if a nobleman, e.g., brings the free worker together with his serfs, even if he re-sells a part of the worker's product, and the free worker thus creates value for him, then this exchange takes place only for the superfluous (product) and only for the sake of superfluity, for luxury consumption; it is thus at bottom only a veiled purchase of alien labour for immediate consumption or use value. Incidentally, wherever these free workers increase in numbers, and where this relation grows, there the old mode of production — commune, patriarchal, feudal, etc. — is in the process of dissolution, and the elements of real wage labour are in preparation."[34]

From the point of view of organisation, the merchant capitalist introduced an even more significant innovation. The products were often procured as semi-finished and the final processing was carried out in the workshops by the craftsmen who worked as wage labourers. So this class of traders was the advance guard of the coming Indian industrial bourgeoisie and would have developed into the modern capitalist class had not its normal growth been obstructed.*

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* — At this point, one may very pertinently ask how the Indian bourgeoisie could come into its own when the geography provided the social base of power for the central bureaucracy As has been pointed out by Marx the role of geography is very important in determining the social existence — the base of social economy being the geography. "It is not the mere fertility of the soil, but the differentiation of the soil, the variety of its natural products, the changes of the seasons, which form the physical basis for social division of labour. It is the necessity of bringing a natural force under the control of society, of economizing, of appropriating or subduing it on a large scale by the work of man's hand, that first plays the decisive part in the history of industry. Examples are, the irrigation works in Egypt, Lombardy, Holland, or in India and Persia, where irrigation, by artificial canals, not only supplies the soil with the water indispensable to it, but also carries down to it, in the shape of sediment from the hills, mineral fertilizers. The secret of the flourishing state of industry in Spain and Sicily under the domain of the Arabs lay in their irrigation works." (Cited in G. Plekhanov, The Development of the Monist View of History, p.160.)

However, with the development in the technique of production, the importance of geography begins to diminish. The various social systems, in fact, reflect how the means of production are organised to exploit nature. There cannot be any doubt that the growth of the capitalist mode of production in India would have developed its own mechanism of organising the irrigation works. Marx was quite clear that it was not geography alone but also the lack of technical advance-

The Victory of the British and its impact on the evolution of social classes in India

The victory of British power killed the indigenous capitalism in its nascent stage. The trade which was being carried on by the East India Company, and for which England had to pay a huge amount of bullion to the Indian traders and manufacturers, was transformed into an organised plunder.

The artisans were forced to accept whatever price the company and its agents paid to them. (The agents of the company also had their own native employees, known as Gomasthas. They also used to trade in the name of the company.) The plunder was so merciless, even the puppet Nawab of Bengal complained to the Company's Governor in Calcutta: "They forcibly take away goods and commodities of the ryots, merchants, etc., for a fourth of their value; and by ways of

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ment which made it possible for the state in India to play such a dominant role.

As quoted earlier, Marx says, "This prime necessity of an economical and common use of water, which in the Occident drove private enterprise to voluntary association, as in Flanders and Italy, necessitated, in the Orient where civilisation was too low and the territorial extent too vast to call into life voluntary association, the interference of the centralising power of government." In fact, in Southern India, as has been pointed out by Weber, such voluntary associations were springing up. "... rich entrepreneurs individually or jointly constructed them (irrigation works — A.S.) supplying water for rent. This was the origin of the 'water lords' of South India." (Max Weber, Religion of India, p.81.

violence and oppression, they oblige the ryots etc., to give five rupees for goods which are worth but one rupee."[35]

An English merchant who saw things with his own eyes has presented a vivid picture of how the artisans were being turned into 'bond slaves of the company'.

> "Inconceivable oppressions and hardships have been practised towards the poor manufacturers and workmen of the country, who are, in fact, monopolised by the Company as so many slaves. Various and innumerable are the methods of oppressing the poor weavers, which are duly practised by the Company's agents and gomasthas in the Country; such as by fines, imprisonment, floggings, forcing bonds from them, etc., by which the number of weavers in the country has been greatly decreased. Upon the gomastha's arrival at the aurang or manufacturing town, he fixes upon a habitation, which he calls his Kachari, to which by his peons and harkaras he sommons the brokers, together with the weavers; whom he makes to sign a bond for the delivery of a certain quantity of goods, at a certain and price, and pays them a part of the money in advance. The ascent of the poor weaver is in general not deemed necessary, for the gomasthas, when employed on the Company's investment, frequently make them sign what they please."[36]

Until the industrial revolution came into being in England, the main interest of the merchant capitalist was not to turn India into a market, but to monopolise the Indian exports. For this the artisans were ruthlessly exploited. In 1835, the Governor-General of the company sent the following despatch to London: "The misery hardly finds a parallel in the history of commerce. The bones of cotton weavers are bleaching the plains of India."[37] To employ an expression

of Marx, not only were the artisans being turned 'out of this temporal world', the liquidation of the merchants was also being carried on simultaneously. The Indian merchants were not only prohibited from buying from Indian producers, they were also forced to buy goods at higher prices from the Company and its servants. Thus ended the days of prosperity of the Indian merchants. Henceforth they were allowed to exist only as the agents of the company and their employees in the form of gomasthas and baniyans.

The plunder of Bengal, however, helped the capital formation in England at an unprecedented scale and ushered in the Industrial Revolution in England. Referring to this, Marx wrote in a letter to Engels on October 8, 1858, "We cannot deny that bourgeois society has experienced its sixteenth century a second time."[38] Brook Adams has given a very vivid picture how it happened:

> "Very soon after Plassey, the Bengal plunder began to arrive in London, and the affect appears to have been instantaneous, for all the authorities agree that the 'industrial revolution', the event which has divided the nineteenth century from all antecedent time began with the year 1760. Prior to 1760, according to Baines, the machinery used for spinning cotton in Lancashire was almost as simple as in India; while about 1750 the English iron industry was in full decline because of the destruction of the forests for fuel.... Plassey was fought in 1757, and probably nothing has ever equalled the rapidity of the change which followed. In 1760, the flying shuttle appeared, and coal began to replace wood in semtling. In 1764, Hargreaves invented the spinning jenny, in 1776 Crompton contrived the

> mule, in 1785 Cartwright patented the power-loom and chief of all, in 1768 Watt matured the steam engine, the most perfect of all vents of centralising energy. In themselves, inventions are passive, many of the most important having lain dormant for centuries, waiting for a sufficient store of force to have accumulated to set them working. That store must take the shape of money, and money not hoarded but in motion. Before the influx of the Indian treasure, and the expansion of credit which followed, no force sufficient for this purpose existed; and had Watt lived fifty years earlier, he and his invention must have perished together. Possibly since the world began, no investment has ever yielded the profit reaped from the Indian plunder, because for nearly fifty years Great Britain stood without a competitor. From 1694 to Plassey (1757) the growth had been relatively slow. Between 1760 and 1815 the growth was very rapid and prodigious."[39]

H. H. Wilson has described the injustice of the whole situation in these following vivid words:

> "It is also a melancholly instance of the wrong done to India by the country on which she has become dependent. It was stated in evidence (in 1813) that the cotton and silk goods of India up to the period could be sold for a profit in the British market at a price from 50 to 60 percent lower than those fabricated in England. It consequently became necessary to protect the latter by duties of 70 to 80 percent on their value or by positive prohibition. Had this not been the case, had not such prohibitory duties and decrees existed, the mills of Paisley and Manchester would have been stopped in their outset, and could scarcely have been again set in motion, even by the power of steam. They were created by the sacrifice of Indian manufacture.... British goods were forced upon her without paying any duty, and the foreign manufacturer employed the arm of political injustice to keep down and ultimately strangle a competitor with whom he could not compete on equal terms."[40]

So it is not surprising that, by 1850, India, which had supplied cotton goods to the world for centuries, was importing one fourth of all British cotton exports. The effect of this wholesale destruction of the Indian manufacturing industry on its economy can be easily imagined. Prosperous market places and towns lay in ruins. In Bengal, the place where the English had a strong influence from the beginning, the manufacturing towns of Dacca, Murshidabad, Malda and Bakhergunz were ruined. In 1840, Sir Charles Trevalyan reported "The peculiar kind of silky cotton formerly grown in Bengal, from which the fine Dacca muslins used to be made, is hardly ever seen; the population of the town of Dacca has fallen from 150,000 to 30,000 or 40,000 and the jungle and malaria are fast encroaching upon the town.... Dacca, which was the Manchester of India, has fallen from a flourishing town to a very poor and small one; the distress there has been very great indeed."[41]

Montgomery Martin wrote in 1938, "This annual drain of £3,000,000 on British India amounted in thirty years, at 12 percent (the usual Indian rate) compound interest to the enormous sum of £723,997,917 sterling; or at a low rate, as £2,000,000 for fifty years, to £8,400,000,000 sterling. So constant and accumulating a drain even on England would soon impoverish her."[42] In 1890, Sir Henry Cotton noted: "In 1787, the export of Dacca muslin to England amounted to 30 Lakhs (three million) of rupees; in 1817, they

had ceased altogether.... Families which were formerly in a state of affluence have been driven to desert the towns and betake themselves to the villages for a livelihood.... This decadence had occurred not in Dacca only, but in all districts."[43]

The deindustrialisation of India led to the overpressure on agriculture. The millions of ruined artisans, spinners, weavers, smelters, smiths, and potters had no alternative save to crowd into agriculture. This overpressure on agriculture has continued on a cumulative scale right up to the present day.

So before the rising bourgeoisie in India could seize political power and transform India into a capitalist nation, the British commercial and industrial power made it a colony. We have already observed how the British capital, in its own interest destroyed the thriving manufacturing industry of India; it was also forced to uproot, to meet its own capitalist demands, the traditional Asiatic base of India's land relations. The new land system, introduced by the British, brought into existence new forms of land relations on the ruins of the village community.

The Permanent Settlement Act of 1793 recognized the former revenue farmers as the owners of land, but did not give them magisterial or administrative powers over the ryots. This system prevailed in Bengal, Bihar, Orisa and

sections of Madras whereas the temporary Zamindary settlements were introduced in the United Provinces, the Central Provinces and the Punjab. While the British created in these parts landlords on the western pattern, in other parts it created individual peasant proprietorships. The latter system came to be known as Ryotwari.

The new revenue systems superseded the traditional right of the village community. Under the village community, land was not a commodity, nor coult it be alienated without the approval of the village community. But under the new system, land was transformed into a commodity which could be disposed of in the market like any other commodity. As we have already mentioned, the village community had shown signs of weakening before the British conquest itself. Self-sufficiency and original cohesion was undermined by the urban commercial classes. The efflorescence of trade and the market economy resulted in the emergence of private property in land, especially in the commercially advanced areas of the country. However, the British intervention did not allow India to undergo the natural transition from a conglomeration of thousands of atomistic little republics to a unified economic and political national unit. Her economy had to suffer the aberrations of both feudalism and capitalism.

In creating new land systems, the British rulers were motivated by two considerations: (1) to create a class

of landlords who would safeguard their rule; and (2) to create a money economy in the rural areas through which they could extract the raw materials and sell the finished goods produced in Britain. (The establishment of private ownership in land has been described by Marx as the greatest desideratum of Asiatic society, for it not only ushered in an agrarian revolution but also a social revolution.)

According to the Permanent Settlement Act, the former revenue farmers and the agents of the company (baniyans and the gomasthas) were made landlords in perpetuity; in return they were required to pay a fixed amount of money to the government treasury every year. When this system was introduced, many traditional zamindars lost their estates because they could not understand the legal implications of the system and were replaced by mercantile speculators and rapacious businessmen who were ready to stop at nothing to extract the last anna from the peasantry to pay their quota and fill their pockets. Describing the impact of the Permanent Settlement Act on the peasantry, Wadia and Merchant have written:

> "One result of the Permanent revenue settlement was the creation of a class of zamindars with vested interests. They became the proprietors of big estates which never belonged to them, for they were merely the hereditary tax farmers or rent collectors. Another result was the loss to the ryots of their rights to a customary rent and a permanent tenure. The zamindars ... degenerated into a selfish parasitic class of absentee landlords.... It also increased rack-renting. One more consequence of the Permanent settlement in Bengal

> has been the subdivision of rights in the land. The zamindars leased out their interests, and the middlemen leased out in turn, thus creating a long chain of rent receivers who intervened between the state and the actual cultivators. In 1819, the absolute subjection of the cultivators of the soils to the direction of the zamindars was regretfully admitted...."[44]

Thus the British created a class of absentee lords and many intermediary rent-receiving interests who could spend the surplus generated in the villages, not for further improvement in agriculture, but for luxury goods produced in the factories in Great Britain.

Under the ryotwari system, the settlement was made directly with the cultivator; he was recognized as the owner of the land he tilled. The ryotwari and the temporary settlement, or the Mahalwari, had this advantage from the ruler's point of view — over the Permanent Settlement they, being subject to periodical reassessment, secured for the government the entire spoils.

It will, however, be wrong to assume that under the ryotwari system there was no landlordism. "In practice, through the process of subletting and through the dispossession of the original cultivators by moneylenders and others securing possession of their land, landlordism has spread extensively and at an increasing pace in the ryotwari areas."[45]

One of the reasons, as explained earlier, for the introduction of the new land relations was to replace the

production for village use by that for market. As the rural economy was monetized and the rate of rent was gradually increased, the peasant's need for cash also increased. He was thus forced to produce not for home consumption but for the market.

Moreover, the insistence of the British government on the regular payment of rent, irrespective of good or bad harvests, led to an increasing indebtedness of the peasants. This was further aggravated by the total neglect of public works which was the primary condition of agriculture in India. This was noted long ago by Marx in a classical statement:

> "There have been in Asia, generally from immemorial times, but three departments of government: that of finance, or the plunder of the interior; that of war, or the plunder of the exterior; and finally the department of public works.... The British in East India accepted from their predecessors the departments of finance and of war, but they have neglected entirely that of public works. Hence, the deterioration of an agriculture which is not capable of being conducted on the British principle of free competition, of laissez-faire and laissez-aller".[46]

The havoc this neglect caused on India's agriculture can be guessed from the following observation of a renowned hydraulic engineer. Sir William Willcocks (who surveyed the delta region of Bengal) stated:

> "... innumerable small destructive rivers of the delta region, constantly changing their course, were originally canals which, under the English regime, were allowed to escape from their channels and run wild. Formerly these channels distributed the flood waters of the

> Ganges and provided for proper drainage of the land, undoubtedly accounting for that prosperity of Bengal which lured the rapacious East India merchants there in the early days of the eighteenth century. Some areas, cut off from the supply of loam-bearing Ganges water, have gradually become sterile and non-productive; other, improperly drained, show an accompaniment of malaria.... Nor has any attempt been made to construct proper embankments for the Ganges in its low course, to prevent the enormous erosion by which villages and groves and cultivated fields are swallowed up each year."[47]

With the growing deterioration of agriculture and the increasing burden of land revenue, the peasants' dependence on the moneylender also increased. The nearest person to whom the peasant could go for a loan was the village moneylender. But with the commercialization of agriculture and the introduction of the British legal system, a significant change took place in the function of the moneylender. He could now appropriate land for non-payment of a loan which was not permissible under the village community system.

> "The organisation of the rural economy on the basis of personal and traditional ties provided a significant and useful place to the moneylender in the past and he rendered an indispensable and valuable service to the rural population. The system also worked well. With the increasing adoption of the cash nexus and the introduction of the British system of jurisprudence which laid down rigid laws of property and contract, the human basis of the creditor-debtor relationship in the village was destroyed. Consequently, new opportunities of exploitation were opened up for the moneylender."[48]

How the British legal system facilitated the process of

alienation of lands from the hands of the cultivators to those of the moneylenders has been described by R. P. Dutt in this way:

> "Previously, the peasant could only borrow from the moneylender on his personal security, and the trade of the moneylender was hazardous and uncertain; his transactions were, in practice, subject to the judgement of the village. Under the old laws, the creditor could not seize theland of his debtor. All this was changed under British rule. The British legal system, with the right of distraint on the debtor and the transferability of lands created a happy hunting ground for the moneylender and placed behind him all the power of the police and the law."[49]

The transformation of agriculture on the basis of laissez-faire thus created a situation in which the peasant's burden of debt steeply increased and lands began to pass from the hands of the cultivators to moneylenders and landlords. This large scale expropriation of the peasantry led to the widespread growth of absentee landlordism. Though it is difficult to get the comprehensive statistics for how this process took place in all of the provinces of India, the United Province's (the beggest province in India) Abolition of Zamindari Committee has given the following figures of the total acres from which the cultivators were ejected:

	Total No. cases in which eject-ment was ordered	Arrears of rent cases	Relinquish-ments	Total acres from which cultivators were ejected
1926-27 to 1928-29	21,960	766,303	76,972	347,421
1929-30 to 1932-33	362,159	1,318,002	209,893	880,810
1933-34 to 1936-37	398,036	1,310,155	110,914	911,655
1937-38 to 1938-39	125,405	618,022	26,769	210,474

Source: Cited in Wadia/Merchant, Our Economic Problem, p.306

The following data also reveal the rate at which the growth of non-cultivating landlords and the simultaneous growth of agricultural labourers took place under the British:

	1921	1931
	millions	
Non-cultivating landlords	3.7	4.1
Cultivators (owners or tenants	74.6	65.5
Agricultural labourers	21.7	33.5

Source: R. P. Dutt, India Today, p.238.

Though this process of transfer of land from one hand to another started in the beginning of the eighteenth century, it gathered momentum when the American Civil War brought to the notice of the Indian cultivators the importance of commercial crops. The demand for Indian raw cotton suddenly increased and its price registered a tremendous leap.

Moreover, with the rise of modern industries in England, as we saw earlier, the necessity of raw materials for these industries grew. In many areas the cultivation of industrial crops ousted the production of food crops. As pointed out by Lenin long ago, "The development of commercial agriculture is very often expressed in the transition from the production of one type of produce to another."[50] This is illustrated by the fact that the production of indigo declined in Bengal and its place was taken up by jute when synthetic indigo was invented. About this process of commercialization, Dr. Gadgil says, "The commercialization of agriculture had progressed most in those tracts where the crops were largely grown for export out of the country. This was so in the Burma rice area, the Punjab wheat area, the jute area of Eastern Bengal and the Khandesh, Gujrat and Berar cotton tracts."[51]

"These circumstances were the payment of the government assessments and interest of the moneylender. To pay these two dues the cultivators had to rush into the

market just after harvest, and to sell a large part of their produce at whatever price it fetched."[52]

The commercialization of agriculture did not improve the lot of the cultivators, it only increased his indebtedness and led to the alienation of land from his hands. As a result, a large class of parasitic landlords, moneylenders, and land speculators came into existence and more and more people were drawn to these sources of income. Subinfeudation increased at a rapid rate and there were sometimes, particularly in places where the Zamindari system prevailed, ten to fifteen rent-receiving interests between the original cultivator and the zamindar.

Furthermore, the British rule, as we saw before, destroyed the urban and rural industries and ruined the commercial classes; these uprooted people, having no other employment, fell on agriculture. In this way, agriculture became the only source of livelihood for most of the people in India. How the pressure on agriculture continued to increase during the British rule can be seen from the following census record:

Percentage of population dependent on agriculture:	
1891	61.1
1901	65.5
1911	72.2
1921	73.0
1931	75.0

Source: Census Records of the relevant years.

At the same time the dependence on Industry declined:

Percentage of population dependent on industry:	
1911	5.5
1921	4.9
1931	4.3
1941	4.2

Source: Census Records of the relevant years.

While in the developed countries more and more people were shifting from agricultural to industrial and tertiary sectors since the industrial revolution, the reverse occurred in India. As a result, from about the end of the first quarter of the nineteenth century, the old relation between land and labour came to be reversed. Instead of competition for labour for the cultivation of land, the situation changed into one of competition among cultivators for securing land for cultivation. The increased competition for land raised prices as well as rents of land.

This was further worsened by the fact that the Indian peasant had to maintain a vast rentier or parasitic class which was least interested in the development of agriculture. The process of deindustrialisation was also accompanied by an increase in the production of non-food crops in relation to food crops; this was to meet the demand of raw

materials for the British industries.

Thus the legendary poverty of India today, in contrast to its legendary riches which one day attracted the adventurers from the West, was the result of the British colonial rule. Paul Baran's classic description of the wretchedness of the subjugated peoples possibly fits no other country better than India:

> "... the peoples who came into the orbit of Western capitalist expansion found themselves, in the twilight of feudalism and capitalism, enduring the worst features of both worlds, and the entire impact of imperialist subjugation to boot. To oppression by their feudal lords, ruthless but tempered by tradition, was added domination of foreign and domestic capitalists, callous and limited only by what the traffic would bear. The conservatism and arbitrary violence inherited from their feudal past was combined with the rationality and sharply calculating rapacity of their capitalist present. Their exploitation was multiplied, yet its fruits were not to increase their productive wealth; these went abroad or served to support a parasitic bourgeoisie (and a rentier class) at home. They lived in abysmal misery, yet they had no prospect of a better tomorrow. They existed under capitalism, yet there was no accumulation of capital. They lost their time-honored means of livelihood, their arts and crafts, yet there was no modern industry to provide new ones in their place."[53]

Referring to India, Baran further adds:

> "... it should not be overlooked that India, if left to herself, might have found in the course of time a shorter and surely less tortuous road toward a better and richer society. That on that road she would have had to pass through the purgatory of a bourgeois revolu-

> tion, that a long phase of capitalist development would have been the inevitable price that she would have had to pay for progress, can hardly be doubted. It would have been, however, an entirely different India (and an entirely different world), had she been allowed — as some more fortunate countries were — to realize her destiny in her own way, to employ her resources for her own benefit, and to harness her energies and abilities for the achievement of her own people."[54]

The British rule, however, in the midst of all these destructions and exploitations had a regenerating role. It created for the first time a "political unity ... more consolidated and extending further than ever it did under the Great Moghuls."[55] This, in turn, helped to generate a national consciousness which could not have come into existence in a society which was divided into thousands of atomistic little republics. Under the material conditions of the village community, the consciousness of the people could not develop into a national consciousness; the interests and aspirations of the people could seldom transcend the village consciousness. For the emergence of national consciousness in Europe, it was necessary to destroy the strong bond of feudal relations; for the emergence of nationalism in India, the destruction of the village community was an imperative need. The British rule was the unconscious tool of history in unfolding Indian national consciousness. This the British accomplished by destroying the material base of

the Asiatic or oriental economy — the union between agricultural and manufacturing occupations. As Marx says,

> "We must not forget that these idyllic village communities, inoffensive though they may appear, had always been the solid foundation of oriental despotism, that they restricted the human mind within the smallest possible compass, making it the unresisting tool of superstition, enslaving it beneath traditional rules, depriving it of all grandeur and historical energies. We must not forget the barbarian egotism which, concentrating on some miserable patch of land, had quietly witnessed the ruin of empires, the perpetration of unspeakable cruelties, the massacre of the population of large towns with no other consideration bestowed upon them than on natural events, itself the helpless prey of any aggressor who designed to notice it at all. We must not forget that they subjugated man to external circumstances, that they trnasformed a self-developing social state into a never changing natural destiny...."[56]

However, the material base which the British established had the worst features, as pointed out by Baran, of both feudalism and capitalism. So the national consciousness which emerged on this basis was not a unified national consciousness; it contained all the distortions of the base, this being reflected in the formation of various social classes under the British rule.

The emergence and importance of the educated middle class in the Indian body-politic

The following social classes emerged in the rural and urban areas in India by the second half of the nineteenth

century: (1) the zamindars (landlords) and intermediary rent-receiving interests (small landlords); (2) the class of peasant proprietors divided into various strate; (3) agricultural labourers; (4) merchant class; (5) moneylender class; (6) the modern class of capitalists; (7) the class of petty traders and shopkeepers; (8) the professional middle class, comprising the lawyers, doctors, journalists, professors, engineers, clerks, etc. Many of these classes, particularly the professional middle class, were non-existent in the forms they emerged under the British rule. Speaking of the non-existence of these classes in pre-British India, Moreland says:

> "There were, at this time, no lawyers, very few if any professional teachers, no journalists or politicians, no engineers, no forms of employment corresponding to modern railways ... and if we remove these from middle classes as they exist today, we shall find that there is little left, beyond the families dependent on the various public offices."[57]

This professional middle class was created by the British to meet its administrative needs. The British government had to organize a huge and extensive state machinery to administer the country. It was not possible to staff this huge machine by bringin in educated people from Britain, save filling in the upper posts.

Moreover, the capitalist penetration of the country needed English-educated agents. So English was introduced

as the medium of instruction in 1835 by William Bentick.

However, it should be noted that the Christian missionaries — inspired by a proselytizing spirit — had laid the foundation of the modern education in India long before the government took any steps in that direction. But their attempts were feeble and could not satisfy the growing needs of the colonial economy.

Another source of English education in India were the British liberals. They thought that, by 'Anglicizing' the Indians, they would lead them towards the path of light. Some Indians, like Rammohan Roy, who is regarded as the peioneer of modern education in India, also shared this view. In the debate between the Anglicists and the Orientalists (who wanted Persian and Sanskrit as mediums of instruction for the Muslims and Hindus, respectively), Rammohan's influence comes on the side of 'English'. He believed that English education was necessary for the Indians to overcome traditionalism, which he regarded as the greatest obstacle for progress. To quote his own words:

> "If it had been intended to keep the British nation in ignorance of real knowledge, the Baconian philosophy would not have been allowed to displace the system of the schoolmen, which was best calculated to perpetuate their ignorance. In the same manner, the Sanskrit system of education would be the best calculated to keep this country in darkness if that had been the policy of the British Legislature."[58]

However, in spite of the attempts of the Christian missionaries and the liberals, English could not secure many adherents until it was made the administrative language in 1835. At the same time, English was made the medium of instruction for higher learning. Thousands of English schools and colleges were opened for imparting the knowledge of the English language to the native population.

But, who were the students who came to study in these educational institutions? What were their class and communal backgrounds? Answers to these questions will make it clear why a unified nationalism did not develop in India.

It is to be remembered that, because of the obstructed growth of industries and over-pressure on agriculture, very little opportunity was left in these fields. So, there occurred a tremendous competition for the administrative posts and the professions that came into existence as a result of the British rule. In this race, the Hindus entered the field earlier than the Muslims and, by the second half of the nineteenth century, monopolised most of the occupations. This was the most important reason which later stood in the way of development of a unified nationalism among the Hindus and Muslims.

We have observed how the British rule created a new class of landlords in India. This new class of landlords replaced the office-prebend holders of Moghul India. Moreover, introduction of a new administrative system brought

into being a new bureaucracy. Under the Moghul rule, most of the higher administrative posts or office-prebends were in the hands of the Muslims. It should be noted, however, that the majority of zamindars were Hindus, but the higher administrative posts, such as jaigirdars, fauzdars, masrabdars, aumils, and sezawab, etc., were predominantly held by the Muslims. According to W. W. Hunter, even under and after the enlightened rule of Akbar the distribution of the higher offices of the state stood thus:

> "Among the twelve highest appointments, with the title of Commander of more than Five Thousand Horse, not one was a Hindu. In the succeeding grades, with the title of Commander of from Five Thousand Horse, out of 252 officers, only 31 were Hindus under Akbar. In the next reign, out of 609 Commanders of these grades, only 110 were Hindus; and even among the lowest grades of the higher appointments, out of 169 commanders of from Five Hundred to Two Hundred Horse, only 26 were Hindus."[59]

The loss of political power also meant, for the Muslims, loss of these occupations.

In the first one hundred years of their rule, the British reserved for themselves all the higher civil (covenantal posts) and military appointments. Thousands of Muslims in Bengal and other places lost employment in the army. Some military chiefs or office-prebend holders who had grants of lands left the capital towns and settled down as landlords, with their followers and soldiers as peasants.

However, this security did not last long for the Muslim aristocracy. With the introduction of the Permanent

Settlement Act by Cornwallis, most of them, particularly in Bengal, were gradually elbowed out and replaced by Hindu baniyans, bankers and traders who had ready money to buy the estates.*

Muslims were always reluctant to take to trade although they had a very high proportionate representation in various craft-occupations. Almost all of the traders at the time of British ascendancy were Hindus. By buying landed estates, these big Hindu traders sought the security which was lacking in business. So the Permanent Settlement Act not only secured an ally for the British rule in these landlords, it also removed a potential competitor for the British merchant capitalists.** As M. N. Roy says,

> "The representatives of the British bourgeoisie recognised in the Indian traders and speculators their rival, historically destined to compete for the right of monopoly of exploiting the country. In the pious request of the English landed aristocracy assembled in Parliament, not to wipe off landlordism in India, was found a way to side-track the energies of Indian capital. Feudalism as a hereditary element in social economics had already been irretrievably undermined, the land had been freed from feudal fetters. By the Permanent Settlement Act, the land liberated from feudal

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* — The Hindu landlords were in the majority in those places where trade and industry flourished. Most of the big landlords in United Province, where trade did not flourish to the extent it flourished in Bengal, were Muslims.

** — K. K. Dutta says: "Most of the Company's Gomasthas belonged to the Hindu community and the native commissioners in Calcutta about the year 1758 were all, with two or three exceptions, Hindus." (History of Bengal Subah, p.105.)

ownership was given to the trading class still in its infancy."[60]

Dr. A. K. Nazmul Karim has pointed out how the disintegration of the traditional landed aristocracy had different effects on the two communities:

> "The rigorous regulations which followed the Permanent Settlement (which together came to be popularly known as the 'sun-set law'), together with the sale law, 'resumption proceedings', and ultimately the Muslim law of inheritance — all these combined to disintegrate and dismember the landed estates owned by Muslim zamindars. These laws and regulations under the British rule worked in a similar way both among the Hindus and Muslims and land became transferred to the new 'monied' class or the new merchant class, but as the 'new rich', mainly constituted of the Hindus, in many instances land became alienated from the Muslim hands to the Hindu hands."[61]*

This decay of the Muslim aristocracy was completed when English replaced Persian as the language of the court and the medium of higher education. The positions in the judiciary and civil administration had been one of the major sources of livelihood for the Muslim aristocracy. During the first fifty years of British rule, the Muslims held the major share in these positions. After Lord Cornwallis introduced reforms in 1791, the Europeans began to replace Indians in

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* — Another blow to the Muslim rural aristocracy was dealt when, in 1819, the government decided to confiscate the 'lakhirey' or the freehold property. The 'resumption proceedings', started by Lord William Bentick, also made many Muslim families paupers The 'resumption proceeding' was undertaken to examine the titles to land granted by the Moghuls. Whoever failed to establish his full title lost his land. The examination, in the beginning, was so severe that very few could establish their rights.

high administrative and judicial services. Almost all the covenanted posts were monopolised by the British and they carried extraordinarily high remuneration.

However, in the lower administrative posts, particularly in the judiciary, Muslims could maintain their supremacy until 1837. The memorandum of February 6, 1882, submitted by the Calcutta National Muhammedan Association to the Government of India brings out how the replacement of Persian by English as the official language started the degeneration among the Muslims.

> "The measures introduced by Lord Cornwallis did not, however, make any immediate or decided alteration in the political condition of the Muhammedans, and in spite of the status which the Hindu collectors of revenue had acquired under the Permanent Settlement, and the new system of judicature, the Muhammedans continued to occupy the front rank among the Indian Communities. The Civil Lists of those days show a proportion of 75 percent of Muhammedans in the service of the state. It is not until Lord William Bentick's administration that Mussulman's decadence really commenced.... In 1837 an order was promulgated that office business should thenceforward be conducted either in English or in the provincial dialects....
>
> "The actual impoverishment of the middle class Muhammedans dated from this epoch. English-educated Hindu youths, trained foremost in Missionary institutions, from which Mussulmans naturally stood aloof, now poured into every government office and completely shut out the Muhammedans. A few unimportant offices remained in the hands of Muhammedans, but year by year, day by day, their number has decreased, until there has come to pass what Hunter described ten years ago in his 'Indian Mussalmans', — 'There is now scarcely a Government Office in which a government can hope for any

post above the rank of porter, messenger man, filler of ink pots, and mender of pens'."[62]

For the Hindus whose mother tongue was not Persian, it was not at all a problem to adopt English instead of Persian. For the Muslim aristocracy it was a question of cultural attachment — Persian being the language of the Muslim political elite. Moreover, the Muslim aristocracy had a contempt for the vernaculars, which were the languages of the 'subject race'. So, when the change came from Persian to English and the provincial languages, the Muslim upper class failed to adjust to this change.

> "The Muslims at that time had no institution where they could learn English, and there was no provision for teaching vernaculars in the schools, public or private, resorted to by the Muslims. The youths of Hindu College therefore reaped the full benefit of the change and caught unaware and unprepared the remnant of the Muslim upper class that had sought to adjust itself to the new regime and that was ousted from every grade of official life."[63*]

This trend continued until the end of the nineteenth century. In 1869, there was one Muslim to two Hindus in the highest grade government posts; only two years later

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* — Furthermore, the Muslim community led by the Muslim Sharif class or the aristocracy, as pointed out by Dr. Naxmul Karim, "stood opposed to the English education, because it was 'kufr' or heresy to have such an education, because it inculcated 'infidelity and sceptism' etc. The best English schools were run by the missionaries and the Muslims as a community stood aloof from such educational institutions." (The Modern Muslim Political Elite in Bengal, p.171.) So, when the proposal for introduction of English as the medium of instruction was made in 1835, the middle class Hindu intelligentsia under Raja Rammohan Roy's leadership heartily welcomed it, while 8312 Muslims, including many prominent persons, submitted a petition to the government, opposing the move.

there was but one Muslim to ten Hindus. The proportion in the lower ranks changed from four Muslims out of thirty in 1869, to four out of 39 in 1871. The situation was the same in other professions.

In law, up to 1839, the Muslims were almost as numerous as the Hindus. But in this field also the Muslims could not hold their own for long. Of 240 lawyers who joined the Bar from 1852 to 1868, 239 were Hindus and only one was Muslim.

In medicine, the position of the Muslims was equally pitiable.

> "(a) Among the graduates of medicine in the Calcutta University, there were four doctors; three Hindu, one Englishman and no Moslem. (b) Among eleven bachelors of medicine, ten were Hindus and one an Englishman. (c) The hundred and four licentiates of medicine consisted of five Englishmen, ninety-eight Hindus and one solitary Moslem."[64]

Thus, by the second half of the nineteenth century, the Muslim upper class was ousted from almost all employment under the government and professions by a rising Hindu middle class.*

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* — Compared with the Muslims in Bengal, where the British had their first foothold, the Muslims in other provinces were more backward. As B. B. Majumder says, "In 1881-82, the number of Mussalman students pursuing their studies in colleges in Bengal Presidency was 106 as against 30 in the Punjab. In the high schools of Bengal there were 3831 Mussalman students, as against 117 in Madras, 118 in Bombay, 697 (including students in middle schools) in N. W. Provinces and 91 in the Punjab. Between 1858 and 1893, the Calcutta University produced 290 Mohammadan graduates, as against 29 of the Madras, 30 of the Bombay, 102 of the Punjab,

It should be noted, however, that Hindus in the commercially advanced areas were better placed in both education and services even before the introduction of English as the official language. In Bengal, in the thirties of the nineteenth century, according to Adam's report more Hindu scholars were learning Persian than Muslims. To quote Adam,

> "With regard to scholars, there are only 9 Hindu to 149 Mussalman students of Arabic, and consequently 2087 Hindus to 1409 Mussalmans who are learning Persian. The small comparative number of Arabic students who are Hindus and the large comparative number of Persian scholars of the same class seem to admit of only one explanation, viz., that the study of Persian has been forced by the practice of government; and it seems probable that even a considerable number of Mussalmans who learned Persian may be under the same artificial influence."[65]

It is also interesting to note that even the great Muslim religious leader of the eighteenth century — Shah Wabullah (1703-81) — who invited the Afgan King Ahmad Shah Abdali to invade India, noticed the growing prosperity of the Hindus. His letter to the Afgan King reveals how deeply he felt the degeneration of the Muslims. "In short, the Muslim community is in a pitiable condition. All control of the machinery of government is in the hands of Hindus because they are the only people who are capable and industrious. Wealth and prosperity are concentrated in their hands, while the share of Muslims is nothing but poverty and

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and 102 of the Allhabad University." (Cited in A. K. Nazmul Karim, The Modern Muslim Political Elite in Bengal, p.183.)

misery."[66]

It is not true that the Muslims were less industrious than the Hindus. The decline that occurred did not occur in the character of the people as most of the Hindus and Muslims in India, more or less belonged to the same racial stock. What happened is that with the decay of the central authority of the Moghul power, the power of the patrimonial bureaucracy composed of the Muslim aristocracy declined. Their power was being gradually undermined by a new rising bourgeoisie predominatly composed of the Hindus. It is clear that they were even consolidating their position in administration.

So, in the late nineteenth century, when a new rising Muslim intelligentsia was thinking that the cause of the backwardness of the Muslim community could be found in their reluctance to taking to English education, a penetrating Muslim scholar, D. H. Hussein, rightly observed that this was an apparent cause but not the real one. "... now what are the causes that led to our decline? Want of education has been assigned as the main cause but want of school teaching is more the consequence of social decadence than the cause."[67] In his view,

> "... our social degeneracy must be mainly ascribed to our inability to accumulate wealth and inability to preserve property. Both Hindus and Muhammadans are living under the same government but while Hindu community is accumulating wealth and prosperity and gaining in social importance, we have lost the wealth and property that we had when the English people assumed sovereignty of India."[68]

He was also aware of how some social institutions stood in the way of capital formation among the Muslims.

> "Firstly — there is no doubt that the superior classes amongst the Hindus are more economical in their domestic habits and less expensive in their social customs.... Secondly — there is less energy and restlessness amongst the higher Mahomadans than amongst the Hindus of the same social rank.... Thirdly — one large source of wealth is entirely closed to Mahomadans — I mean interest on money lent."[68]

As noted before, the rising Hindu Bourgeoisie, in spite of its obstructed growth, was making its presence felt in every sphere.

So, it was not surprising that the relatively more prosperous Hindus had better literacy rates than the Muslims. Moreover, the loss of political power, the introduction of the new land tenure system, the abolition of Persian as the administrative language, all contributed to the degeneration of the Muslim upper class (in a very restricted sense, the judges, lawyers, etc.). However, it should be noted that the loss of Persian was not felt by the masses of the Muslim population. To them, Persian was as alien a language as English. As Adam says,

> "I have shown ... that Persian was peculiar to the Mohammadan population, and that the language has a strong hold on the native society, but it is the upper class of native society that it has the hold, and it has not descended, and cannot be expected to descend, to the body of the Mohammadan population. To

them it is foreign and unknown...."[69]

He also points out that

> "... the rural Mussalman population speak Bengali, attend, indiscriminately with Hindus, Bengali schools, and read, write, correspond, and keep account in that language."[70]

However, it is the elite or the upper section of the society which gives leadership to the society. Due to its loss of political power and ousting from every occupation, the Muslim elite stood opposed to the English administration and advised the masses to boycott everything English, calling it the language of infidels.

This upper aristocracy not only shunned 'English', they also maintained a social distance from the Muslim masses by speaking a language different from theirs. This fact is important to note, because therein lies one of the fundamental roots from which later grew Bengali nationalism. As we have already observed, this upper class, Muslim aristocracy was composed of the landed aristocracy (office-prebend holders) or the religious leaders. It also included the Ulemas (they used to enjoy grants of freeholdings from the state).

Although the cultural language of this class was Persian, the language they spoke at home was Urdu or Hindusthani. It is evident from the educational schemes presented by Nawab Abdul Latif, for the Muslims in Bengal, that the

upper class was anxious to maintain its social distance from the mass of the Muslim community.

> "Briefly summarised, my opinion as regards Bengal is that primary instruction for the lower classes of people who for the most part are ethnically allied to the Hindus should be in the Bengali language ... for the middle and upper classes of Mohammedans, Urdu should be recognised as the vernacular. That is the language which they use in their own society in the town and country alike and no Mohammedan would be received in respectable society among his own coreligionists if he were not acquainted with Urdu."[71]

Sir Ameer Ali, who claimed foreign ancestry, also spoke in the same vein: "... the Mohammedans of Northern India were descended chiefly from Mohammedan settlers from the West, who had brought with them to India traditions of civilizations and enlightenment, while in Eastern Bengal the Mohammedans were chiefly converts from Hinduism who still observed many Hindu customs and institutions."[72] (Until very recent times, the West Pakistani ruling class held that the Muslims in Bengal are inferior because they are converts from the indigenous people.)

On the other hand, to the Bengali Hindu upper class, Bengali was not an alien language. So, not only could they reap great benefit when Bengali was made the medium of instruction, they could actively engage in enriching the language. However, when the Muslim middle class began to emerge in the late nineteenth century (which, as we will see later, emerged

not from the upper class but from the lower landholding class), many in this class became aware that by pursuing a foreign language they would only alienate themselves from the mass of the Muslim community. One Mr. Syeed wrote in the Muslim Chronicle in 1881, "Whatever we may feel, think, or do, the Bengali will be our vernacular; this is now a physical certainty. It behoves us then to turn our attention at once to that language and try to introduce into its structure the peculiarities of our diction and the peculiarities of our character (Muslim — A.S.)."[73]

In the middle of the nineteenth century one section of the Muslim community realised that they would have to take to English education if they wanted to acquire wealth or social position in India. Sir Syed Ahmed in Northern India and Nawab Abdul Latif in Bengal played a very important role in rousing this consciousness among the Muslims.

In the beginning they had to face a stiff opposition, particularly from the Ulemas or the religious leaders. The Ulemas carried on a vigorous propaganda against English education. But, public opinion by that time had decisively changed in favour of Sir Syed and Nawab Abdul Latif, because it became apparent to many Muslims that the knowledge of English was necessary for mere survival. In this attempt at modernising the Muslims, they were also helped by the British bureaucrats.

The British ruling class was growing suspicious of the intentions of the rising Hindu intelligentsia. It

is interesting to note that, as early as 1843, debating societies were established by Hindu youths in Calcutta. In the meetings of these societies the debators would often call the British robbers and plunderers. One such meeting at Hindu College was terminated by the European principal on the plea that seditious ideas were being propagated through the debate.

> "To stand up in a hall which the Government had erected and in the heart of a city which was the focus of enlightenment, and there to denounce, as oppressors and robbers, the men who governed the country, did in his opinion, amount to treason.... The College would never have been in existence, but for the solicitude the Government felt in the mental improvement of the natives of India. He could not permit it, therefore, to be converted into a den of treason, and must close the doors against all such meetings."[74]

As we have already observed, the Hindus availed themselves of the new education at least seventy years before the Muslims. Thus, not only did they predominantly occupy most of the jobs that emerged as a result of the British rule, they were also first to raise the nationalist slogans. It may be mentioned here in this connection, that the pioneers of nationalism are very often the bourgeoisie and the intellectual class.*

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* — The intellectuals in the traditional and pre-capitalist societies are not nationalists. They owe their allegiance either to tribe, sect, caste or religion. Historically it has been found that, with the growth of capitalism, they transcend these limitations and become the champion of national interests.

But the intellectuals or the bourgeoisie do not automatically become nationalists. The particular social economy and social background make them nationalists. It is to be remembered that the new Hindu middle class which was formed under the impact of British rule was born in the urban milieu. This class came into existence in the urban centres, such as Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, etc., which were established by the British. Here they came under the direct influence of British capitalism and its appendage — British liberal ideas. The Hindu intellectuals developed a progressive and critical outlook and could seek inspiration from the writings of Bentham, Mill, Comte, and Paine. How avidly they were seeking the new ideas from the West could be glimpsed from the following description left by a missionary:

> "The great authorities ... were Hume's essays and Paine's Age of Reason. With copies of the latter, in particular, they were abundantly supplied.... It was some wretched bookseller in the United States of America who — basely taking advantage of the reported infidel leanings of a new race of men in the East and apparently regarding no God but his silver dollars — despatched to Calcutta a cargo of that most malignant and pestiferous of all antichristian publications. From one ship a thousand copies were landed, and at first were sold at the cheap rate of one rupee per copy, but such was the demand that the price soon rose, and after a few months, it was actually quinopled. Besides the separate copies of the Age of Reason, there was also a cheap American edition, in one thick vol. 3vo, of all Paine's works including the Rights of Man, and other minor pieces, political and theological."[75]

The new Hindu intelligentsia, imbued with Western liberal thought, could give a new lead to the Hindu society. The result was a renaissance and reform movement among the Hindus. There was also a revivalist movement, but it was submerged in the stronger current of the reform movements. As has been pointed out by Karl Mannheim,

> "In every society there are social groups whose special task it is to provide an interpretation of the world for that society. We call these the 'intelligentsia'."[76]

The outlook of this intelligentsia, however, is dependent on the social matrix. The Hindu intelligentsia, coming into existence in the British established towns, could see the forces of capitalism in operation. Nationalism was born out of this outlook. They became critical of the colonial role India was being forced to play.

To the same situation, however, the Muslim intelligentsia reacted differently. Their response was a revivalist movement. Being ousted from all gainful occupations, they sought solace in religion. To quote again from Mannheim,

> "The most important negative effect of unemployment consists in the destruction of what may be called the 'life-plan' of the individual. The life-plan is a very vital form of personal rationalisation, in as much as it restrains the individual from responding immediately to every passing stimulus. Its disruption heightens the individual's susceptibility to suggestions to an extraordinary degree and strengthens belief in miraculous 'cure-alls'."[77]

The 'cure-alls' for the decaying Muslim aristocracy were the revivalist movements. These movements propagated the view that the reason for the decline of the Muslims lay in their deviation from Islam. Thus these movements were directed to restore the original spirit of Islam. This is one of the reasons why the first Muslim intelligentsia that came into existence under the British rule could not make itself free of revivalist influence.

The Western educated Muslim intelligentsia began to form — seventy years later than the Hindus — from the remnants of the landed aristocracy. Unlike the Hindus, they did not emerge from that class which made money as agents of the company and its employees, as moneylenders, or as rent receivers established by the British revenue system.

On the other hand, the Muslim intelligentsia developed from a different social base. As a remnant of the old aristocracy, they did not take naturally to the vernacular, although material necessity forced them to adopt English. Noting this phenomenon, W. W. Hunter says (with reference to Bengal), "The British system of public instruction .. conducts education in the vernacular of Bengali, a language which the educated Muhammedan despises (most of whom were students of Aligarh)."[78]

This was one of the main reasons why the Muslim intelligentsia, when it began to emerge under the leader-

ship of Sir Syed and Nawab Abdul Latif, did not develop a national outlook. The failure of the Muslim upper class to adopt the vernacular was a symptom (growth of nationalism, in most cases, is dependent on the growth of the vernacular or the national language) of the disease, not the cause. The cause was its social base.

The British bureaucrats took the opportunity of this differential development of the Muslim and Hindu educated middle classes to widen the gap between them.

Establishment of the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League and the creation of the Two-Nation theory

As we have already observed, when the British captured power in India, they replaced the Moghuls. In the beginning, they were very hostile to the Muslims as the community of the ruling class, and favoured the Hindus (Hindus, of course, as we have seen, were acquiring more power with the decline of the Moghul bureaucracy). This was the strategy of the political counterpoise employed by Britain to maintain its political rule over India. Lord Ellenborough stated, in 1843, "I cannot close my eyes to the belief that the race (Mohammedans) is fundamentally hostile to us, and our true policy is to reconcile the Hindus."[79]

This policy was generally followed until the third quarter of the nineteenth century. But, with the growth of

nationalism among the rising Hindu intelligentsia, the British turned to the Muslims for support.

At the same time, the British tried to check the rising tide of nationalism — in particular, the militant type — by establishing the Indian National Congress. As is well known, this organisation was brought into existence through the initiative of A. W. Hume, a British civil servant. Hume, in his official capacity, had received many secret police reports which revealed the growth of popular discontent and the spreading of undergound conspiratorial organisations. The biographer of Hume, Sir William Wederburn, explains in these words what prompted Hume to establish the Indian National Congress:

> "Towards the close of Lord Lytton's Viceroyalty, that is, about 1878 and 1879, Mr. Hume became convinced that some definite action was called for to counteract the growing unrest. From well-wishers in different parts of the country he received warnings of the danger to the Government, and to the future welfare of India, from the economic suffering of the masses and the alienation of the intellectuals."[80]

According to Andrews and Mukherjee, the historians of the National Congress:

> "The years just before the Congress were most dangerous since 1857. It was Hume, among English officials, who saw the impending disaster and tried to prevent it.... He went to Simla in order to make clear to the authorities how almost desperate the situation had become. It is probably that his visit made the new Viceroy, who was a brilliant man of affairs,

> realise the gravity of the situation and encourage Hume to go on with the formation of the Congress. The time was fully ripe for this all-India movement. In place of an agrarian revolt, which would have had the sympathy and support of the educated classes, it gave the rising classes a national platform from which to create a new India. It was all to the good in the long run that a revolutionary situation based on violence was not allowed to be created once again."[81]

The strategy of the liberal imperialism is clearly evident in this scheme.

The intelligentsia and the commercial bourgeoisie formed the main social base of the Congress. They considered the interests of Britain and India to be identical rather than antagonistic. (Particularly this is true in the case of the commercial bourgeoisie. The industrial bourgeoisie has not yet come into prominence.) Hence they were loyalists and enthusiastic supporters of the British rule. Dadabhai Naoroji expressed their feeling when he said, "Let us speak out like one man and proclaim that we are loyal to the backbone; that we understand the benefits English rule has conferred upon us."[82]

However, the interests of a colony and the metropolitan centre cannot go hand in hand. So the British could not satisfy even the modest demands of the Indian liberals. The Indian liberals wanted free economic development of India. But as a colony, the economic growth of India had to be subordinated to the British capitalism and therefore could

not be allowed to grow without fetters. So, the British had to turn down even such minimum demands as simultaneous examinations for I.C.S. in England and India, introduction of the elective principle in the legislature, the separation of judicial and executive functions, and the right of the Indians to be admitted to higher public services.

The Indian liberals failed to realize that Britain could not grant administrative reforms of a far-reaching character without undermining the power base of its rule. Because of the existence of the objective conflict of interests, the Indian National Congress, in spite of its loyalist and safety-valve character, encountered the displeasure of the government just after its establishment. The government issued circulars that said, "the presence of government officials, even as visitors, at Congress meetings, is not advisable and their taking part in the proceedings of any such meetings is also prohibited."[83] Governor-General Lord Curzon wrote in a letter to the Secretary of State in 1900: "The Congress is tottering to its fall, and one of my great ambitions while in India is to assist it to a peaceful demise."[84]

The British also decided to combat the nationalist activities of the Congress through a policy of keeping divided the two religious communities. (It may be mentioned here that the Simor Report, in dealing with the Hindu-Muslim antagonism, referred to its comparative absence in the Princely

States.) As early as 1888, Sir John Stratchey, an expert on India, wrote:

> "Nothing could be more opposed to the policy and universal practice of our government in India than the old maxim of divide and rule; the maintenacne of peace among all classes has always been recognised as one of the most essential duties of our 'belligerant civilisation'; but this need not blind us to the fact that the existence side by side of these hostile elements is one of the strong points in our political position in India. The better classes of Mohammedans are a source to us of strength and not of weakness. They constitute a comparatively small but energetic minority of the population, whose political interests are identical with ours, and who under no conceivable circumstances would prefer Hindu dominion to our own."[85]

It is interesting to note that Lord Dufferin, who encouraged Lord Hume to take the initiative in establishing the National Congress, was also the architect for laying the foundation of the rise of Muslim separatism in the Indian body politic. In a recent biography of Badruddin Tayabjee, the first Muslim President of the Indian National Congress, his son, N. H. Tayabjee, has exposed Lord Dufferin's role in the following words: "Indeed as greatly intensified was it (i.e., Hindu/Muslim fraternization) during the benign rule of Lord Ripon that the Muslim leaders were then vying with each other to profess their faith in the unity of the nation and were preaching brotherhood between Hindus and Muslims, till 1889. In that year, Lord Ripon's term of office expired, Dufferin, a Tory Imperialist — the choice of Randolph

Churchill — who set out vigorously to undo all that Lord Ripon had done...."[86]

A resolution was adopted in 1885 at the prompting of Lord Dufferin which, according to Dr. A. K. N. Karim, came to be regarded by the Muslim intelligentsia as the Magna Carta of Muslim rights and privileges. This resolution ensured for the Muslims a "larger number of appointments the gifts of which lie in the hands of the local governments, the High Courts or local officers."[87]

The comparative backwardness of the Muslims in education, and consequently the disproportionate employment of Hindus and Muslims in the service of the state, thus enabled the ruling power to drive a wedge between the two communities in developing a unified nationalism. This root of antagonism, as we have already seen, lay in the socio-economic milieu of the rising middle classes in the two communities. As R. P. Dutt argues,

> "The growth of trade, commerce and education had begun much earlier in Bombay, Calcutta and Madras, that is, in the Hindu majority areas, than in the Muslim areas of the North. The Hunter Commission Report in 1882 found that the Muslim average in university education was only 3.65 percent. To this day, the percentage of literacy is considerably higher among the Hindus than among the Muslims. Hence with the rise of the Indian bourgeoisie, conditions of sectional rivalry existed which could easily assume a communal guise. The great landlords who formed the main basis of the Muslim upper class, viewing with displeasure the advance of the trading and industrial bourgeoisie, regarded that advance as

'Hindu' — the menace of the 'Hindu Baria' etc."[88]

On October 1, 1906, a Muslim deputation, consisting mainly of the aristocrats, met Lord Minto, the Viceroy of India. The deputation had no connection with the Muslim masses, nor did it claim it. The opening sentence of the deputation was "We, the undersigned nobles, jaigirdars, talukdars, lawyers, zamindars, merchants and others...."[89]

Like the liberal bourgeoisie who formed the Congress a quarter century ago, these landed gentry also paid their homage to the British rule and tole the Governor that they are grateful for the "incalculable benefits conferred by British rule on the teeming millions of India...."[90]

This deputation demanded 'political importance' in the form of separate and privileged representation in any electoral system that might be set up. "The political importance of a community," they further added, "to a considerable extent gains strength or suffers detriment according to the position that the members of that community occupy in the service of the state."[91] In the bureaucratically controlled economy of India, there is no doubt, that the statement contained a great amount of truth.

So the government, they claimed, should reserve a due proportion of all jobs in the government, for Muslims, irrespective of merit. The examination system or the competitive principle, they contended, would only lead to the monopoly

of all official influence by the Hindu middle class. So the examination system should be dispensed with.

Throughout the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the rising Muslim middle class had been complaining against the competitive system, by means of which, they claimed, the Bengali Hindus with better cramming power could easily excell, whereas the Muslims, even the Hindus from other parts of India, often failed. The Muslim Chronicle, on May 30, 1895, editorially commented,

> "The competitive system of examination has been disastrous in its consequences not only to the Mussulmans, but also to the Christian, Behori, Hindu and the Uriay. All these are admittedly a minority, behind the Bengali Hindu in education. The latter has established a bad reputation for passing examinations beyond all cavil. He has shown this by successfully competing with English boys on their own soil in the Civil Service examination."[92]

Another complaint of the Muslim intelligentsia, that was partially true, was that, so long as the jobs in government remained monopolised by the Hindu middle class, Muslims had no chance of getting into government employment as these were jealously guarded by the Hindus from outside intrusion. Thus, the struggle between the Hindu and Muslim middle classes for the government services was grasped by the government to transform it into a communal struggle. There is some suspicion that the government itself played an important part in the submission of the memorandum by the

deputation. Manlana Mohammad Ali, who was a member of the deputation, claimed, in 1923, that it was a 'command performance' arranged by the government.

The alacrity Lord Minto showed in accepting the demands of a separate electorate which struck at the roots of the development of a unified nationalism confirms this suspicion. Lord Oliver, who as a Secretary of State for India, had access to all the records, wrote in a letter to The Times: "No one with a close acquaintance with Indian affairs will be prepared to deny that on the whole there is a predominant bias in British officialism in India in favour of the Muslim community, partly on the ground of closer sympathy, but more largely as a makeweight against Hindu nationalism."[93]

Moreover, the play of underhand patronage of the government behind the creation of the Muslim League cannot also be ruled out. J. Ramsay Macdonald wrote in 1910:

> "The All-India Muslim League was formed on December 30, 1906. The political successes which have rewarded the efforts of the League ... have been so signal as to give support to a suspicion that sinister influences have been at work, that the Mohammedan leaders were inspired by certain Anglo-Indian officials, and that these officials pulled wires at Simla and in London and of malice aforethought sowed discord between the Hindu and the Mohammedan communities by showing the Mohammedans special favour."[94]

Whether these allegations were true or not, the conflict between the middle classes in these two communities for more jobs and political influence helped the British

power to administer this vast land of immense population through a policy of divide and rule. In fact, the class background of the Congress and the Muslim League was the greatest impediment that stood in the way of the growth of a unified nationalism. The League being formed from the landed aristocracy, and the Congress from the trading and business class, there was little likelihood that their interests would be identical. This class conflict was further reinforced by communal cleavage.

It would be wrong, however, to assume that the superstructural elements such as culture and religion had no role in this communal bitterness.

> "When men are grouped together on a religious footing, the mass-mind which emerges is likely to be abnormally conscious of creed, and can be swung with ease towards fanaticism. Candidates are driven to rival one another in zeal for the faith, and things of secular concern are thrust into the background. In the Hindu camp a lawyer, who is in fact the lawyer's or usurer's candidate, may win peasant votes by swearing to protect the sacred cow. The corresponding trick is played with equal success in the Muslim electorate by a green-turbaned hadji (pilgrim) just returned from Mecca. The result is the peasants of the two creeds never come together and with difficulty perceive the overwhelming identity of their common interests."[95]

Thus it was possible for the Muslim League led by the landlords of Oudh and the United Province to rouse the Muslim peasants in Bengal, at least for a short time, in the name of Muslim nationalism. It is also significant that the landlords in Bengal were predominantly Hindus. More-

over, an incipient bourgeoisie was emerging among the Muslims in Bombay and Gujrat. Most of them came from various Muslim Shea communities known as Memons, Bohra, and Khoja. But their capital was very little compared to the capital commanded by the Hindu bourgeoisie.

Though the landed aristocracy led the Muslim League, they felt that to make the Muslim League a powerful political party, they should welcome the rising Muslim bourgeoisie (which in fact was a lumpen bourgeoisie). For the Muslim bourgeoisie, a separate Muslim state meant a territory where they could develop unhindered by Hindu competition. Thus the demand for Pakistan also reflected the uneven development of the two bourgeoisies. Poor Muslims also, particularly the peasants in Bengal, were led to understand that their lot would considerably improve if they could escape from Hindu oppression which was strangulating them in the forms of moneylenders and landlords. Therefore, when Jinnah declared, "We maintain and hold that Hindus and Muslims are two major nations by any definition or test of a nation"[96] almost all Muslims enthusiastically supported this theory.

The demand for a separate Muslim state was formally made to the government in a resolution in a meeting of the Muslim League in Lahore in 1940. The resolution, however, envisaged not a single Muslim state but a group of sovereign Muslim states in the Muslim majority areas of North-Eastern and North-Western India. The Congress at first vehemently

opposed the partition of India. But when it became apparent that the other alternatives would be communal riots at regular intervals, the Congress leadership felt compelled to accept partition as a peaceful solution of the independence issue.

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CHAPTER II

PAKISTAN'S SEARCH FOR NATIONAL IDENTITY

Commenting on the birth of Pakistan, Gunnar Myrdal has observed:

> "No country in South Asia has so little historical individuality as Pakistan. It cannot claim descent from the Mogul empires, which represented not nation-states but loosely knit entities wherein a Moslem ruler and aristocracy dominated a mixed population, few of whom were ever converted to Islam. The demand for Pakistan as a separate homeland for nearly one quarter of the population of British India was instead a kind of Moslem Zionism — the more so since before partition there were no large areas exclusively inhabited by Moslems. It rested on the assertion that Hinduism and Islam were not merely different religions but that the two peoples were distinct nations as well.[1]

Jinnah asserted this 'two-nation doctrine' in the following words:

> "We are a nation of a hundred million, and what is more, we are a nation with our distinctive culture and civilization, language and literature, art and architecture, names and nomenclature, sense of value and proportion, legal laws and moral codes, customs and calendar, history and traditions, aptitude and ambitions — in short, we have our own distinctive view on life and of life. By all canons of international law we are a nation."[2]

On the basis of Jinnah's theory, as was pointed out by Gandhi in Harijan, the Muslims in Bengal and Punjab were two distinct nations: "If we accept the argument of Sri Jinnah, the Muslims of Bengal and the Muslims of Punjab would become two distinct and separate nations."[3] The wide culture differences

between the Bengalis in East Pakistan and West Pakistanis consisting of the Punjabis, Sindhis and Pathans prompted Rupert Emerson to declare, "By the accepted criteria of nationhood there was in fact no such thing as a Pakistani nation."[4]

The people in East and West Pakistan are different in every respect. Linguistically, culturally and even racially they have nothing in common except religion. In terms of language and culture, East Pakistan is a homogenous unit, whereas West Pakistan has four distinct ethnic groups: Punjabis, Pathan, Beluchis and Sindhis. In East Pakistan, all the people speak Bengali and have a rich cultural heritage which has little in common with West Pakistan.

Geographically, Pakistan was rightly called a double country. The western part of the country has more similarity with the Middle East than with East Pakistan which resembles and belongs to South-East Asia. Barring the hilly regions of Chittagong and Mymensingh, East Pakistan is a flat fertile plain. Rainfall in East Pakistan is abundant, exceeding one hundred inches, and floods occur almost every year. Most areas in West Pakistan, on the other hand, are arid and semi-arid, with an average annual rainfall of less than twenty-five inches. The soil and climate in East Pakistan are suitable for the production of rice, jute and tea; West Pakistan's main agricultural products are wheat and

cotton.

These differences were reinforced by the fact that the two wings were separated by one thousand miles of Indian territory. Thus there was little physical mobility of people from one wing to the other. The only links, except religion, were the English language and the Pakistan International Airlines.

So, the first task before the leaders of Pakistan was to keep these two wings together and to create a national identity.* Religion has never been recognized as the cementing force of nation-building. Had religion played such a role, the Arab countries in the middle East would have formed a single nation. Even in Pakistan, many religious leaders believe nationalism is a deviation from religion. Maulana Moudidi, an Alhazar, educated, Muslim divine opposed the Pakistan movement because, in his view, "Nationalism is the

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* — As we have already mentioned, the Lahore resolution envisaged more than one Muslim state in India. Paragraph 3 of the resolution states, "Resolved that it is the considered view of this session of the All India Muslim League that no constitutional plan would be workable in this country or acceptable to the Muslims unless it is designed on the following basic principle, namely, that geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted, with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary, that the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority, as in the North-Western and Eastern zones of India should be grouped to constitute 'Independent States' in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign." (Francois Bernier, Travels in Moghul India, p.320)

antithesis of Islam, for it sets up the nation as a god."[5]

That religion would be more divisive instead of cohesive in the nation-building became apparent to Jinnah* just after Pakistan came into being. One of the reasons which led him to believe so was the factional quarrel among the various religious sects in Islam.** As the representative of the rising Muslim middle class — who used religion but who did not believe in religion — he wanted to develop Pakistan (once Pakistan was achieved) as a secular state. On August 11th, 1947, at the inaugural session of the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, he said:

> "If you will work in co-operation, forgetting the past, burying the hatchet, you are bound to succeed. If you change your past and work together in a spirit that everyone of you, no matter to what community he belongs, no matter what relations he had with you in the past, no matter what is his colour, caste or creed, is first, second and last a citizen of this state with equal rights, privileges and obligations, there will be no end to the progress you will make.
>
> "I cannot emphasize it too much, we should begin to work in the spirit, and in course of time all these angularities of the majority and minority communities ... will vanish.
>
> "You are free, you are free to go to your temples; you are free to go to your mosques or to any other places of worship in that state of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion or caste or creed — that has nothing to do with the business of the state.... We are starting with this fundamental principle that we are all citizens and equal citizens of one state.

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* — Jinnah was regarded as the architect of Pakistan.
** — In 1952, the Sunni-Quadiani conflict led to a blood-bath in Pakistan.

> "Now I think we should keep that in front of us as our ideal and you will find that, in the course of time, Hindus would cease to be Hindus and Muslims would cease to be Muslims, not in the religious sense, because that is the personal faith of each individual, but in the political sense as citizens of the state."*[6]

Was this statement not contrary to the two-nation theory propounded by him earlier? The contradiction was rooted in the class interests of the rising Muslim middle class. Once they established their state free of Hindu competition, they were in need of peace for further development. So Suhrawardy** argued that the two-nation theory had become incompatible with Pakistani Nationalism. Thus, introducing the joint electorate bill in the National Assembly in 1956, he said:

> "The two-nation theory was advanced by the Muslims as justification for the partition of India and the creation of a state made up of geographically contiguous units where the Muslims were numerically in the majority. Once that state was created the two-nation theory lost its force even for the Muslims.... There is then a radical difference between the conception of the Millat-i-Islam which transcends geographic boundaries, and the conception of a Pakistani nation or 'Quom' ... which has boundaries and has a peculiar entity which differentiates it from other nations."[7]

The two-nation theory, therefore, was not based on

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* — Though West Pakistan was virtually free of Hindus, East Pakistan had a sizeable Hindu population. Nation-building was not possible without integrating them into the body-politic.

** — Prime Minister of Pakistan from 1956-58. He introduced a joint electorate bill in 1956 annulling the separate electorate which was the basis of the two-nation theory.

religious conviction but on political necessity — the hegemony of the rising Muslim middle class. It is, however, not always easy to check the forces of reaction once they are unleashed. The creators of Pakistan became the prisoners of their own creation — religious fanaticism. The Ulemas or the Muslim priests who played an important role in winning over the masses to the concept of Pakistan, reports the Munim Commission, rejected unequivocally Pakistani Nationalism advocated by Jinnah in the Constituent Assembly. "We asked the Ulema whether this conception of a state was acceptable to them and everyone of them replied in an unhesitating negative.... None of the Ulema can tolerate a state which is based on nationalism and all that it implies."[8]

As it was soon realized that the state of Pakistan had no solid basis as a nation, the task of nation-building became the imperative. Language being one of the most basic factors in consolidating nationalism, the rulers of Pakistan thought that the best way to lay the foundations for a unified nationalism would be to impose Urdu on both East and West Pakistan as the 'national language'.* However, Urdu,

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* — Jinnah said in a famous speech in Dacca in 1948, "Let me make it very clear to you that the state language of Pakistan is going to be Urdu and no other language. Anyone who tries to mislead you is really the enemy of Pakistan. Without one state language, no Nation can remain tied up solidly together and function." It seems Jinnah's knowledge of history was very poor. He was unaware of the existence of multi-national states.

according to the census of 1951, was the mother tongue of only 2.4 million citizens in Pakistan, which constituted 3.3 per cent of the population, and only 7.3 per cent of the total population could speak Urdu at all. Whereas West Pakistan presented the picture of a complex polyglot, East Pakistan had a common language — Bengali. The following table reveals the different languages that were spoken in Pakistan and the percentage using them.

TABLE I:

Language	Pakistan 1961
Bengali	55.48%
Punjabi	29.02
Pushtu	3.70
Sindhi	5.51
Urdu	3.65
English	0.02
Baluchi	1.09

Source: Population Census of Pakistan, Vol I, Statement 5.3.

Most of the above mentioned languages were regional in character. Bengali, the language of the majority of people in Pakistan, was confined to East Pakistan only. West Pakistan had different languages in different regions: Punjabi in

Punjab, Pushtu in North West Frontier Province, Sindhi in Sindhu and Baluchi in Beluchistan. As the majority language, Bengali could have claimed the honour of a 'national language', but no nationalist from East Pakistan demanded that. They wanted Bengali as one of the national languages. But the ruling elite was not ready to accept even that minimal demand.

As we have already observed, (in the first chapter), the Muslim aristocracy, which formed the ruling class in Pakistan, was mainly Urdu-speaking. They had contempt towrads vernaculars, particularly Bengali, as the language which derives its inspiration from Sanskrit, the classical language of the Hindus.* We also noted that the Muslim aristocracy advocated vernacular only for the Muslim lower classes. Therefore, not only did they try to impose Urdu on both the wings of Pakistan, they vehemently opposed the demand for Bengali as one of the national languages.** Bengali members in the Constituent Assembly were not allowed to speak in Bengali and they were told by the Prime Minister, "Pakistan is

* — Both Bengali and Urdu, as well as other West Pakistani languages, are derived from Sanskrit. Urdu's claim for Islamic is based on the fact that it is written in Persian script (the language of the ruling class during the Moghul period) and has a few more Persian words than Bengali.

** — Moreover, they feared that the recognition of Bengali, which was also the mother tongue of West Bengal (in India) would lead to more cultural links between East Pakistan and West Bengal undermining the national basis of Pakistan.

a Muslim state and it must have its lingua franca as the language of the Muslim nation.... It is necessary for a nation to have one language and that language can only be Urdu and no other language."[9]

The hint was clear that Bengali was a non-Muslim language. Although Urdu was understood by only seven percent of the people, the governing elite wanted to impose it because that would have ensured their continued hegemony, Urdu being their mother tongue. It may be noted here that Khawaja Nazimuddin, the first Chief Minister of East Pakistan, and many other front-ranking East Pakistan Muslim League leaders, were of feudal origin and the language they used to speak at home was Urdu. However, since the thirties of the twentieth century, a new vernacular-based or Bengali-based college and university educated Muslim middle class was emerging from the non-feudal, particularly peasant background (discussed in detail below). This middle class saw in the imposition of Urdu not only cultural subjugation but also perpetuation of their under-representation and inferior status in the administrative services (see below), particularly in relation to the Punjabis who had better proficiency in Urdu from long ago.

In February 1948, the demand for recognition of Bengali as the national language spread throughout East

Pakistan. Students were in the vanguard of this movement. They were actively supported by the vernacular-based (indigenous) middle class.* The social origins of the students, who were in the forefront of the movement, in fact, were the vernacular-based middle class. The government tried to discredit the movement by branding it as communist-inspired. Many students were arrested and tortured.

The students set up an Action Committee and placed before the Chief Minister, Khawaja Nazimuddin, the following demands:

(1) The East Bengal Assembly should adopt a resolution making Bengali the official language in East Bengal and the medium of instruction in schools and colleges.

(2) The East Bengal Assembly should by another resolution recommend to the central government to make Bengali one of the state languages.

(3) All political prisoners arrested during the movement should be released.

(4) Bans on newspapers which gave support and publicized the movement should be lifted.

(5) A commission should be set up immediately to investigate the atrocities committed on the students by the police and their commanding officers.

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* — The educated Muslim middle class which emerged from the landed aristocracy in the nineteenth century could be regarded as structurally alien as its mother tongue was different from the language of the masses. In Europe, it was the middle class which developed the national language.

(6) It should be declared that the movement was inspired by highly patriotic motives and sentiments, and the Chief Minister should broadcast this over Dacca Radio.

(7) All warrants of arrest against workers of political parties who had joined in the movement whould be withdrawn.

(8) The Chief Minister should withdraw his previous statements in which he called the agitators 'Communists and agents of the enemies of the state'.

The Chief Minister accepted all the demands, but the bureaucracy headed by the West Pakistani Chief Secretary succeeded in freezing the issue. The second language movement started in 1952. The Interim Report of the Basic Principle Committee stated flatly, "Urdu should be the National Language."[10] There was also a clumsy attempt by the central government to impose Urdu script on Bengali. On January 26th, 1952, Nazimuddin declared at a public meeting that Urdu would be the only national language of Pakistan. The people of East Pakistan were stunned by this announcement. The students of Dacca immediately responded by boycotting their classes and on February 21st they came out in a procession violating a government order.* They demanded the full recognition of Bengali as the national language. The police opened fire on the students and fatal casualities occurred.

When the news of the students' killing reached the

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* — The government declared all meetings and processions illegal for one month.

people, the whole of East Pakistan became agitated. There was anger and emotion everywhere. The city of Dacca was handed over to the military. The law-enforcing authority again fired upon a large procession on February 22nd, in which more than fifteen persons were killed and many were injured. A shahid minar, or a memorial in honour of the martyrs, was hurriedly erected by the students near the medical college where the first firing had occurred.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that the genesis of Bangladesh can be traced to the language movement. It gave the rising Bengali (vernacular-based) middle class its martyrs, myths and symbols. It established the students as a political force to be reckoned with in Pakistan's politics. It bridged the gap between the literati and the masses.

Although the rural people did not actively participate in the language movement, their support for the cause was manifest in the provincial election results of 1954.* The Muslim League Government was crushingly defeated by the United Front (discussed below). The students played an active role, on behalf of the United Front, in the election campaign. A virtually unknown student leader of the language movement defeated the Muslim League Chief Minister. However, the result of the 1954 election and the success of the students in mobilizing the masses unnerved the ruling elite

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* — 80 per cent of the voters were rural people.

in the centre.* The United Front Government was dismissed a few days after it came to power.

The ruling elite

The ruling elite in Pakistan was composed of three groups: the political elite, consisting of the Muslim League leaders, the civil bureuacracy, and the military bureaucracy. As we have already noted, the Muslim League leadership was composed of the "landlords of the northern part of imperial India, with only a sprinkling of the type of industrialists and commercial people who were so important among the supporters of the Indian Congress."**[11] The importance of landlordism in West Pakistan could be guessed from the fact that 7.5 million acres of cultivated land, in holdings of more than 500 acres, was held by one per cent of the landowners, whereas 65 per cent of the cultivators owned only 7.4 million acres in lots of more than five acres each.[12] The civil and military bureaucracies were also recruited from the landowning classes of Northern India. We have already observed that one of the reasons for the Muslim aristocracy's conflict with

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* — The capital of the Central Government was Kariachi, West Pakistan.

** — According to Khalid bin-Sayeed, landlords formed the largest single group in the Muslim League council. The Punjab, with 51 landlords, contributed the largest share; of Sind's 25 members, 15 were landlords. (Khalid bin-Sayeed, Pakistan, p.91)

the rising Hindu bourgeoisie was a share in the pie of the public services.

The social background of the leadership of the Muslim League (and also of the bureaucracy) explains why the Constituent Assembly took nearly nine years to frame the first constitution of Pakistan.* Although the leaders of the Muslim League could think of no other form of government, parliamentary democracy did not bring them nearer to the people. In fact, the extablishment of a democratic state was opposed to their class interests. Moreover, as their aspirations had no identity with those of the people, they were reluctant to seek electoral support for their policies. The Muslim League leaders knew that if they gave a constitution to the country, that would mean their own elimination (their interests being antagonistic to the interests of the peasants). The Civil and Military bureaucracies also recognized the threat that a truly democratic government posed to its power. The political elite, in its anxiety to remain in power and to avoid elections, found a natural ally in the civil and military bureaucracies. As we will see later, Pakistan had a parliamentary form of government in name only; it was practically a dictatorship of a coterie of Muslim League leaders and bureaucrats. (The big business interests

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* — The first constitution of Pakistan was promulgated in 1956.

joined this group later but not in the formative years.) Again, it was a dictatorship of West Pakistan over East Pakistan in that the ruling elite belonged to West Pakistan (see below).

The victory in the provincial elections of 1945-46 in the Muslim majority areas of undivided India made the Muslim League master of the whole of Pakistan. The elected members not only formed the Constituent Assembly, but were also members of the provincial legislatures and provincial cabinets. Indeed, a group of eighty-eight people appointed the Governor-General, ambassadors, and ministers from among themselves. In the first Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, East Pakistan (with 56 per cent of the population of Pakistan) had forty-four seats out of seventy-nine. Nazimuddin, the first Prime Minister of East Pakistan, at the request of the Central Government, sacrificed six seats of East Pakistan to West Pakistan, thus reducing to a minority its representation in the Constituent Assembly. In the vital sectors of Civil and Military Bureaucracy, East Pakistan was again miserably under-represented (Tables II and III).

TABLE II: Province of Origin of Officers of the Central Secretariat by Rank, July, 1955

Rank	Province of Origin	
	West Pakistan	East Pakistan
Secretary	19	0
Joint Secretary	38	3
Deputy Secretary	123	10
Under Secretary	510	38
Total	690	51

Source: Pakistan Constituent Assembly Debates, Vol. I, 1956, p.1844.

TABLE III: Province of Origin of the Military Officers, July, 1955.

Service	Province of Origin	
	West Pakistan	East Pakistan
Army	894	14
Navy	593	7
Air Force	640	60
Total	2,127	81

Source: Dawn, January 8, 1955.

Of course, the under-representation of the Bengalis in civil bureaucracy and military employments was a legacy from the British. As we have already discussed, the rising Hindu bourgeoisie in Bengal succeeded in monopolizing the jobs under the government; Bengali Muslims were predominantly peasants, although there were a few teachers, doctors and lawyers. However, as noted earlier, a section of the upper aristocracy of Muslims in Northern India, under the impact of Sir Syed Ahmed's Aligarh Movement, took to English education, and was thus able to exact from the government a quota system that guaranteed for them a proportion of all government jobs without competition. So, at the time of partition, only one out of 133 Muslim civil servants who opted for Pakistan was a Bengali; all the others came from North India, including areas forming West Pakistan.

In the army, there was virtually no Bengali presence. Because of the early resistance to British rule by the Bengalees,* the army recruitment policy of the British always excluded Bengal and favoured those areas, in particular Punjab, which remained loyal and subservient to its rule. The reason for this predominance of Punjab in the British Army and Administration has been described by Ralph Breubanti in the following words:

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* — 'The Sepoy mutiny', (in 1857) the first national liberation struggle against the British started in Barackpore in Bengal.

"The Punjab was in many ways the most favoured province of India and came under sustained, concentrated British influence. From this area, the 'martial races'* came and there is scarcely a village which does not have one or more military pensioners with some knowledge of English, nostalgia for the army, and great respect for the British. In the Punjab were the great Zamindar families with huge landholdings, whose sons were educated in England from early age (often living with the family of a rural vicar) and in many instances were knighted by the Crown.... In Lahore, center of Punjab society, was Aitchison College, an elite school of British pattern for the education of the sons of tribal chiefs and other leaders. The presence in Lahore of the political resident to the Punjab states meant much coming and going of the princely rulers and a consequent quickening of the social pulse. The outward symptoms of this concentration of British and local social influence of landed wealth are obvious: one of the largest and most elaborate gymkhanas in India and a cosmopolitan, leisured society devoted to British customs and immodest enough to regard itself as the most 'advanced' and 'modernized' society in Pakistan....

"Probably no region in India (certainly not in North India) could be more opposite to the Punjab in externals and in spirit than East Bengal which was joined together to West Pakistan with no more common bond than Islam....

"More importantly Bengalis have a remarkably homogenous culture, rich in art, music, dance, language, poetry and philosophy epitomized in Rabindrevath Tagore.... Although their intellectual proclivity naturally impelled the Bengalis to learn English, the profundity and homogeneity of their culture enabled them to reject successfully the influence of British social mores. Moreover, they actively resisted rather than acquiesced in British rule. They were neither interested in nor allowed to serve in combat military

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* — The British propagated the concept of "Martial races" to exclude recruitment from hostile areas.

> forces, hence no web of allegiance to the British was spun by military experience."[13]

Thus the complete dominance of the West Pakistanis, particularly the Punjabis, in the civil and military bureaucracy, made the East Pakistani political elite totally impotent, even when it had a majority in the Parliament or Legislature.

> "Nazimuddin (East Pakistani) became Prime Minister, but lacked force of will, and was ultimately dismissed by the Governor-General (a Punjabi bureaucrat). Mohammed Ali was brought in as Prime Minister but, although a Bengali, he remained the captive of the West Pakistan group that provided the main strength of his government. The Bengali members attempted to use their majority to diminish the power of the Governor-General, but as a result they found themselves out of their own jobs. The electorate of East Bengal had repudiated the Muslim League but the outcome was a rule for more than a year by West Pakistan bureaucrats."[14]

Now the question may be raised how the bureaucracy could become so powerful as to be able to dismiss the elected governments of the people. The answer is rooted in its social origin. The British administrative system — Pakistan's bureaucracy was its progeny — was inherited from the Moghuls.[15]

When the British replaced the Moghuls as the rulers of India in the eighteenth century, they did not introduce any fundamental change in the administrative system. This is reflected both in territorial divisions and the nomenclature of officials, such as Kanungo, Patwari, Mahal, Taluk,

etc. As has been said by historian Perceval Spear, "The British found the wreck of this (former) system and admired it even in decay."[16] Without going into details of how the Indian bureaucracy* evolved in the nineteenth century from this wreck, which remained, more or less, unchanged in Pakistan, it can be said that the fundamentals of both Moghul and British administrations had a lot in common. Both concentrated on the collection of revenue, law and order, and dispension of justice. Even the British retained Akbar's revenue division of the country into subas (provinces), sarkars (districts), parganas (cities or villages) and mahals (units). The district officer under the British who was designated as the collector of revenue had as much power as that of a Moghul subadar or fouzdar. There was, in fact, little change in the basic structure of administration, though there occurred many changes in the formal laws and

* — It is interesting to note that the term 'civil service' originated in India and was later exported to Europe. As Tyagi says, "The term civil service, itself, owes its origin to the Company's (East India Company) rule. The term was first used to designate those servants of the Company who were engaged in mercantile work. This was done in order to distinguish them from those servants of the Company who were engaged in military or naval duties.... But when the Company changed from a trading corporation to a territorial government and its mercantile servants were engaged in civil administration, the term, civil service got automatically widened in scope and came to connote not only a non-combatant status but also a status of civil administration. The term, having thus originated in India, was imported to the 'home' country from where it quickly spread to Prussia and later on to other European countries." (A.R. Tyagi, The Civil Service in a Developing Society, p.7.)

regulations.

It is significant to note that the organisation of the civil service in Punjab was, to a great extent, based on the regulation of water supply and irrigation.* Even personal and discretionary administration, like that of the despotic and arbitrary Moghul officers, was allowed in Punjab. John Lawrence's instruction to the District Officers was, "Do a thing regularly and legally, if you can do it as well and vigorously in that was as irregularly and illegally."[17]

The Indian Civil Service was not developed on the model of the English Civil Service. It differed from the home government or the English Civil Service in several important respects. In the home government, the civil servants merely executed the policies adopted by the politicians; their role was limited to that of an expert. In India, the civil servants were responsible for not only executing but also formulating the policies.[18] Apart from this difference, the Indian Civil Service differed from the English Civil

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* — At first, the British Government neglected the irrigation works in Northern India which resulted in famines almost every year. The development and maintenance of irrigation, later, became a very important function of the government. As A.R. Tyagi states, "For example, the government was faced early in its rule to develop the irrigation facilities because of the devastating famines which had been occurring almost incessantly since the advent of the British rule. The government first tried to develop irrigation through private companies, but this experiment failed disastrously.... And as in the case of irrigation, direct responsibility of state ownership and management of railways was undertaken only when the experiment of developing railways through private enterprise utterly failed." (A.R. Tyagi, op. cit., p.2.)

Service in composition, duties and size. The English civil servant was employed in a civil capacity. Unlike the Indian civil servant, he was not a holder of political or judicial offices. The British Civil Service consisted of 400,000 members in the thirties of this century. The Indian Civil Service, on the other hand, was a small group of approximately 1,000 members. Often called 'the greatest civil service', this small group was trained in a literary generalist tradition, the object of which was to impart virtues of Platonic Guardianship. As true guardians, they were educated in how to hold India in a benevolent but tight grip.

The Indian Civil Service had a dual role. On the one hand, they determined the policy of the government in the secretariat; on the other, they served as the executive arm of the government in the field. It was also provided by law that one-third of High Court and Supreme Court judges should be civil servants. Thus the Indian Civil Service had all-pervasive power. Why? Goodnow thinks that the British, to maintain their rule in India:

> "... had to occupy the important positions, and all offices held by natives must be supervised by a British officer. The simplest type of organizational pyramid was established. The District Officer was delegated extensive power within his district. The tougher or more volatile problems might be reviewed by his senior at division headquarters or even by the governor of the province. At

> the top was the Governor-General. It was a very simple hierarchy — at least in the beginning. As the problems became more complex, the size of the Governor's staff was increased; ultimately it became a secretariat."[19]

He further adds, "In response to British and Indian opinion, concessions to democracy were made, but it was the form rather than the substance of representative government that was granted."[20] This means that, although representative government was formed, the hold of the bureaucracy on the government remained unchanged. The bureaucrats, in fact, were not responsible to the elected ministers (in India) but to the Secretary of State for India in Britain and to the Governor-General.

The Civil Service of Pakistan was the progeny of the Indian Civil Service. It retained all the traditions of the Indian Civil Service including its powers.[21] The executive arem through which the British, as well as the Pakistan bureaucracy, maintained its iron grip over all classes of the population, was the District Officer. A comparison between the functions of the District Officer under the British rule and Pakistan would clearly demonstrate that there occurred no change in these functions after the British left.

O'Malley thus describes the all-embracing functions of a District Officer under the British rule:

> "Milton was once impelled by national pride to say that when God wished to have some hard thing done, he sends for his Englishman. In India it may more truly be said that when the Government wants a hard bit of work done, it calls on the District Officer. He is the man to whom fall all sorts of miscellaneous jobs, such as the taking of the census, preparing an electoral role for his district, providing supplies for troops marching through it, etc. He has not only to discharge the everyday duties of administration (many of them dull, petty and uninteresting) but also to cope with sudden emergencies of extraordinary diversity."[22]

In Punjab, the District Officer was also responsible for the digging of canals (for irrigation), conducting diplomatic affairs with the tribal chieftains, and, if necessary, leading punitive expeditions against them. These functions had little difference with the functions of a Moghul Subadar. In Pakistan, according to A. M. Muhite, the District Officer had the say in almost all matters that could affect the people in his district vitally as individuals and more as groups. He further comments:

> "If you are a landlord or a tenant of any sort or description, the deputy commissioner* has a finger in you pie. If you are an owner or prospective of a cinema or any other business in a district, you are bound to come across the deputy commissioner at some stage or other. If you are an industrialist of any size or an intending industrialist wishing to set up a factory of some sort including such things as petrol pumps, you will have to deal with the deputy commissioner at some stage or the other.... If you are a resident of an area which has asked for a road, a canal, a

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* — Under the British, the District Officer was normally known as the Deputy Collector; in Pakistan he was designated as the Deputy Commissioner.

> hospital, a dispensary, a school or a fishing tank to be built near or through that area, the deputy commissioner was involved in it too. If you are a citizen of the thinking type wanting to discuss, criticize or amend any law or government policy, the deputy commissioner is the man tosee and exchange views with. If you want to have a gun license, a liquor permit or any such facility, the deputy commissioner is the person to be approached. In short, unless you are a man who has no earthly needs and requirements and who lives fairly high above the earth not attached to land or subsisting in water on land you cannot possibly ignore the existence of the deputy commissioner and refuse to reckon with his qualities, good, bad or indifferent."[23]

In Goodnow's view the British, in its anxiety to control violence, gave the civil servants unlimited power. This argument is partially true and touches only the surface. L. S. S. O'Malley has given the real reason underlying the power of the civil servants; it is rooted in the institutional framework of history.

> "One very important distinction between them (i.e., the Indian civil servants) and the civil servants elsewhere is that they are the local representatives of a government which is not only the supreme administrative authority, but also the supreme landlord. Its position as such has been inherited from previous governments. In India the right of the state to a share in the produce of the soil has been recognized from time immemorial. This right takes the form of payment of land revenue, which historically is older than private rent."*[24]

So, we find, the civil servants, even under the British, derived their power as the representatives of the

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* — Here O'Malley makes a distinction between the private rent under feudalism and the portion of the produce which was appropriated by the state as land revenue in Asiatic states.

state which was the supreme landlord or owner of the soil. As we have already observed, the patrimonial bureaucrats of Moghul India, such as the Fauzdars or Subadars, had unlimited and despotic power because they were the agents of a state which was the supreme owner of the land. In India, although private ownership in land and, consequently, private rent in the form of Western landlordism, was introduced, it could never take root in the alien soil. The feudal lords, the private owners in land, were created by the state; they were not the products of the organic growth of the body politic as in Western Europe. They did not grow as a class; this class was created by the state. So their continued existence depended on the mercy of the state; the state remained remained the supreme owner of the soil. This explains why the big industrialists in Pakistan had to keep even a petty district officer in good humour, not to speak of those higher civil servants in the secretariat.*

Thus Pakistan inherited a bureaucracy** which, in the words of Hamza Alavi, was "overdeveloped":

> "It might be said that the 'superstructure' in the colony is therefore overdeveloped in relation to the 'structure' in the colony, for its

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* — We shall discuss later the role the civil servants played in the development of industrialization in Pakistan.

** — The basis of the power of the bureaucrats either in Moghul India or British India or in Pakistan was the Army. The military basis of the Oriental state has been discussed in the first chapter.

> basis lies in the metropolitan structure itself, from which it is later separated at the time of independence. The colonial state is therefore equipped with a powerful bureaucratic military-apparatus and with governmental mechanisms that enable it, through routine operations, to sub-ordinate the native social classes. The post-colonial society inherits that overdeveloped state apparatus and its institutionalized practices through which the operations of the indigenous social classes are regulated and controlled. At the moment of independence, the weak indigenous bourgeoisie find themselves enmeshed in bureaucratic controls by which those at the top of the hierarchy of the bureaucratic-military apparatus of the state are able to maintain and even extend their dominant power in society, having been freed from direct metropolitan control."[25]

In Alavi's analysis, the metropolitan bourgeoisie (i.e., the British rule) created an overdeveloped state apparatus so that, through it, it could exercise dominion over all the indigenous social classes in the colony. In our discussion, we have found that the metropolitan bourgeoisie just inherited a superstructure (i.e., the state) which remained transcendental over the social classes because of its particular mode of production (Asiatic mode of production).* Even in decay, the state structure in India was able to exact tribute from the indigenous bourgeoisie.**

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* — In fact, the British, by introducing private ownership in land, created the new social relations, which had the potential for challenging the British hegemony.

** — "It is mentioned that Mir Jumla (Governor of Bengal) once demanded Rs 50,000 from the merchants of Dacca. On refusal, they were threatened with death by being trampled by elephants and compromised for Rs 25,000, while the bankers of the city appeased by paying Rs 300,000 without much further ado. Occasionally, however, the mercantile community could

The political elite that came to power in Pakistan, instead of weakening this bureaucracy, strengthened it. Jinnah, in a parliamentary democracy, chose the mantle of Governor General. As Jinnah was a virtual dictator, and was regarded as the creator of Pakistan, the post of Governor General was endowed with all powers. The office of Prime Minister, which should have been the centre of power of responsible government, was overshadowed. A resolution was adopted in the Constituent Assembly requiring the use of the term Quaidi-i-Azam (Great Leader) for Jinnah in all official uses. No conventions were allowed to infringe upon his powers.

> "Whatever the constitutional powers of the Governor-General of a dominion may normally be, in Quid-i-Azam's case no legal or formal limitations can apply. His people will not be content to have him as merely the titular head of the government, they would wish him to be their friend, philosopher, guide and ruler, irrespective of what the constitution of a Dominion of the British Commonwealth may contain."[26]

Commenting on his assumption of the post of Governor-General, the Economist wrote:

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protest successfully against the exactions of a governor or high administrative officer by hartal or suspension of business." (Radhakamal Mukherjee, The Economic History of of India, p.67). Moreover, Alavi's diagnosis of the over-development of the "superstructure" cannot explain why there is no military-bureaucratic hegemony in India. Both India and Pakistan inherited the same superstructure from the British. The reason behind India's being able to sustain a bourgeois democratic government is that, in India, the growth of the indigenous bourgeoisie reached a stage where it was able to overcome the superstructure and establish its hegemony.

> "Mr. Jinnah's rule gives the promise of being a very thinly veiled dictatorship. His motive in demanding the office of the Governor-General is no doubt to obtain the position which belongs to it in the eyes of the Indian masses. The Viceroy, as Governor-General, has been hitherto, even though to a restricted degree in recent years, the supreme executive ruler, and his ministers have been simply the members of his Executive Council. By force of mental habit, the man in the street will continue to think of the Governor-General as being more important than his Prime Minister."[27]

Not only in the eyes of the men in the street, but also in the eyes of the civil servants, the Governor-General became more important. The secretaries (the civil servants) had direct access to the Governor-General. Jinnah's visible contempt for his political comrades encouraged the civil servants to bypass the ministers in formulating the policies and taking them directly to the Governor-General. It has been claimed by a competent authority that, next to Jinnah and Liaquat (the first Prime Minister), the most important man in the government of Pakistan, in its formative phase, was its Secretary-General, Chowdhurry, Mohammad Ali. He headed the civil service of Pakistan and also adorned the posts of cabinet secretary and establishment secretary. Jinnah, unlike the heads of state in parliamentary governments, used to preside over the cabinet meetings. Thus a close relationship developed between the cabinet secretary and the Governor-General.

Moreover, Jinnah gradually assumed extraordinary powers. In the name of the Federation, the administrative policies were totally centralized. Pakistan was governed

until 1956 on the basis of the Government of India Act of 1935. This act, because of the colonial nature of the state, provided for a strong centre which empowered a provincial governor, as an agent of the Central Government, to take over the administration of a province in case of a constitutional crisis. This anti-democratic law was at first removed by the Pakistan Provisional Constitution order. However, Jinnah later inserted a new section (92A) which gave the Governor-General more power. Under this section, he could direct the Governor of a Province to assume, on behalf of the Governor-General, all or any of the powers vested in or exercisable by any Provincial body or authority (excluding the high court). This section was retained in the 1956 constitution as Article 193.

Thus, not only the Governor-General, but also the Governors* acquired powers in a parliamentary system to dismiss elected Provincial Cabinets. The Governors of the provinces were, therefore, not titular heads but real heads of governments. Furthermore, as the Governors of the provinces enjoyed their stay in office at the discretion of the Governor-General, the centre could impose its will on the province at any moment.

The continuance of this vice-regal system of the British, in which the viceroy or the Governor-General was the arbiter of all decisions, encouraged the civil ser-

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* — The Governors of the Provinces were appointees of the Governor-General.

vants to feel superior to the politicians and to make decisions on their own. It was revealed, during the P.R.O.D.A. proceedings against Hamidul Huq Chowdhury, the Minister of Finance and Commerce in East Pakistan, that the Chief Secretary of the province (a civil servant), under the instruction of the central government, had effectively stopped the export of steel drums to India in spite of Mr. Chowdhury's instruction that they should be exported.*

The members of the Civil Service were encouraged to take decisions over the heads of the provincial ministers because they were protected by the Constitution. No provincial government had authority to take disciplinary action against a C.S.P. Moreover, unlike most federal states in the world, a higher civil service was common to all levels of government in Pakistan, and the same group of people occupied the pivotal positions in both the provincial and central governments. Thus, whenever there was any conflict between the bureaucracy and the provincial governments, the bureaucracy emerged triumphant; it could use its position in the central government to impose the President's (or

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* — Mr. Chowdhury, though a minister, was charged under the Public and Representative Offices Disqualification Act (PRODA) because he annoyed the central Government by exposing the cause of East Pakistan. The PRODA was another weapon in the hands of the Central Government to intimidate and control the provincial politicians.

Governor-General's) rule and bring down the provincial government. In Pakistan's short history, the Governor-General and the Governors[28] had repeatedly dismissed the provincial governments and provincial legislatures; the most blatant imposition of Governor's rule was in East Pakistan in 1954 when the United Front Government, which secured 299 out of 309 seats in the legislature, was dismissed. The hold of bureaucracy on the Governments thus reduced the provincial political elites, particularly in East Pakistan, to complete impotence. This was further aggravated by the almost complete absence of Bengali representation in the Civil Service. "If one went to the East Bengal Secretariat, one was surprised not to find a single Bengali Secretary in the whole of the Bengali Secretariat,"[29] bemoaned Dr. Mahmud Husain in the Constituent Assembly. Even the Muslim League Chief Minister of East Pakistan was bitter about the center's domination. "... I should mention another point, that is, the anxiety on the part of the Central Government to encroach on every field of provincial activities.... The provinces must be allowed to enjoy the full autonomous position, must be as free from the Central Government as it is thought practical."[30]

In spite of these protestations from Bengali and other provincial political leaders, the centre's as well as the bureaucracy's powers continued to increase. In October

1951, the Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan was assasinated and with him ended the formal rule of the political elite. The next President was Ghulam Muhammad, an ex-bureaucrat. The post of Finance Minister, the most important portfolio, was given to the erstwhile Secretary General Chowdhury Muhammad Ali (another bureaucrat). Incidentally, both of them came from the Punjab. Prime Minister Nazimuddin from Bengal was totally ineffective and was later dismissed by the Governor-General (in 1954), even when he had majority support in the Parliament. The dismissal of Nazimuddin clearly demonstrated who exercised real power. Soon after, the Constituent Assembly or the rump Parliament was also dissolved when a few parliamentarians (mostly from East Pakistan) made an abortive attempt to pass a bill curbing the power of the Governor-General. In dismissing Nazimuddin and packing off the Parliament, the Governor-General was backed by both the civil and military bureaucracies. As Ayub Khan, then Commander-in-Chief of the Army, states in his autobiography, "The Constituent Assembly was finally dissolved on 24 October 1954, and I was asked by the Governor-General to join the New Cabinet, with Mohammad Ali Bogra (not Chowdhury Mohammad Ali) as Prime Minister."[31] Ayub Khan was given the portfolio of defense.

Prime Minister Mohammad Ali Bogra was a protege of Ghulam Mohammad and had practically no personal following.

He was chosen solely for his great success as an ambassador in the United States; military consideration was also an important factor in making him the Prime Minister. Keith Callard observes, "... he was fresh from the United States, where he had enjoyed great success as ambassador; this made him the right man to redirect the foreign policy of Pakistan into close military and economic alliance with that country."[32] Immediately after his appointment, American food-grain supplies began to pour in. In less than one year's time, Pakistan entered into the Bagdad Pact* and the South East Asia Treaty Organization. Ayub Khan himself has confirmed that he played a decisive role in initiating Pakistan into the Bagdad Pact.

In this way, an alliance developed between the civil and military bureaucracies, which completely overshadowed the power of the political elite in the government. One of the reasons which prompted the bureaucracy, particularly the military bureaucracy, to take a more active and formal role in the government was its apprehension about the encroachment of the rising indigenous middle class of Bengal (see below) in defense affairs.

We have already observed that the army was predominantly composed of the Punjabis. The Punjabi bureau-

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* — The Bagdad Pact was later renamed CENTO after the revolution in Iraq.

crats had a vested interest in maintaining this Punjabi character of the military. Large scale Bengali recruitment into the army — which was the distinct possibility if democracy was allowed to function — would have meant for the aristocracy in Punjab a partial loss of a profitable source of income and power.[33] East Pakistan's interest in army recruitment was evident from its very inception. The Chief Minister of East Pakistan presented a list of demands to the Central Government in 1948 which included, "First and foremost, among these is that as far as East Pakistan is concerned, we must have a fair and proper share in the Armed Forces of Pakistan."[34] The Central Government silenced these demands by calling them parochial. "Today in Pakistan there is no difference between the Central Government and a Provincial Government. The Central Government is composed of the provinces.... We must kill this provincialism for all times."[35]

However, the rising fervour of Bengali nationalism, exhibited in the Language Movement and the defeat of the Muslim League at the hands of the United Front, derived a coalition of the rising indigenous Bengali middle class which unnerved the ruling elite. So, in a succession of events, the Provincial Government of the United Fron in East Pakistan and the Muslim League Government in the center were dismissed, the Constituent Assembly was

dissolved, and a new regime of civil servants and military bureaucracy was installed in power. The new Home Minister, Major General Iskandar Mirza, another civil-military bureaucrat, declared the political philosophy of the new government in the following words:

> "Some undeveloped countries have to learn democracy, and until they do so they have to be controlled. With so many illiterate people, politicians could make a mess of things. There was nothing undemocratic in declaring the state of emergency, because 95 per cent of the people welcomed it.
>
> "The people wanted an honest government and the would get it. They would also get law and order and prompt justice. There was no point in having the fine British administrative system with good traditions that Pakistan had inherited unless it was run in the British way. A district officer or magistrate must be given full powers to deal with any situation. Politicians could make policy but they must not interfere. The Government must be judged by results, and the generals did not want to stay one moment longer than was absolutely necessary."[36]

Commenting on the assumption of power by the Civil-Military bureaucracy, the Observer wrote, "The political complexion of Pakistan in the future will be largely determined by the extent to which these British-trained senior administrators and army officers consider that they are the only ones qualified to control the evolution of the country's institutions."[37] This statement proved to be prophetic.

In 1955, Gulam Muhammad had to retire for ill health and Iskandar Mirza became the Governor-General. As Mirza's contempt for the politicians was well known — once

he referred to them as 'crooks and scalawage' — the civil servants felt assured that the politicians would not be allowed to meddle with their activities. In addressing a meeting of the Civil Servants in 1957, he identified himself with them and said:

> "... to be a civil servant is both a privilege and an arduous responsibility. The great Indian Civil Service which, with the passage of time, became surrounded by a fabulous halo of efficiency, resources and heroism was to a large extent staffed by men who faced exile and physical distress in the pursuit of their imperial ideal. Today our ideal is far nobler than that of the pre-independence civil service and we must bring to its pursuits the sacrifice of personal vanities and a noble disdain of petty fears and cheap favours."[38]

Mirza picked as his Prime Minister the ex-Secretary General Chowdhury Muhammad Ali who was also an ex-minister of Finance and Economic Affairs. The Second Constituent Assembly was elected by the members of the Provincial Assemblies in June 1955 to frame the constitution. However, before the constitution came into effect, the ruling elite of West Pakistan was anxious to coerce East Pakistan into accepting the parity of electoral representation in the future parliament. The West Pakistani Civil-Military bureaucracy was not ready to surrender its privileges through letting the East Pakistanis (which they feared would be a new political elite, the representatives of the new indigenous middle class) have the majority say in the Parliament. The bureaucracy was confident that it would be able to maintain

its hegemony in any future political set up if the principle of parity in electoral representation (between East and West Pakistan) was incorporated into the constitution. In order to accomplish this parity, the integration of West Pakistan into one unit became a logical necessity.* The interests of the smaller provinces in West Pakistan were thus sacrificed at the altar of the Punjabi bureaucracy.** "The plan to force through One Unit was put into immediate effect. In the Sind Assembly, the anti-One-Unit Chief Minister was dismissed and replaced by an old hand at strong-arm politics — M. A. Khuro. The latter ordered the police to surround the Sind Assembly and forced the members to accept One Unit."[39]

It came as a great shock to many members of the rising indigenous middle class in Bengal, particularly to the student community, when Mr. H.S. Surhrawardy,*** the leader of the Awami League, accepted the principle of parity. Since 1948, when the Awami League came into existence (see below), it relentlessly fought for the one-man-one-vote principle. Surhrawardy surrendered this right for a position in the central cabinet. He joined the cabinet as a

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* — West Pakistan had four Provinces: Punjab, Sind, North West Frontier Province, and Beluchistan.

** — The Punjab overwhelmingly predominated in both the civil and military bureaucracies. Punjab was also the most prosperous province in West Pakistan.

*** — Mr. Surhrawardy was one of the old Muslim League

Law Minister. This sell out of East Pakistan, according to many followers of Surhrawardy, was done to ensure the framing of the constitution. They thought that once the constitution was framed, the stranglehold of the bureaucracy could, at least, be reduced in East Pakistan.

In East Pakistan, seventy-five per cent of the following top posts were reserved for the C.S.P. officers:[40]

Chief Secretary	1
Member, Board of Revenue	1
Commissioners	3
Secretaries	8
Joint Secretaries	3
Provincial Transport Commissioner	1
District Magistrates	17
Additional District Magistrates	10
District Judges	15
Additional District Judges	8
Director of Land Records and Survey	1
Settlement Officer	1
Private Secretary to Governor	1
Secretary to Chief Minister	1
Commissioner of Excise and Taxation	1

Leaders. He incurred the displeasure of Mr. Jinnah and stayed in India until 1950. After Jinnah's death he came to Pakistan but was not accepted by the old Muslim League Leaders. As a shrewd politician he could fathom the discontent of the rising Bengali middle class and was able to make himself their leader and spokesman.

Registrar of Co-operative Societies	1
Registrar, High Court	1
Judges, High Court	2

Of the above mentioned posts, only twenty-five per cent were filled by promotion of East Pakistan Government employees. Some of these posts, such as the post of the Chief Secretary, were never occupied by East Pakistanis.

The Constitution was promulgated on March 23rd, 2956. This, however, did not lead to greater autonomy for East Pakistan. As Tariq Ali has said:

> "The new constitution succeeded in resolving none of the basic contradictions within Pakistan. On the contrary, it institutionalized political discrimination against East Pakistan by not allowing East Bengal the weight due to it by virtue of its population, and established One Unit as a 'balance' to contain East Pakistan. The wide ranging powers it gave to the President and the Central Government made autonomy seem a complete farce."[41]

Although the Constitution gave only lip service to the autonomy of East Pakistan, it could not fully satisfy the civil-military bureaucracy of Pakistan. Since the ascendency of the indigenous middle class in 1954 (in East Pakistan), the civil-military bureaucracy, as we have already observed, began to advocate a kind of controlled democracy.[42] Ayub Khan, according to his autobiography, circulated his draft constitution which envisioned a "controlled form of democracy with checks and counterchecks."[43]

These checks and counterchecks were necessary to protect the interests of the military elite from the poli-

tical elites' encroachment on its privileges. Since 1948, the military bureaucracy in Pakistan had emerged as the largest single interest group in the country. During the decade of 1950, there were approximately three thousand officers in the armed forces of Pakistan. These army officers, as we have seen earlier in the quote of Braibanti, were accustomed to an ostentatious living under the British.[44] Their conspicuous consumption increased manifold under Pakistan. More than half of Pakistan's total revenue budget was allocated annually to the defense services (see Table IV).

TABLE IV:

	Revenue	Defense Expenditure
	(millions of rupees)	
1950-51	1273.2	703.0
1951-52	1448.4	907.9
1952-53	1334.3	994.6
1953-54	1110.5	802.3
1954-55	1172.7	713.4
1955-56	1435.8	814.3
1956-57	1298.3	820.0
1957-58	1495.8	742.9

Source: Budgets of the Government of Pakistan

A huge portion of this expenditure went for more and more comfort for the army officers, nearly all of whom came from

the Western wing of Pakistan. "In 1955, only 14 out of 908 army officers of the rank of major or above were from Pakistan's eastern province. Of 700 air force officers, just 60 were from East Pakistan. In the navy, a mere seven out of 600 officers were from that province."[45] Therefore, it was very natural that the emerging middle class in East Pakistan would demand a share of defense employments and expenditures. Incidentally, all three armed forces' headquarters were in West Pakistan and all defense expenditures were incurred in that province. Bengalis demanded at least one headquarter in East Pakistan (see below).

The country's first general election under the new constitution was due early in 1959. The civil-military bureaucracy became convinced that, if the general election were held, that would mean a government of the new political elite (representatives of the new emerging middle class) from East Pakistan. What led them to believe so was the disunity of the political parties in West Pakistan. On the other hand, in East Pakistan the Awami League, led by the rising indigenous middle class, was being backed by all sections of the people. For this reason, the civil-military bureaucracy feared that, in the absence of a countervailing force in the Parliament (in spite of parity in electoral representation), the political elite from East Pakistan might be able to establish civilian control over both the army and the civil service. Moreover, they thought that,

once the political elite succeeded in getting a popular mandate under the new constitution, it would be difficult to combat its influence. So they decided to dispense with both the constitution and the politicians. In a bloodless coup d'etat on October 8th, 1958, the civil-military bureaucracy abrogated the constitution, abolished all political parties, and took over the control of the government. After three weeks, Mirza was removed from power by Ayub Khan in a palace coup. But the power of the civil-military bureaucracy remained intact.

The immediate victims of the military take-over were the rising political elite of East Pakistan. Thousands of student leaders and members of political parties were arrested, and many prominent politicians were politically disqualified under EBDO.* Martial-law was imposed all over the country, and a series of ordinances snuffed out all civil liberties and struck terror into the hearts of the people. Summary military courts were set up to try 'miscreants'. Censorship was imposed on the press. Freedom of association and assembly was curtailed.

The most important reason which facilitated the capture of power by the civil-military bureaucracy was the absence of a strong middle class in West Pakistan. In the formative stage, as we have already observed, there were

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* — EBDO, or the Elective Bodies Disqualification Ordinance, was promulgated to disqualify politicians from participating in politics for a period of eight years.

only two classes: the landlords and the peasants.

The emerging bourgeoisie, which came from India with small capital, had to depend on the civil servants for export and import licenses, tax subsidies, government loans, industrial permits, etc. So, the government, unlike in the developed countries, was not its agent (see below). Thus, in the absence of an indigenous bourgeoisie, the only organized political forces were the civil service and the army. However, in East Pakistan, a strong indigenous middle class was forming, and it posed a real threat to the power of the ruling elite in West Pakistan.

Emergence of an indigenous middle class and a new political elite in East Pakistan

We have already seen how the Muslim leaders in the second half of the nineteenth century were able to convince the British Government to offer special facilities for education and jobs for the Muslims. We have also noted that, because of the property relations in Northern India, only those Muslims who had a feudal background could take advantage of these facilities.* In Bengal, most of the landlords were Hindus. Naturally they took the lead in education. However, in the late nineteenth century, a few well-to-do

* — We have discussed earlier why the feudal elements failed to play their political role.

Muslim families (some of them were landlords, some rich peasants) began to send their sons to schools and colleges. But their number was insignificant compared with the Hindus.

At the close of the nineteenth century, as crops in Bengal — particularly the jute crops — acquired commodity value, the rich peasants, instead of settling or letting out their surplus land under temporary tenure (which was allowed under the Permanent Settlement Act), began to have these lands cultivated by the share croppers. The expansion of the internal and external markets for their commodities also enabled them to increase their landholdings under this mode of production. In this way, a new class of landholders, known as Jotedars (not feudal lords or zamindars), emerged in Bengal.[46] In the Muslim majority areas of Eastern Bengal, naturally, most of these jotedars were Muslims. They had money to educate their children and to invest in a small business. After partition, most of the Hindu landlords left for India. The zamindari system too was abolished in 1950. This also enabled many rich peasants or jotedars to substantially increase their holdings.[47]

The following table indicates that, although there were very few farmers who had more than 25 acres in land, and they had only five per cent of the total land area under their control, there were 21.5 per cent of the farmers who controlled more than 52 per cent of the total land.[48]

TABLE V: Size Distribution of Farms in East Pakistan

Size of Farms (acres)	Per Cent of Farms	Per Cent of Farm Area
Less than 5	78	43
5 to under 12.5	19	38
12.5 to under 25	2.5	14
25 and above	0.5	5

Source: Pakistan Census of Agriculture, 1960, quoted in Griffin and Khan, Growth and Inequality in Pakistan, p.79.

Although the average gross production per acre was higher in East Pakistan, these farmers did not constitute a landlord class as in West Pakistan.* In view of the fertility of the soil in East Pakistan, they constituted an upper middle income group (particularly those who had more than eight acres of land). An indigenous, educated, middle class emerged in East Pakistan from this section of the people; they also provided the basis for a new political elite in East Pakistan.

The difference between this elite and the old political elite in East Pakistan (as well as in West Pakistan) lay in their socio-economic background. In most cases, the members of the old elite came from an absentee landlord

* — We have already observed that 7.5 million acres (half of the total land area) of cultivated land in holdings of more than 500 acres was held by one per cent of the people (landlords) in West Pakistan.

class. They received their education in English, considered Urdu as their cultural language and hated vernacular as the language of the lower classes. (This was discussed in detail in the first chapter.) The conflict between the old and the new elites surfaced in the language movement just after independence. Since partition, the enrollment of Muslim students increased many times. They studied at vernacular schools and began to love their own language and literature. Moreover, as many Hindu teachers and professionals left for India, the vacuum was filled in gradually by the expanding Muslim middle class. As Hindus no longer constituted a threat to this class, either in professions or in business, the ruling elite's tirade against Bengali (denounced as the language of the Hindus) lost its former appeal.

The new emerging Muslim middle class also considered the imposition of Urdu as an attempt on the part of the old ruling elite to perpetuate its hegemony. This feeling of alienation was further aggravated when they found that all high officers appointed in the districts and secretariat were West Pakistanis (mostly from Punjab). Moreover, the East Pakistani political elites' subservient role to the Chief Secretary, who fortnightly sent reports to the Centre on the activities of the provincial cabinet, angered the rising political elite (discussed above).

To counter the domination of the West Pakistani ruling elite, a group of students of Dacca University formed a student party called the East Bengal Students' League (EBSL) in January, 1948. It was this Students' League which launched the movement for recognition of Bengali as one of the State languages.

Although the students took the lead in rousing the national consciousness, they thought that they should accept the help of the political elite to make their demands more broad-based. In June 1949, a new political party, the East Pakistan Awami League, was established with an old politician, Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani as its President, and Surhrawardy as Convenor. Many young, dissatisfied workers from the Muslim League, who could not make their voice heard in the bureaucratically-controlled government, decided to join this party. Shamsul Haq, a student of Dacca University, became the General secretary and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (the leader of the Bangladesh Movement), then a student, was made one of the Joint secretaries. Shortly after it came into being, the Awami League demanded full autonomy for East Pakistan on the basis of the Lahore Resolution of the All India Muslim League (passed in 1940) which resolution demanded that "the areas in which Muslims were numerically in a majority — as in the North-Western and Eastern Zones of India — should be grouped to constitute independent

states in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign"[49] (see above).

It is significant to note that Cominform, in early 1951, praised the Awami League for its secular and anti-feudal and anti-colonial role.[50] However, the Awami League was not a socialist party; it was a party of the petit-bourgeois, consisting of students, teachers and other professionals who stepped into the occupations vacated by the Hindus. Naturally they were opposed to feudal leadership of the political elite of West Pakistan.

The first opportunity for the Awami League to bring their political manifesto to the masses was provided by the Anti-Basic Principles Committee Report movement (1950). During this movement, the leaders and the rank and file workers of the Awami League toured the length and breadth of East Pakistan and made the masses acquainted with the question of provincial autonomy. The alternative constitutional proposal of the Awami League demanded full autonomy for East Pakistan in all spheres except in Defense and Foreign Affairs.* It also demanded 'a sovereign socialist republic.' The last demand might have been inspired by the communists who joined the Awami League to work through it as the most popular mass party.

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* — The Basic Principles Committee Report was the first draft of Pakistan's constitution. In this report, the central government was invested with all powers. For a full text of the proposed alternative draft constitution of the Awami League see Kamruddin Ahmed, Social History of East Pakistan, Appendix C.

In the cultural realm, too, the new political elite decided to challenge the hegemony of the old ruling elite. They observed the Bengali New Year's day and organized cultural shows and literary symposiums and seminars on occasions like Rabindranath Tagore's birth and death anniversaries. Tagore was hated by the ruling elite, firstly, because he was a Hindu and secondly, because they thought that his ideas of universal love and compassion would undermine the theocratic foundation of the state and thereby weaken Pakistan's territorial integrity. The cultural function which was held in honour of Tagore and Nazrul (a rebel poet in Bengali literature) at Dacca University in 1950 was taken by the ruling elite as a challenge to the Islamic foundation, and the organisers of the function were arrested.

This repression, instead of wiping out the people's enthusiasm for Bengali culture, ushered in a new Rennaissance of Art and Literature. As Tagore was a versatile genius like Goethe of Germany, he became the symbol of the new rennaissance. His music, short stories, novels, poems and art became a beacon of light to all. These exponents of Bengali culture pointed out to the ruling elite that there was nothing anti-Muslim in Tagore's writing and, therefore, discouraging the cultivation of his works would amount to a

dissociation with a part of world literature. The government, however, did not change its hostile attitude towards him. In 1967, the government put a ban on airing Tagore's music from Radio Pakistan. In fact, the ruling elite, in opposing Tagore, was trying to suppress the Bengali culture and Bengali nationalism, which was gradually gaining ground in weakening Pakistani nationalism based on religious fervour.

It was apparent to the political elite that the ruling elite was using religion to deprive East Pakistan of its autonomy, and to consolidate its hold over power. Professor Abul Fazal, one of the pioneers of rennaissance in East Pakistan, explained the danger of mixing religion with politics in the following words: "Religion and democratic politics cannot go together.... Politics, especially modern politics, is wholly secular,... no happy union can be imagined between the everchanging politics and eternal religion."[51] He further said (with reference to the ruling elite), "The purpose of these people is not to spread the message of religion.... They are using religion or Islam to remain in power."[52]

Abul Mansur Ahmed, who at one time was a member of the Central Cabinet, pointed out the fallacy of building Pakistan's national integration on religion: "From religion's viewpoint, the sixty scores of Muslims are one group,

but that group cannot be regarded as a nation. It is a Millat. The Muslims all over the world belong to the same Millat, but politically they belong to different nations ... and their interests also are not identical."[53]

The 1954 election in East Pakistan (see above), however, was the watershed in Pakistan's politics. It marked the rejection of the old political elite (which was closely associated with the ruling elite in West Pakistan) by the people in East Pakistan. The various sections of the indigenous middle class in East Pakistan, represented by the Awami League, the Krishak Sramik Party and Ganatantri Dal,* coalesced to form a United Front to oppose the ruling party in the election. The Krishak Sramik Party was headed by Fazlul Haq who, as Chief Minister of Undivided Bengal (1937-39), became dear to the peasants for enacting laws to save them from the oppression of the moneylenders. Ganatantri Dal was formed by the dissident communists who did not want to work through the Awami League. Their manifesto was more radical than the Awami League's. The United Front adopted a 21-point formula manifesto to contest the election. The 21-point formula was a significant document; it reflected the aspirations of the various political hues of East Pakistan. Its dominating feature, however, was Bengali national-

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* — Almost all of the leaders of Ganatantri Dal, such as Haji Danesh, Toha and Haq came from the middle class background.

ism. This document also determined the future course of politics in Pakistan. The 21 points were as follows:[54]

(1) To make Bengali one of the state languages of Pakistan;

(2) To abolish, without compensation all rent-receiving interests in land, and to distribute the surplus lands among the landless cultivators;

(3) To nationalise the jute trade and to make arrangements for securing a fair price for jute to the jute growers;

(4) To introduce co-operative farming and to improve the condition of cottage industries and manual work;

(5) To start industries, both cottage and big, in order to maked the province self-sufficient in the supply of salt;

(6) To immediately rehabilitate all refugees, particularly those who are artisans and technicians;

(7) To improve the irrigation system and save the country from flood and famine;

(8) To industrialise East Bengal and to guarantee the economic and social rights of the Industrial Labour Organization, according to the I.L.O. Conventions;

(9) To introduce free and compulsory primary education and to arrange for just pay and allowances for the teachers.

(10) To reorientate the entire secondary educational system by abolishing the discrimination between government

and private schools, and to introduce the mother tongue (vernacular) as the medium of instruction;

(11) To repeal all reactionary and black laws of the Dacca and Rajshahi Universities and to make them autonomouse institutions;

(12) To make an all-out curtailment of the cost of administration and to rationalise the pay scale of high and low paid government servants. United Front ministers shall not accept more than Rs 100 as their monthly salary;

(13) To eradicate all corruption, nepotism and bribery and with this end in view to take stock of the properties of all government officers and businessmen from the year 1940 onward and forfeit all properties, the acquisition of which is not satisfactorily accounted for;

(14) To release all security prisoners detained in jails under various Public Safety Acts and Ordinances, and to guarantee freedom of the press, speech and association;

(15) To separate the Executive from the Judiciary;

(16) To convert the Burdwan House for the present into a students' residence and afterwards into a research institute of Bengali Language and Literature;

(17) To erect a monument to commemorate the memory of those martyrs who gave their lives for the Bengali Language on 21 February 1952, and to compensate the bereaved families;

(18) To declare 21 February as 'Sahid Day' and

a public holiday;

(19) In accordance with the historic Lahore Resolution, to secure full and complete autonomy and bring all subjects under the jurisdiction of the province, leaving only Defence, Foreign Affairs and Currency under the jurisdiction of the Centre. Even in the matters of Defence, arrangements shall be such as to have the headquarters of the Army in West Pakistan and the headquarters of the Navy in East Pakistan. Ordinance factories must be established in East Pakistan with a view to make East Pakistan self-sufficient in the matter of devence, and the Ansars must be converted into a full-fledged militia;

(20) The United Front Cabinet shall on no account extend the life of the Legislature, and the Ministry shall resign six months before the general election and shall arrange for a free and fair election through the agency of an Election Commissioner;

(21) All casual vacancies in the Legislature shall be filled up through be-elections within three months of the date of vacancies and if the United Front nominees are defeated in three successive by-elections, the Ministry shall voluntarily resign from office.

While the 21-point programme essentially represented the interests of the low-income employees, students, school teachers, university professors, in short, the petit-bourgeois, it also included demands to mobilize the

support of the peasants and workers (points 2, 3 and 5 for peasants; point 8 for workers). The Muslim League had no such comprehensive programme. Moreover, the entire student community (as was evident from the programme) played an important role in mobilizing the people's support. When the election result was out, it was found that the ruling party had been able to secure only ten seats out of 309. The rout of the Muslim League unnerved the ruling elite in the centre. They could never let a government stay in power whose declared goal was full provincial autonomy. As we have seen above, the United Front Government was, therefore, dismissed six weeks after it came to power.

However, it was a major victory for the emerging indigenous middle class in East Pakistan, and its political elite. It carried the people with the, it won the support of the peasants and the workers. It was also a victory for the rising Bengali Nationalism. It was this power of the rising middle class in East Pakistan which led the ruling elite or the civil military bureaucracy in West Pakistan, in the face of the coming national election, to declare martial law and to do away with the established political institutions.

The growth of militant Bengali Nationalism under the dictatorship of Civil-Military Bureaucracy

The military take-over did not bring any fundamental redistribution of power. Although army officers, at least initially, became more important than the civil servants, the new regime represented the combined power of the military bureaucrats, civil bureacrates, and (to a lesser extent) the big industrialists (see below). The old political elite, even before the army take-over, had little real power. However, this change of regime and the dissolution of the political institutions dashed the hopes of the new political elite in East Pakistan.

During the first four years (1958-62), the civil-military bureaucracy ruled the country by ordinances. Later, when the need for legitimacy, at least for foreign relationships, became urgent, it introduced a constitution (1962) in which all power was concentrated in the hands of the Executive. The Legislature was given little power; for all practical purposes, it was nothing but a debating forum. Under the new constitution, the President was the sole repository of all executive and legislative power. He ruled the centre through a council of ministers and the provinces through two governors who were selected by him. The National and Provincial Legislatures could not even vote on the budget; all

public expenditure was the responsibility of the President and the Governors. The constitution also gave the President the right to dissolve the Assembly and rule by ordinances. The new constitution was nothing but an autocratic tract in spite of its democratic pretensions. As Newman has observed, "The document bears all the hallmarks of a Constitution devised by the Executive, to be imposed through the Executive and for the Executive."[55]

The elections of the President or the Chief Executive, and the Legislatures, under this constitution, were not held on the basis of a universal adult franchise. A new system of 'democracy' called 'basic democracy' was introduced by the bureaucracy to perpetuate its rule. Eighty thousand basic democrats* were elected from the two wings of Pakistan, who in turn were to elect the President and the members of the Legislatures. It was easier to manipulate and coerce eighty thousand voters than 65 million people.

The basic democrats were entrusted with the functions of local government. In this respect they resembled the old panchayats of traditional India. However, unlike the old panchayats, they had little autonomy. They were totally integrated from bottom to top into the government apparatus. In structure, the system of basic democracy was pyramidal. At the bottom there were Union Councils (Rural)/ Town Committees (Urban); next on the tier were Thana Council

* — Forty thousand from each wing of Pakistan.

(Rural, E.P.)/Tehsil Council (Rural, W.P.)/Municipal Committees (Urban); at the top were District Councils and Divisional Councils. The members of the Union Councils or town committees were elected on the basis of adult franchise for a period of five years. The elected members elected a chairman from amongst themselves. Thana Councils were composed of all the chairmen of the Union Councils and an equal number of government officers selected by the Deputy Commissioner. The ex-officio chairmen of the Thana Council was the Sub-divisional officer (often a C.S.P.). In the District Council, half of the members were government officials, including all the sub-divisional officers under the District; the other half were appointed by the Divisional Commissioner from amongst the non-officials. At least fifty per cent of the non-official members, i.e., twenty-five per cent of the total members, were appointed from amongst the Chairmen of Union Councils and Town/Union Committees, the other half of the members were government officials, including all the Deputy Commissioners of the Districts. The ex-officio Chairmen of the District Councils and Divisional Councils were the Deputy Commissioners and Divisional Commissioners respectively.

TABLE VI: Structure of the Basic Democracies

	Chairman	Members
Divisional Council	Commissioner	Half elected, half officials
District Council	Deputy Commissioner	Half elected, half officials
Thana Council or Municipal Committee	Sub-divisional officer	Half Union Council chairmen, half officials
Union Council or Union Committee	Elected by members	Elected by universal adult franchise

The chairman, or the controlling authority, had considerable powers to take appropriate actions if, in his view, "anything done or intended to be done by or on behalf of a local council is not in conformity with the law or is in any way against the public interest."[56] He could quash the proceedings, suspend the execution of any resolution passed or order made by the local council, prohibit the doing of anything proposed to be done and also could require the local council to take such steps as might be specified.[57] He also had the authority to suspend the chairman of a Union Council or a Town/Union Committee.[58] Although the local councils (the basic democrats) were entrusted with the planning and implementation of village and town community development projects, they had little self-government and were totally subordinated to the civil servants. The system of basic

democracy was thus a grand device by the bureaucracy to spread its tentacles of power, particularly in the rural areas.

Moreover, the bureaucracy wanted to develop a new rural elite in the form of basic democrats to contain the rising indigenous middle class and its political elite (see above). The basic democracy system also succeeded in eliminating the villagers from taking an interest in their own affairs: "... officers and union councillors agreed to dispense with the villagers and to take the total burdens of the works programe on their own shoulders."[59] Moreover, "85 per cent of the items on the agenda for discussion at the Union Council meetings were initiated by letters and visits from government officials."[60] This monopolization of decision making by the bureaucracy also discouraged the new emerging leaders of the villages, such as lawyers, doctors, professors, teachers, etc. from participating in the local affairs.[61] Their place was taken by a new, rural, nouveaux riches class which, in fact, was created by the basic democracy system through works programmes.

Under this programme, the basic democrats were given millions of rupees to spend for the economic development of their respective constituencies. During the period from 1962 to 1967, the government spent nearly 650 million rupees on the rural works programme in East Pakistan.[62] Most of this amount was spent on building kutcha or muddy roads [63] (110,000

miles), a major portion of which used to be washed away during the rainy season every year. This huge expenditure neither led to the development of agriculture (see below), nor to the building of infrastructure. Only 7.200 miles of metalled or pucca (permanent) roads were built during this period.[64] Actually the Works Programme was a mechanism through which the government bribed the basic democrats to vote for its candidates; the basic democrats who voted for the government were not accountable for the expenditures they incurred.

In this way, the government was successful in creating a new rural elite whose economic and political fortune was dependent on the continuation of the existing regime in power. In the process, however, the government alienated the bulk of the rural people and the emerging political elite. As the majority of the basic democrats had little education and traditional background,[65] they were looked down upon by the masses as upstarts in the illegal pay of the regime. The new political elite was enraged because it found that politics, on the basis of ideology and party affiliation, had suddenly become inoperative. Furthermore, as the electorate was very small (to elect a basic democrat; see above), it was vulnerable to official pressure, intimidation and influence of money. Finally, what mostly angered the rural people against the basic democrats was their (basic democrats) conspicuous consumption and the exhibition of political powers. The basic democrats could impose arbitrary taxes on the villagers that they very often

did. Thus, the basic democracy system, instead of mobilising popular support for the regime, resulted in a new kind of class struggle in the rural areas; the small peasants looked upon the basic democrats (as a new class and) as an instrument of oppression of the government. To the emerging political elite, the system symbolised a mechanism to perpetuate the regime of the civil-military bureaucracy of West Pakistan.

Since there was little room for the new political elite to make any change in the government through constitutional means,* and as the economic exploitation of East Pakistan by West Pakistan continued unabated (in certain areas it rather increased; see below), the Bengali nationalist sentiment intensified; the despondency of the political elite added a new militancy to the Awami League and other political parties. The repression of the students and other members of the political elite by the provincial Governor Abdul Monem Khan added new dimensions to the nationalist sentiments in East Pakistan.

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* — The defeat of Miss Jinnah, sister of the deceased father of the nation (she promised a return to parliamentary democracy and evoked tremendous popular enthusiasm in East Pakistan) convinced the political elite, particularly the students and young Awami League and National Awami Party leaders that President Ayub and consequently the civil-military regime could not be dislodged through the electoral system (the basic democracy) devised by them.

Monem Khan was an old old-guard Muslim League leader of East Pakistan. In the 1954 election, he was utterly defeated by a candidate of the United Front. When Ayub Khan decided to legitimate his rule in 1962, he revived the Muslim League and resurrected from oblivion a few of its old leaders. Monem Khan was one of them. Monem knew that the main support base of the rising political elite, which always opposed the ruling elite of West Pakistan, was the students.

His first step, therefore, was to neutralize their power. So he organised and financed a pro-government student party named the National Students Federation in Dacca University — the nerve centre of East Pakistan's politics. The members of this student party, in most cases, were degenerate students of low calibre, who became members of this organization for money, power, and to get admission into the University. Monem also installed a very subservient Vice Chancellor through whom he made an attempt to de-politicise the teaching community. He also curtailed the autonomy of the Universities by various University Ordinances. His undisguised contempt for the intelligentsia, particularly for those who were the vanguard of the Bengali cultural movement, was proverbial.

As a member of the old political elite, he often gave vent to the feeling that Bengali was a non-Muslim language and wanted to purify it by incorporating more Persian and Arabi words. All of these steps — instead of weakening —

intensified the new political elit's resistance to the regime. In the realm of culture, a militant, linguistic nationalism gave birth to new literary and art forms. Even men in the streets and rural areas were infected by a strong feeling of Bengali nationalism.

It was in this environment of intense nationalist feelings that Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who became the President of the Awami League after Surhrawardy's death, came forward with a plan for 'full autonomy' for East Pakistan. The timing of the announcement was crucial. It was just after the Indo-Pakistani War when the feeling of isolation was complete in East Pakistan.

At the time of the war, East Pakistan was totally cut off from West Pakistan and had only one division of soldiers. If India wanted to, she could have easily overrun East Pakistan. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, therefore, declared in a press conference in 1966: "The question of autonomy is more important after the War. Time has come for making East Pakistan self-sufficient in every field."[68] His plan for complete self-sufficiency of East Pakistan was a six-point programme. The Six Points demanded:

1. The establishment of a federal form of government, with a parliament, to be the supreme point of power, directly elected by universal adult suffrage.

2. The federal government would control only defense and foreign policy, leaving all other subjects to the

federating states of East and West Pakistan.

3. The two wings would have separate (but freely convertible) currencies or, if one currency, separate fiscal policies to prevent the flight of capital from East to West Pakistan.

4. The federal government would have no powers of taxation. It would share in state taxes for the needs of foreign and defense affairs.

5. Each of the federating units would have the power to enter into trade agreements with foreign countries. They would have full control over their earned foreign exchange.

6. The states would have their own militias or para-military forces.

These demands were explained in a pamphlet — 'Amader Banchar Dabi' or 'Our Right to Live' — which was published in Dacca in March, 1966. These demands were different from the previous demands of 1954 in the sense that they envisioned two separate economies for East and West Pakistan. The programme denied the centre to levy taxes on East Pakistan and argued that the provinces should have the right to establish separate trade and commercial relations with foreign countries.

The Six Point programme, in demanding economic self-determination, won the support of both the petit-bourgeois and the emerging commercial and industrial bourgeoisies

of East Pakistan. To them it meant the elimination of competition from the developed bourgeoisie of West Pakistan. This sentiment was expressed in a speech delivered in the National Assembly in June, 1966 by an East Pakistani parliamentarian,

> "How can capital be formed in East Pakistan? Sir, when the government decided to give more and more to East Pakistan in the import trade — as you know in the import trade East Pakistanis are not categorized as importers — they decided that there should be OGL (open general license) importers and the OGL system was introduced and East Pakistanis were allowed to import and they were registered as importers. But as soon as the authorities found that East Pakistanis are coming and becoming importers and trying to form small capitals, they overnight abolished the system of OGL and brought the free list. Sir, it is open to everybody that East Pakistanis have very small capital. They cannot compete in free list ... You cannot have the same system for both East and West Pakistan.... If you want real national integration ... treat us equally in the economic life of the country."[69]

The Six-Point demands not only articulated the interests of the middle class and the rising bourgeoisie, they also voiced the interests of the peasants and workers. The artificially low price of jute, the exportable commercial commodity of East Pakistan, and the high price of cereals, a major portion of which came from West Pakistan, the total neglect of agriculture in East Pakistan, and virtually no attempt at controlling floods, brought the East Pakistani peasants to the verge of complete ruination. In fact, the capital formation in West Pakistan occurred on the basis of primitive capital accumulation by exploiting the peasants

in East Pakistan (see below). Mahubub-ul Haq an East Pakistani legislator, said in a famous speech in the National Assembly,

> "East Pakistan contributed to the development of West Pakistan to the extent that, during the last fifteen years, East Pakistan has been drained out of Rs 1,000 crores of its solid assets by way of less imports and more exports. With that, sir, West Pakistan was developed and these million acres have been created.... Today in the 16th year, when we have been reduced as paupers to build WestPakistan, we are told 'get out boys', we have nothing for you, we do not require you."[70]

The workers were also affected by the rising cost of consumer goods which resulted from the import substitution policy (see below) followed by the government's protection of the West Pakistani industrialists. (At the same time, they did not have the benefit of the expansion of those industries.)

Thus the Six-Point programme came to reflect the interests of all the sections of people in East Pakistan. Even the East Pakistani bureaucrats, at first surreptitiously and later openly, gave their support to the Awami League because the implementation of the programme promised easier promotion and more job openings for them.

Encouraged by the overwhelming support given to his programme by the masses, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman started a vigorous campaign in February, 1966. During the next three months, the whole of East Pakistan — both rural and urban areas — was convulsed by a vigorous mass movement which led

the ruling elite to imprison him along with other important Awami Leaguers under the Defence of Pakistan Rules. However, these arrests did not lead to the cessation of the mass agitation. On June 7, 1966, a complete general strike paralysed the entire province. To put an end to this mass upsurge, the government not only took recourse to severe repressive measures under the Defence of Pakistan Rules, but also charged Sheikh Mujib, 24 petty East Pakistani Army officers and three East Pakistani Senior Civil Servants, with a conspiracy to bring about the Secession of East Pakistan with Indian connivance. According to the government, the conspiracy took place in Agartala in India. By concocting this tenuous case, the government wanted to undermine the Sheikh's image by depicting him as a traitor to the country. Instead, it increased his popularity and he became the symbol of Bengali Nationalism.

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CHAPTER III

THE ECONOMIC ROOTS OF BENGALI NATIONALISM

The most fundamental reason which led to the final rupture between East and West Pakistan and the emergence of Bangladesh was economic. Of course, this does not mean that cultural factors were not important. Cultural factors reinforced the national sentiment which emerged on the basis of economic deprivation.

At the time of partition, both East and West Pakistan were predominantly agricultural, East Pakistan producing jute and rice, West Pakistan producing wheat and cotton. There were very few industries either in the East or in the West wing. For the potential growth in industries both were on equal footing. They had very few industrial raw materials and minerals except raw jute and raw cotton. However, the economic development of the two wings was very uneven.

Since partition, West Pakistan has developed much more rapidly than East Pakistan in almost all areas of economic activity. In terms of resource and income endowments, East Pakistan had a slight edge over West Pakistan. At the time of independence, the regional total income of East Pakistan was certainly higher than that of West Pakistan. Even in 1949-50, the Eastern wing's total regional income, according to Mahbub-ul-Haq was Rs 8,580 million as against West Pakis-

tan's Rs 8,460 million at 1949-50 to 1952-53 prices.[1] According to Khan and Bergen's estimate (see table 1, page 152), the Gross Provincial Product of East Pakistan in 1949-50 was higher than that of West Pakistan and it remained higher until 1953-54. In 1954-55, West Pakistan's income exceeded that of East Pakistan's and the gap has widened since then.

According to the Third Five Year Plan and the Report of the Panel of Economists on the Fourth Five Year Plan, the GNP of East Pakistan increased from Rs 12,360 million in 1949-50 to Rs 14.945 million in 1959-60 and to Rs 23,119 million in 1969-70 (at 1959-60 constant factor cost). During the same period the total GNP of the West wing was Rs 12,106 million in 1949-50, Rs 16,494 million in 1959-60, and Rs31,157 million in 1969-70 (at 1959-60 constant prices). During the decade of 1959-60 to 1969-70, the per capita GDP increased in the following way in East and West Pakistan: (see Table II, page 153)

TABLE I: Gross Provincial Product in East and West Pakistan at 1959-60 Constant Prices.

	1949-50		1954-55		1959-60		1963-64	
	East	West	East	West	East	West	East	West
Gross Provincial Product	1237.40	1209.10	1381.60	1410.60	1497.20	1646.70	1867.10	2009.00
of which: Agriculture	807.40	659.50	870.40	694.80	904.20	771.10	1059.90	875.60
Manufacturing	47.20	96.10	65.10	156.90	91.20	201.80	137.10	269.40
Construction	5.80	17.90	12.60	28.90	22.40	42.70	67.30	83.70
Electricity, Gas, Water	0.60	2.70	1.00	3.70	2.00	8.70	9.30	14.20
Transport and Communi-cations	63.10	60.80	77.90	81.00	90.00	92.10	112.70	111.80

Source: Khan and Bergen, Pakistan Development Review, 1966

TABLE II: Per Capita GDP in East and West Pakistan at 1959-60 Constant Prices

	Per Capita GDP East	Per Capita GDP West	West-East Disparity Ratio	Index of Disparity
1959-60	269	355	1.32	100
1960-61	277	363	1.31	97
1961-62	286	376	1 31	97
1962-63	277	393	1.42	111
1963-64	299	408	1.36	113
1964-65	293	426	1.45	141
1965-66	295	427	1.45	141
1966-67	290	448	1.54	169
1967-68	307	468	1.52	163
1968-69	312	490	1.57	178
1969-70	314	504	1.61	191
Growth over the decade	17%	42%		
Growth in Third Plan Period	7%	18%		

Source: The Report of the Panel of Economists on the Fourth Five Year Plan, Table I.

As has been pointed out in the Report of the Panel of Economists (sub-part 1 of Part 1), "The various reasons for the growth of economic disparity between East and West Pakistan over the past two decades can be traced to (a) disproportionate government expenditures in the two regions and (b) various government policies relating to planning and dev-

elopment strategy."[2] As we discussed above the ruling elite was composed of the civil servants and the military officers from West Pakistan. The Central Government succeeded in centralising all economic and political powers (see above). All the headquarters of the armed forces, as well as the Federal Capital, were established in West Pakistan. Most of the expenditures of the Federal Government and the armed forces were incurred in West Pakistan.

Pakistan's economic development — both industrial and agricultural — resulted not from private initiative but on the basis of Government intervention. The businessmen who came from India to West Pakistan and the businessmen (Bengali) who replaced the Hindu businessmen in East Pakistan were too small to undertake large-scale economic activities. The PIDC, or Pakistan Industrial Development Corporation, was therefore established by the government to undertake investment in the large scale industries and in those areas where private capital was shy,* and the PIDC temporarily occupied a monopoly position. Moreover, the infrastructure of the economy was totally controlled and developed by the state. Transportation, communications, power, and large scale irrigations were in the hands of the public sector. WAPDA, or the Water and Power Development Authority, was entrusted with the task of maintaining the old and building the new physical

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* — After developing these industries, the PIDC handed over these industries to the private capitalists in West Pakistan.

infrastructure in the fields of water and power. The importance of this agency could be guessed from the fact that agriculture was impossible in the semi-arid land of West Pakistan without irrigation. Agriculture in East Pakistan was dependent on errigation or flood control.

In Pakistan, semi-autonomous agencies or public corporations were established to undertake development works. Even when a sizable capitalist class emerged in Pakistan (after the Second Five Year Plan), these corporations, through various mechanisms, determined the course and volume of development works in Pakistan. It was stated in the Third Five Year Plan of Pakistan that public corporations "are expected to handle around 55 per cent of the total public sector allocation."[3] Of the nine areas among which allocations of public expenditures were projected, public corporations played a major role in the following areas: industry, fuels and minerals, transport and communication, agriculture, water and power. The authors of the plan remarked that the entire economy depended on the satisfactory and efficient functioning of the corporations.

These corporations owed their origins not to legislative but to bureaucratic initiative. Birkhead says, "Judging from the sources and content of official reports on the subject, the creation of corporations throughout Pakistan's nineteen years has been the work of administrators, and the legislative branch has seemingly played no role at

all."[4] Why were the civil servants interested in establishing public corporations? The Chairman of WAPDA, Ghulam Ishaq, explained the reasons:

> "What I believe forced the government in this country to select this tool was the realization that a government department was inherently inappropriate as an institutional framework in which to conduct an efficient service of a commercial or industrial nature. The government department partakes of the character of the government as a whole and is, therefore, largely impersonal. Impersonal administration means low motivation of employees, whcih, coupled with the large measure of in-built service security, makes it ideally suited for routine, repetitive operations in which there is a precedent for every situation and a rule for every action, but hardly for anything more. A government department must also aim at perfection; there must be uniformity of treatment of problems and of individuals;... This preoccupation with order and system, conformity and perfection, as also with playing it safe, succeeds in loading a government department with such a mass of rules and regulations, codes and practices and manuals and charts, that inevitably keeps it, by and large, effectively in check and balanced, but at the same time, makes its movements so rigid, so ponderous as practically to incapacitate it for undertaking a large, business type venture."[5]

This remarkable and extraordinary statement makes it clear that the bureaucracy in Pakistan could transcend the limitations and dysfunctions of bureaucracy when power was involved. Otherwise the captaincy and control of business would have passed to the capitalist class. In the case of East Pakistan, that would have meant more power to the rising indigenous middle class and its political elite. It is

needless to say that almost all corporations were headed by CSPs from West Pakistan. In these semi-autonomous agencies they attained complete freedom from political control in their day to day operations. Through these agencies, they could easily maintain their overall control of the economy. These tools were invented by the bureaucracy not only to control the economic development but also to consolidate its power position vis-a-vis the rising industrial and merchant classes. In this way, the state conditioned the functioning of the emerging social classes. Referring to this phenomenon, Harvard Professor Gustav Papanek has observed:

> "It was assumed that the economy would function more efficiently if some decisions were taken by government — that is, by civil servants — rather than by private businessmen. Civil servants were presumed to be better educated, less tradition-bound, more experienced and far sighted, than the petty traders who became the businessmen and industrialists of Pakistan."[6]

Further he says:

> "It is ... plausible that administrators see merit in direct controls which require administrators. An elaborate direct control apparatus gives prestige and power to all administrators, and illegal income to some. It also works well for them. Price control and allocation for automobiles might not be universally effective, but they were likely to work for the automobiles bought by the civil servants."[7]

The investors in any industry or business in Pakistan had to obtain permission from the semi-autonomous agencies or corporations to set up a business or factory, to issue stocks, and to obtain a building permit, land, telephone,

water and sewage, power or railway connections. There were other agencies which determined the location of plants, tax concessions etc. Authorization was needed in foreign investment and foreign travel.[8]

Exports and imports were also controlled by an elaborate system of licensing. The most important of all controls was the control over foreign exchange. As a developing nation, Pakistan needed imported capital goods for any significant operation either in industry, commerce or infrastructure. The government issued licenses for import of each item and thus determined who could import those items and when. The control of government over industry and business was, therefore, all-pervasive. Only those persons who had a connection with the government or civil service could expect to shine in business or industry. As Papanek, referring to these government controls, states:

> "One could continue with the list of controls. It should be clear, however, that they were so far-reaching that even decisions not ordinarily subject to specific controls could be determined by the government if it so wished. The government by its decisions, especially on foreign exchange, determined the success or failure of any venture, and even an informal suggestion by a powerful government official could have the force of a regulation. Few businessmen wanted to incur a black mark that could affect their next import permit."[9]

As (see above) most of the civil servants settled in or belonged to the western part of Pakistan, and as the Federal capital was established first in Karachi, and then

in Islamabad (both in West Pakistan), only those merchants, traders and entrepreneurs settled in West Pakistan had the connections to augment their business interests.

> "To some extent government favours depended on influence, bribes and pressure, and personal contact was essential — by mail it was hard to become socially intimate with government officials, or to bribe them by flattery or money. Businessmen and industrialists, therefore, preferred to invest in Karachi. Those who did found it easier to obtain the import licenses and permits they required for operation and expansion."[10]

East Pakistan's economic development was thus hindered by two factors: (i) all the Federal expenditures (including expenditures on Armed Forces) were incurred in West Pakistan; (ii) East Pakistani traders did not receive their due share of licenses and permits. However, the most important reason for East Pakistan's economic hardships stemmed from the fact that while the capital in Pakistan was formed from the primitive capital accumulation in East Pakistan, this capital was transferred to West Pakistan for that wing's industrialisation. Moreover, the West Pakistani manufacturers could sell their goods above the international price in the protected market of East Pakistan (as well as in West Pakistan. But West Pakistan was the beneficiary of that further capital accumulation.). How did this capital formation occur?

When Pakistan came into existence in 1947, the Muslim traders replaced the Hindu businessmen. The Korean War boom started in 1950. Suddenly Pakistan's export earnings

experienced a manifold increase and continued to increase until the end of the war in 1954. Imports also registered a sharp rise. Import trade meant a windfall gain in the sense that the imported goods were sold at a very high price.* However, in the starved domestic market, this opportunity of making huge money in trade could be availed by only those who could get licenses. With a very few exceptions, all of them were West Pakistanis. The Korean War boom thus enabled these West Pakistani businessmen to accumulate huge cash reserves out of high profits in export and import trade.

With the decline in export earnings after the Korean War boom, there occurred a need for import substitution (as imports were largely financed by exports). The few successful traders who had capital could invest in the production of consumer goods which had a highly protected market.** This transformation of the traders into industrialists was further facilitated by the fact that machinery and other capital goods were cheap to import because Pakistan maintained an overvalued currency. The high price of consumer goods and the low price of capital goods enabled the industrialists to make annual profits of more than 100 per cent (in the developed industrial countries, annual profit normally does not exceed 20 per cent). The 1950s were thus years of rapid capital formations and investments. Throughout the next decade this

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* — Moreover, because of the over-valued exchange rate of the rupee (see below), import licenses meant large income subsidies.

** — "The incentives for Pakistani Muslims (West Pakistani)

trend continued.

The mechanism which enabled the West Pakistani capitalists to form their capital was the domestic currency (rupee) which was kept aftificially overvalued by a big margin. The exporters had to surrender their export earnings to the State Bank of Pakistan (Government Central Bank) at an artificially low rupee price. (When the price of one U.S. dollar in the open money market was more than 10 rupees, its official price was only 4.75 rupees). As jute accounted for 70 per cent of Pakistan's foreign exchange earnings in the early years — jute was grown exclusively in East Pakistan at that time — the jute growers never got the shadow price or the real value for their commodities. On the other hand, the importers received a dollar for its half price.

As import licenses were given mainly to the West Pakistani traders (see tables III and IV), there occurred a

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to invest in industry were effective in part because foreign competition was largely absent, tax concessions were generous, and tax evasion widely practiced. Unlike other countries, Pakistan was not faced with the problem, and the benefits, of having a large groups of foreign or ethnically different industrialists. British firms had been concentrated in the great port cities of the sub-continent which remained with India.... The well established Hindu commercial enterprises, and the few industrial firms, were more anxious to sell out than to expand. Both the British and the Hindus (and the East Pakistanis) operated under a severe handicap in that economic activity was largely controlled by the government, which naturally encouraged (West) Pakistanis and Muslims. ... Potential foreign investors also faced an ambiguous government attitude, and difficulties in obtaining permits and in remitting profits. At first, economic efficiency suffered as a result of these restrictions, but there was an undiluted incentive for Pakistani Muslims to become importers and later, industrialists." (G.F. Papanek, Pakistan's Development, p.34)

net transfer of resources from East to West Pakistan.

TABLE III: Commercial Import Licences Issued by Region of Licence (per cent of total Commercial Licence value)

Shipping Period	Karachi	Other West Pakistan	East Pakistan
1957-58			
July-Dec	49.2	17.8	33.0
Jan-June	48.8	18.3	32.9
1958-59			
July-Dec	49.9	18.2	31.9
Jan-June	48.9	15.3	35.8
1959-60			
July-Dec	42.1	17.8	40.1
Jan-June	47.6	20.3	32.1
1960-61			
July-Dec	41.8	14.6	43.6
Jan-June	40.9	12.8	46.3
1961-62			
July-Dec	36.1	17.8	46.0
Jan-June	36.9	17.5	45.5
1962-63			
July-Dec	42.9	18.8	38.4
Jan-June	41.3	21.7	37.0

Source: Pakistan Development Review, Winter 1966, p.533.

TABLE IV: Industrial Import Licences Issued by Region of Licences (per cent of total industrial licences)

Shipping period	Karachi	Other West Pakistan	East Pakistan
1957-58			
July-Dec	37.4	25.5	37.1
Jan-June	39.6	33.8	26.6
1958-59			
July-Dec	42.8	31.8	25.4
Jan-June	46.9	30.5	22.6

1959-60			
July-Dec	38.0	22.5	39.6
Jan-June	36.3	32.1	31.6
1960-61			
July-Dec	43.3	30.3	26.4
Jan-June	37.5	24.4	38.2
1961-62			
July-Dec	36.4	27.9	36.7
Jan-June	36.5	32.6	30.9
1962-63			
July-Dec	46.6	27.4	26.0
Jan-June	45.0	30.3	24.7

Source: Pakistan Development Review, Winter 1966, p.534.

Thus capital was accumulated by the West Pakistani traders on the basis of exploitation of the East Pakistani jute growers. This capital was later used to initiate industrialisation in the West wing. This is illustrated by the fact that, although East Pakistan provided the major portion of Pakistan's export earnings, East Pakistan's share in the total imports of the country throughout the period 1950 to 1960 was less than 30 percent.*[11] It is to be noted in this connection that, until 1960, the amount of foreign aid received by Pakistan was significant compared with her export earnings. Throughout the decade 1950-60, East Pakistan had a net export

* — According to Stephen R. Lewis, East Pakistan's share of total commodity imports in the pre-plan (1950-51 to 1954-55), First Plan (1955-56 to 1959-60), and Second Plan (1960-61 to 1964-65) periods were as follows: 29.4 per cent, 29.1 per cent and 30.5 per cent. On the other hand East Pakistan's commodity exports during the same periods were: 50.3 per cent, 61.4 per cent, and 59.5 per cent. (Stephen R. Lewis, Pakistan: Industrialisation and Trade Politics, pp.142-143).

surplus with the outside world and West Pakistan had a net import surplus.

According to Mahubub-ul-Haq, a West Pakistani economist, "the extent of this transfer of real resources was about Rs 210 million per annum in the pre-plan period and Rs 100 million in the plan period. It meant that roughly 2 per cent of East Pakistan's regional income in the pre-plan period and 1 per cent in the plan period was being taken away by West Pakistan."[12] In the views of East Pakistani and other economists the extent of transfer was much higher. Whatever might be the real amount of transfer, it had important consequences for the economic development of both East and West Pakistan.

> "First, higher imports of development goods, partly financed out of East Pakistan's trade surplus, the net trade surplus of East Pakistan, directly facilitated increased investment both in the public and private sectors of West Pakistan. Second, because of the high rate of profit earned by the importers, it produced indirect effects on private capital formation through the reinvestment of importers' profits. Third, to the extent that a major share of the central revenue came from import duties which were largely spent in West Pakistan, it contributed to the growth of public investment and other expenditures in that region. On the other hand, it restricted the growth of the private sector in East Pakistan due to (a) limited opportunity for capital accumulation through profits from trade, and (b) transfer of its savings to West Pakistan through its trade surplus."[13]

Furthermore, there was a huge disparity in government expenditures between East and West Pakistan, both during the pre-plan (1948-49 to 1954-55) and the plan (1955-56 to

TABLE V: Revenue and Development Expenditure in East and West Pakistan (Rupees in million)

EAST PAKISTAN

Period	Revenue Expend-iture	Development Plan Exp. Total	Public	Private	Outside Plan Exp.	Works Programme	Total Develop-ment Exp. (3+4+5)	Total Expend-iture	Development Exp. as per All Pakistan Total Exp.
1	2		3		4	5	6	7	
1950/51-'54/55	1,710	1,000	700	300	--	--	1,000	2,710	20%
1955/56-'59/60	2,540	2,700	1,970	730	--	--	2,700	5,240	26%
1960/61-'64/65	4,340	9,250	6,250	3,000	--	450	9,700	14,040	32%
1965/66-'69/70	6,480	16,560	11,060	5,500	--	--	16,560	21,410	36%
				WEST PAKISTAN Indus Basin					
1950/51-'54/55	7,200	4,000	2,000	2,000	--	--	4,000	11,290	80%
1955/56-'59/60	8,980	7,570	4,640	2,930	--	--	7,570	16,560	74%
1960/61-'64/65	12,840	18,400	7,700	10,700	2,110	200	20,710	33,550	68%
1965/66-'69/70	22,230	26,100	10,100	16,000	3,600	--	29,700	51,950	64%

Source: Report of the Panel of Economists, p. 25.

1969-70) period. (see Table V, p.165) As we have already noted, the Central Government's expenditure, both on administration and development, was concentrated in East Pakistan. About 80 per cent of the total non-development expenditure was incurred in West Pakistan during the pre-plan period.[14] In respect of development expenditures, East Pakistan's share was 700 million rupees, as against 2,000 million in West Pakistan. In the private sector, the situation was more dismal. East Pakistan got only 300 million rupees as against West Pakistan's 2,000 million rupees.

During the First Plan period, East Pakistan's share in the total investment in the public sector was 36 per cent. This was shamefully inadequate to meet East Pakistan's requirements since she had a larger population and little industrial development during the pre-plan period. What is more depressing, even the amount allotted to East Pakistan could not be spent because of various bottlenecks created by the West Pakistan bureaucrats. The development schemes were not sanctioned in time, the funds were released at the last moment when there was little time left for implementation. Moreover, East Pakistan was given only 30 per cent of the total import quota. Hence, during the First Plan period, East Pakistan could utilise only 30 per cent of the total public expenditure. In the private sector only 20 per cent of the total investment was in East Pakistan. In respect of revenue expenditures, East Pakistan's share was 2.5 billion

rupees as against 8.9 billion in West Pakistan.

During the Second and Third Plans, the total revenue and development expenditures in East Pakistan was 14 and 21 billion rupees, whereas in West Pakistan it was 33 and 51 billion rupees. The huge revenue expenditure in West Pakistan (about 75% of the total) explains how a favorable environment for private investment was created in West Pakistan. The building of the infrastructure (a vast network of railways, roads and telecommunication systems) resulted in the external economies in that wing by reducing the private costs of investment. Furthermore, investment generated investment.

The fiscal and monetary policies of the Central Government were also unfavourable for investment in East Pakistan. Financial institutions like PICIC, IDBP, and ADBP always adopted step-motherly attitudes towards investors in East Pakistan. As a result, East Pakistan's share in the total private investments never exceeded 25 per cent.

The extent of disparity in development and non-development expenditure in the two wings can be best understood in per capita terms.

> "In the pre-plan period on the average the per capita development and revenue expenditures were Rs 22.08 and Rs 37.75 respectively for East Pakistan as against Rs 108.03 and Rs 201.94 respectively for West Pakistan. These disparities in per capita expenditure continued to prevail in the subsequent three Five-Year Plan periods. Thus, in the Third Five Year Plan, the per capita development and revenue

expenditures were Rs 240 and Rs 70.29 respectively in East Pakistan as against Rs 521.05 and 390.35 respectively."[15]

The mechanism through which the centre channelled a major portion of its expenditures to West Pakistan was the fiscal policy regarding tax. Although the India Act of 1935 granted to the provinces the sales tax, share of export and import duties as well as of super and income taxes, Mr. Jinnah, in 1948, by a special ordinance, made them central revenues. The only important taxes left to the provincial governments were land revenue and agricultural income tax. As a result, East Pakistan had little left to develop its infrastructure of the economy. So, it is not surprising that during the two decades of Pakistan, only 20 miles were added to East Pakistan's railways as against a few thousand miles in West Pakistan.

Moreover, 70 per cent of the total foreign aid given to Pakistan was appropriated by West Pakistan. West Pakistan always had a trade deficit with the outside world which was met from the foreign exchange earned by East Pakistan and the foreign aid given to Pakistan (i.e., the two wings of Pakistan).

However, what mortally hurt East Pakistan's economy was the primitive capital accumulation (of the West Pakistani traders) on the basis of East Pakistan's agriculture. Not only did that leave the East Pakistan peasants with little capital in their hands to invest in the development of agri-

culture, there was virtually no attempt on the Central Government's part to develop East Pakistan's agriculture. According to S.R. Bose's estimate, during the period 1960-61 to 1967-68, the trend rate of increase of rice production in East Pakistan was only 1.7 per cent while its population increased nearly 3 per cent per annum.[16] During the same period the rate of increase in the major crops of West Pakistan was 5.5 per cent per annum. Thus, there was a real 'green revolution' in West Pakistan. It was possible because of the abundant supply of water and fertilisers in that wing. Under the Indus basin scheme, 900 million rupees were spent for the development of irrigation works in West Pakistan. The installation of deep tubewells in West Pakistan was another important development in the 1960s. More than 60,000 tubewells were sunk in West Pakistan before the end of the 1960s.[17] Since water was a key input with a high marginal productivity, the large scale use of tubewells led to a rapid boost of agricultural growth in West Pakistan. However, no significant steps were taken to improve East Pakistan's agriculture. According to Mahbub-ul-Haq, one of Ayub Khan's top economists, East Pakistan had greater potentiality over West Pakistan, in the agricultural field. He wrote, "If proper steps are taken, the Eastern wing is destined to become the granary for the whole of Pakistan."[18]

To increase agricultural output in East Pakistan, the first need was flood control. Floods occurred in East

Pakistan, almost every year, taking a heavy toll of human lives, livestock, houses and foodgrains. The ferocity of the floods during the rainy seasons was suggested "by the magnitude of the peak flood flow (five million cusecs or twice the all-time peak flood of the Mississippi river) and the sediment load (about 2.4 billion tons a year) which is greater than that of any other river system in the world."[19] In the mid 1950s, Krugg Mission recommended to the government of Pakistan a joint flood control scheme with India at a cost of 500 million rupees. Although the Indus Basin scheme (West Pakistan) was undertaken with India in 1961 and 900 million rupees were spent outside the plan on this project, no similar venture was ever undertaken with India in the case of East Pakistan. Thus, East Pakistan's agriculture continued to be scourged by a recurring devastation of floods every year. Every year a few million acres became uncultivable or their crops washed away. Flood control became a question of survival for East Pakistan. The reason for poverty and hunger in Bangladesh today is rooted in the cold neglect and criminal inaction in respect of flood control on the part of the Pakistani ruling elite.*

Most of the cultivable land in East Pakistan remained fallow during the dry season for the lack of water. These lands could have been easily cultivated by tapping the

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* — In 1974, seventeen out of nineteen districts were affected by a devastating flood.

below-surface water through low lift pumps. A recent study has shown that tubewells had greater potentiality in East Pakistan than in the Western wing in terms of cost and potentiality. Of course, this would have meant a higher government involvement as most of the cultivators in East Pakistan were poor compared with those of West Pakistan. It must be taken into consideration, however, that the small peasant in East Pakistan was found to be a better credit risk than the large landowners of West Pakistan who often defaulted on their loans.

Moreover, the small peasants in East Pakistan had a better savings rate. "It seems surprising that East Pakistan should have a gross domestic saving rate of 8 per cent in 1959-60 compared with less than 5 per cent in West Pakistan, when West Pakistan was believed to have a higher per capita income."[20] East Pakistan's savings came from the savings of small peasants as industry's contribution in its total economy was insignificant. The mechanism for these savings were transferred to West Pakistan, as has already been described. "West Pakistan has been able to keep its investment far above its domestic saving because of the influx of resources from abroad and from East Pakistan. Gross investment was maintained at about 12 per cent of gross domestic product in West Pakistan in the last ten years even though gross domestic saving was only 7 per cent in the pre-plan and 5 per

cent in the plan periods. On the other hand, investment in East Pakistan fell short of its savings as a result of a compulsory transfer of savings from East to West Pakistan."[21] This saving was, in fact, forced on East Pakistan. It was not an institutional phenomenon. As a consequence of this primitive capital accumulation from East Pakistan's agriculture, there was little left in the hands of the East Pakistani peasants to reinvest in agriculture. He was squeezed so mercilessly through the two decades that his economic condition, instead of improving, gradually declined.

The following two tables will also throw some light on the rate of disparity in the agricultural growth of the two wings:

TABLE VI: Fertilizer distribution in Pakistan

Year	Quantity (in thousand nutrient tons)	
	West	East
1960/61	31	24
1964/65	87	45
1965/66	71	54
1966/67	116	77
1967/68	193	115

Source: K. Griffin and A.R. Khan, Growth and Inequality in Pakistan, p.81.

TABLE VII: Distribution of improved seeds of major crops

Year	Quantity (-000 tons)	
	West	East
1961/62	--	3
1964/65	31	9
1965/66	56	8
1966/67	38	6
1967/68	128	12

Source: K. Griffin and A.R. Khan, Growth and Inequality in Pakistan, p.84.

Hence, it was not surprising that in 1968, when West Pakistan became self-sufficient in agricultural products and a net exporter of rice, East Pakistan's food deficit increased from 4.6 million tons in 1948/49 — 1957/58 decade to 15 million tons in the next decade, 1957/58 to 1967/68.[22]

From the above mentioned facts, it becomes clear that through various fiscal, monetary and administrative policies — the tax system, allocation of foreign exchange, allocation of government expenditures, distribution of licenses, and the exchange rate — the ruling elite of Pakistan not only gave undue benefits to West Pakistan but also transferred real resources from East to West Pakistan. Moreover, the Eastern wing was used as a protected market for the industries of the Western wing. This kind of nineteenth century colonialism not only alienated the middle class of East Pakistan, but also enabled its political elite to mobilize the support of the peasants and workers whose real income

was declining every year.

The Six-Point demand was a rallying forum for all the social classes led by the political elite of the middle class to wage a common struggle against the ruling elite of West Pakistan. The Six-Point demand was a call for the cessation of external exploitation which even the leftists, who did not see eye to eye with the Awami League, had to support. It envisaged two economies for the two wings where each wing would have control over its revenues, foreign exchange earnings, foreign aids. Each should also have the freedom to pursue separate trade, fiscal and monetary policies. It was not possible for the ruling elite of Pakistán to accept these demands without undermining their own political and economic hegemony.

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1 - Mahbub-ul-Haq, The Strategy of Economic Planning, p.96.
2 - The Report of the Panel of Economists on the Fourth Five Year Plan, Sub Part 1 of Part I.
3 - Third Five Year Plan, p.169.
4 - G. S. Birkhead, Administrative Problems in Pakistan, p.120.
5 - ibid., p. 123.
6 - Gustav F. Papanek, Pakistan's Development, p.112.
7 - ibid., p.113.
8 - ibid., p.116.
9 - ibid., p.116.
10 - ibid., p.22.
11 - Report of the Panel of Economists, op. cit.
12 - Loc. cit. 1, p.100.
13 - Report of the Panel of Economists, op. cit.
14 - ibid.
15 - ibid.
16 - K. Griffin and A. R. Khan, Growth and Inequality in Pakistan, pp. 66-67.
17 - ibid., p.74.
18 - Loc. cit. 1, p.115.
19 - A. R. Khan, The Economy of Bangladesh, p.82.
20 - Loc. cit. 1, p.112.
21 - ibid., p.103.
22 - Economic Survey of East Pakistan, 1967-68.

CONCLUSION

The irony of Pakistan's history of a quarter of a century is that the Six Point formula was the minimum which East Pakistan's political elite could demand; on the other hand, the West Pakistan's ruling elite, in particular the army bureaucracy, could not grant it because that would have made the army dependent for its subventions on an economically autonomous East Pakistan, the defense budget of Pakistan being roughly 5 per cent higher than the total revenue earnings of West Pakistan.

The Civil bureaucracy too was enraged because the Awami League demanded the abolition of the central bureaucracy and wanted to replace it with proportional representation from the provinces. Consequently extreme measures were the corollary of the Six Point demand. Ayub first threatened the Awami League leaders that he would respond to the Six Point demand by unleashing the language of weapons; then he threw them en masse behind bars, indicting Sheikh Mujibur Rahman for treason.

However, the Bengali nationalist movement did not die with his imprisonment. The leadership again passed on to the students. Toward the end of 1968, a Students' Action Committee was formed and they drew up an eleven point formula and launched a vigorous mass movement against the Ayub regime. The 11 points of the SAC incorporated the Six Points but were more radical than the Six Point demand. The 11 points in-

cluded, over and above the six points, the demands for: a subfederation in West Pakistan (i.e., the dissolution of the One Unit); reduction of the agricultural tax for small peasants; introduction of a comprehensive flood control plan in East Pakistan; nationalization of banks, insurance companies and big industries; release of all political prisoners; and withdrawal of all political cases including the 'Agartala Conspiracy' case against Mujibur Rahman.

For five months — from November, 1968 to March, 1969 — before a judgment against Mujib could be delivered, East Pakistan witnessed an unprecedented mass movement against the Ayub Government. In this movement the students, labourers, peasants, professionals, artists, petit businessmen, government employees, and also the big businessmen combined to form an irresistable stream that engulfed the Ayub Government. Even the imposition of curfews and the brutal application of force by the army failed to contain the movement. The main slogan of the movement was 'Swadhikar' or 'self-rule'. The political parties were vying with one another in coining more nationalist slogans. In fact, at one period of this movement, the Awami League, the principal party in East Pakistan, was being led by, rather than leading, the people. Ayub had to resign. Mujib and the other political prisoners were released.

However, the civil-military bureaucracy did not relinquish its power in the face of the people's opposition; it only replaced General Ayub by General Yahya Khan. Martial

Law was declared in Pakistan for the second time with a promise for future elections. True to the pledge, the elections were held in December, 1970. However, the thumping victory of the Awami League in the elections, which captured 160 out of 162 contested National Assembly seats in East Pakistan — a clear nationwide, overwhelming majority in the house of 200 members — jolted the ruling elite, and they decided to undo the results of the elections through a military crackdown.

Why did the ruling elite hold the elections in the first place, and then take resort to extreme action? The only logical answer is that they could never have been genuinely interested in the restoration of democracy. They must have thought that, because of the presence of so many parties in Pakistan, no single party, in spite of the Awami League's prominence in East Pakistan, would be able to gain a majority in the Constituent Assembly and that, by taking advantage of their weakness and disunity, they would be able to impose on the country a constitution of their own making which would properly safeguard their interests, as Ayub's constitution did.

But the expectations of the ruling elite were not fulfilled; the people of East Pakistan gave the Awami League an absolute majority in the National Assembly. Even the pro-Peking Left, which before the election had appeared formidable, could not win a single seat in the province. It had alienated itself from the masses by its cooperation with

the government on account of its friendship with China. The pro-Moscow Left, which was strong in N.W.F.P. and Beluchistan, appealed for social justice for the two wings of Pakistan. They demanded more equitable distribution of incomes in both the wings. However, the people in East Pakistan were more concerned with ending the external exploitation before ending the internal exploitation; their political consciousness was totally submerged in Bengali Nationalism.

The thumping victory of the Awami League convinced the ruling elite that it would no longer be possible to perpetuate West Pakistan's dominance in both the economic and political fields once the six points were incorporated into the constitution. So, it demanded an extra-parliamentary talk with the Awami League to ensure the continued protection of its interests before the National Assembly was convened.

As was expected, the talks failed. The Awami League could not make any concessions on the six points because the students and other political parties had already raised the cry of 'selling out' (by the Awami League) even before the talks had started. Neither could Yahya, and his advisors, who were representing the civil-military bureaucracy, hand over power to the Awami League unless the six points were shelved. The B.B.C., in its commentary on the talks, defined the situation by describing 'Mujib as the prisoner of the students and Yahya as the prisoner of the military bureaucracy'.

When the talks collapsed, the semifascist hard-core in the military junta, such as Tikka Khan, Rao Forman Ali, etc., decided to do away with the problem of Bengali Nationalism for all times to come by applying brute force which they had previously used in Beluchistan and the North West Frontier Province. They thought that they had no other alternative but military action to protect their vested interests.

Thus, we find that the seeds of Pakistan's destruction were inherent in the socio-economic factors that gave birth to the state. Pakistan came into existence on the basis of a Muslim Nationalism which was led by a Muslim educated middle class recruited mainly from the landed aristocracy. This Muslim educated middle class was numerically small and educationally less advanced than the educated Hindu middle class. Moreover, the Hindu educated middle class was formed in the urban milieu, whereas its counterpart among the Muslims had its origins in the rural gentry. The rise of a strong indigenous bourgeoisie among the Hindus led to the creation of a 'democratic state' in India which, after the departure of the British, enabled the bourgeoisie to establish its hegemony; the state apparatus was effectively brought under its control. However, in Pakistan, in the absence of a strong bourgeoisie, the state apparatus, which the British inherited from the Moghuls and handed down to Pakistan, had an independent existence. In fact, the bourgeoisie in Pakis-

tan, including the famed twenty-two families, was the creation of the state.

The civil-military oligarchy, who formed the ruling elite in Pakistan, used the slogan of 'Muslim Nationalism' to consolidate its position even after the slogan lost its appeal for the masses in a predominantly Muslim state. This slogan was also used to contain the aspirations of the rising political elite among the educated Bengali Muslim middle class. These aspirations were expressed in the counter slogan of Bengali Nationalism.

It is significant that the educated middle class in East Pakistan was formed from the rich peasants who had no stake in sustaining the civil-military oligarchy of West Pakistan. They wanted access to the bureaucracy and power which was monopolised by the West Pakistanis.

Furthermore, as the Bengali middle class was drawn from the rural areas, it was able to rouse the political consciousness of the rural society which constituted more than ninety per cent of the total population. Thus, Bengali Nationalism, though led by a petit bourgeois, had a universal base in East Pakistan. It drew its inspirations from the injured feelings of economic and cultural exploitations by the West Pakistani ruling elite. The tragedy of Pakistan is that it always remained a state, it could never become a nation.

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