

**SOUTH ASIAN
MUSLIM POLITICS 1937-1958**

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ABSTRACT

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The object of this thesis is to explain why Pakistan which Muslim nationalist historians claim was created in the name of Islam failed to sustain a democratic political system. This question is explored by examining the politics of South Asian Muslims as a continuity from the colonial to the post-partition period, focusing on the tension between centripetal and centrifugal forces.

The thesis begins by investigating the factors which helped politicize Muslim identity during the inter-war years. The interplay of nationalism, constitutional reforms and common identity based on confessional faith forged political identities which determined the course of subsequent events. Dyarchy set in motion processes which the Government of India Act of 1935 reinforced,- the emergence of political solidarities based on religion and region and alienation from nationalist politics.

The Congress was able to neutralize the centrifugal developments among its Hindu constituency. It was not so successful among Muslims partly due to the impact of the Reforms and partly due to the activity of Hindu revivalists in the party. Simultaneously Muslim politics was moving away from the Congress, not towards the Muslim League but to the All-India Muslim Conference, around which most Muslims had gathered in opposition to the Nehru Report. However most regional and communitarian parties were not simply antagonistic to the Congress. They rejected centralist politics as a whole. This was amply demonstrated by the 1937 election results which underlined Jinnah's irrelevance to Muslim politics. Hence Muslims were in their political loyalties divided between strong currents focused on provincial interests and weak ones emphasizing sub-continental unity, national or Muslim. This configuration, the opposition between centrifugal and centripetal forces defined the basic parameters of Muslim politics.

The second chapter describes how the political divisions between Muslims was partially overcome. The 1937 elections initiated a major political shift among the Muslim regional parties and caused great unease among the urban groupings. The Muslim regional parties feared that the Congress Party's control over provincial ministries through a centralized structure and its rejection of the federal basis of the 1935 Act, would lead to their being roped into a Hindu-dominated unitary state. To fight this threat, an alternative political focus at the all-India level came to be considered necessary for the protection of their interests.

The Muslim League's revival was indirectly facilitated by the Quit India Movement which temporarily removed the Congress from the arena of open politics and by the encouragement Jinnah received from the Raj. The League was able to gradually pull Muslim groups, particularly those in the Muslim-minority provinces, into its ranks through the use of anti-Congress propaganda. But among the urban masses of UP Jinnah was eclipsed by Mashriqi until the mid-1940s when the Khaksars became a spent force. This development combined with the increasing influence of the Pakistan slogan, vague yet immensely attractive, provided the ideological cutting edge of the League's agenda for Muslim unity. The ideological hegemony allowed the League to focus the forces of community consciousness as a battering ram to breakdown the regional parties resistance. The Pakistan slogan spread from the urban areas and Muslim-minority provinces into the rural areas of the Muslim-majority provinces. But in Bengal the regionalist had taken over the party, in the Punjab Khizr continued to resist and in the NWFP and Sind the Muslim League was a peripheral influence. Hence by the mid-1940s the League was only able to achieve partial unity under the Pakistan banner.

The third chapter deals with the brief moment of political unity achieved through the combined impact of mass nationalism and communal riots. After the constitutional deadlock following the breakdown of the Simla Conference the League was able to make major advances by positing a clear choice between their and the Congress's plans for India's future. Muslim nationalism now centred on the League capitalized on the political uncertainties caused by the negotiations and won over many adherents from the provincial parties. An important factor which widened the League's area of influence was the increased significance of economic nationalism. It opened channels of communication between the élites and the masses, drew in groups previously unaffected by the Muslim League and turned the agitation for Pakistan into a mass movement. These factors combined with the weakness of the Congress due to their incarceration during the war resulted in the widespread shift away from the regional parties to the Muslim League.

Jinnah was able to achieve for a brief moment political unity and used this as the basis to extract the maximum constitutional concessions from the British and the Congress. However the centralization process was weak and its frailty was at the root of ideological confusion. The confusion was manifest in the changing definition of Pakistan in this crucial period. The problem was compounded by the League's lack of strong party structure to control and enforce discipline over the regional supporters. Jinnah's interventions in the provinces were the exception and not the rule and limited to disciplining local leaders. For expanding the party's influence he was completely dependent on the provincial leaders.

The regionalist forces were not genuine converts to Muslim nationalism. They used the League as a stalking horse for their provincial interests. Jinnah accepted the Cabinet Mission Plan due to the strong pressures from the Muslim-majority provinces who were not interested in a separate homeland for Muslims and later he supported Suhrawardy's attempt to avoid partition of Bengal. Jinnah had to be responsive to these different currents within the party in order to avoid a revolt against his leadership. Besides the internal pressure, pro-Congress opposition was still strong in Sarhad and Sind and they used regional ethnicity as a counter against the League. However the opposition collapsed when the civil disobedience movement mounted by the League at this extremely tense moment triggered off the communal explosion which engulfed northern India and as a result the Congress accepted partition.

The fourth chapter deals with the Muslim League's effort to consolidate its position in Pakistan through the construction of a strong state and the potent anti-centre backlash it produced. Pakistan came into existence through the contingent circumstances attending the transfer of power and the League's leadership was ill-prepared to establishing itself in Pakistan. The perceived threat from India and the internal opposition to the leadership convinced them that the country and they themselves could survive politically only if a strong centre was established. However the ethnic composition of the ruling group was a source of tension which bedeviled the centralizing process. The Muslim League leadership was mainly *Muhajirs* who had no social base in Pakistan. They along with the Punjabis also dominated the military and the bureaucracy. Hence the push for a unitary structure alienated others such as the Bengalis, who were not represented in the upper echelons of the state.

The political instability was aggravated by the ruling group's efforts to establish a strong centre not on the basis of a broad consensus but through strong arm tactics. As a result internal and external opposition to the League leadership was suppressed in an authoritarian manner. Karachi used the state apparatus to crush the emerging opposition and interfered in the provinces attempting to put its supporters into power. The frequent interventions by the military-bureaucratic oligarchy into the body politic retarded the emergence of an alternative leadership and broke up the Muslim League into numerous opposition parties. Ultimately Karachi's meddling damaged the democratic process severely and exacerbated intra-party and intra-government tensions which led to the emergence of the Punjabi dominated military-bureaucratic combine as the dominant power in Pakistan. The Governor-General and his coterie set about getting rid of the Prime Minister, Nazimuddin, by first weakening him. The Chief Minister of Punjab was turned against Nazimuddin and he used the anti-Ahmadiyya agitation in an attempt to overthrow the government. With both groups weakened by this conflict Ghulam Mohammad openly made his move and removed both from power.

The emergence of Ghulam Mohammed and his cohort as the new masters of Pakistan marked a sharp discontinuity in Pakistan's politics and altered the alignment of forces. The fragile unity which had been created by Muslim nationalism was undermined and the strong centrifugal forces re-emerged in the provinces. In many respects the new parameters of politics were similar to those prevalent in the 1930s and early 1940's with the exception that the Punjab was now an enthusiastic supporter of centralization.

The fifth chapter described how the military-bureaucratic oligarchy, once it was installed in power, fought off all challenges to its dominance and refused to compromise, despite the resounding rejection of the ruling group in the East Bengal elections. To complicate matters, Khwaja Nazimuddin attempted to stage a comeback with a legislative coup and tried to strip the Governor-General of his powers. Ghulam Mohammad and his cohort were surprised by Nazimuddin's ambush and made a counter-coup resulting in a tussle with the courts. They were prepared to ignore the courts if crucial decisions went against them. But the courts were not prepared to confront the Governor-General and force him to declare martial law. Instead they side stepped the issue and left enough room for the ruling group to operate constitutionally. An important reason why the military-bureaucratic combine adopted a tough position was that the shift in the foreign policy leading to an alliance with Washington had secured valuable material support which made them unwilling to accommodate the opposition.

Once these difficulties were behind them, the military-bureaucratic oligarchy imposed a unitary constitutional structure of which One Unit was the main feature. It was designed to increase Karachi's control over the minority provinces of West Pakistan and provide a bulwark against East Pakistan. However the political option thus chosen was only viable as long as the reins of power remained in the hands of the oligarchy. Mirza used the Presidency to pulverize and restructure the fragile political solidarities into smaller units so that he could recombine them into new coalitions which would be loyal to him. He broke up the Muslim League to form the Republican Party and did his best to keep the Awami League out of power. However when it became clear that the democratic processes were liable to produce unacceptable alternatives to the leadership of the oligarchy they began to consider doing away with the political option completely. Mirza was determined to prevent the anti-One Unit opposition from coming to power in a coalition with the Awami League. Such a coalition probably would have dismantled the unitary structures which had been imposed by the military-bureaucratic oligarchy. The ruling group feared these possibilities and used the deterioration of law and order as an excuse for the imposition of martial law. Ultimately, Pakistan's constitutional politics perished not due to its many weaknesses but because it was destroyed by those who feared its survival.

The army rejected the anti-centre demands of the opposition and pursued policies that maximized the possibility of conflict both internally and externally. Ayub Khan's strategy of state building accompanied with the modernization and expansion of the army was fraught with dangers which heightened the possibility of conflicts with India and secessionist movements in Pakistan. It established the hallmark of Pakistani politics,- a Punjabi dominated central authority imposing itself on the rest of the country. The fundamental tension between centripetal and centrifugal forces was at the root of the discontent which led to the emergence of Bangladesh and in a new form remains the basic determinant of politics in Pakistan today.

In conclusion it is argued that a political Muslim ethnicity emerged in reaction to the centralizing impulse of Indian nationalism. But as a basis for unity the former was a weak impulse. The heart of the movement was located in the provinces and resistance to central authority was a basic building block of Muslim nationalism. Consequently when the League leadership in Pakistan tried to impose a unitary structure it provoked a centrifugal backlash from East Bengal and the minority provinces of West Pakistan. In order to maintain their dominance the military-bureaucratic oligarchy began to break up the political solidarities and created the conditions for a military take-over which ultimately led Pakistan down the slippery slope to civil war.

PREFACE

The very substantive body of research and publications on South Asia's Muslims in modern times falls into two groups, one based on an historical approach and the other employing social science methodology. This is an imprecise generalization but a useful one in so far as historians focus primarily on colonial India and social scientists concentrate on Pakistan.

The general thrust of the historical approach is to single out primary agencies responsible for the rise of Muslim demands leading to partition. David Page, identifies the constitutional structures established by Dyarchy as the crucial factor which eventually resulted in partition.¹ However Mushirul Hasan has pointed out that there was nothing inevitable about partition and a substantial number of Muslims remained loyal to the Congress.² This view is reinforced by Paul Brass³ and Rittenberg's⁴ investigation into Muslim provincial politics, in the UP and the NWFP, respectively, maintaining that Islam was used as a lever in political manipulation. In a similar vein Anita Singh⁵ and Ayesha Jalal,⁶ researching high politics, focused on the conglomeration of various interest groups around the Muslim League and also emphasized the decisive role of Jinnah. It must be added here that these two writers approach the problem from diametrically opposed points of view with Jalal projecting a revisionist thesis while the former pursues a more conventional, pro-Congress argument. A third strand is evident in Farzana Shaikh's thesis which argues that partition was due to the clash between Islam and liberal democracy.⁷ She follows a line of argument developed by Francis Robinson,⁸ Erland Jannsson,⁹ A.K. Jones¹⁰ and David Gilmartin¹¹

¹ D. Page, *Prelude to Partition: The Indian Muslims and the Imperial System of Control 1920-32*, New Delhi, 1982.

² M. Hasan, *Nationalism and Communal Politics in India 1916-28*, New Delhi, 1979.

³ P.R. Brass, *Language, Religion and Politics in North India*, Cambridge, 1974.

⁴ S.A. Rittenberg, 'The Independence Movement in India's North-West Frontier Province 1901-1947', Columbia Univ. Ph.D. thesis 1977.

⁵ A.I. Singh, *The Origins of the Partition of India 1936-47*, Delhi, 1987.

⁶ A. Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League and Demand for Pakistan*, Cambridge, 1985.

⁷ F. Shaikh, *Community and Consensus in Islam: Muslim Representation in Colonial India, 1860-1947*, Cambridge, 1989.

⁸ F. Robinson, *Separatism Among Indian Muslims. The Politics of the United Provinces' Muslims 1860-1923*, Cambridge, 1974.

who stress the role of Islam in the making of Pakistan. Finally Ian Talbot's¹² work on the Punjab and Sugata Bose's¹³ work on Bengal have emphasized the economic factors which underpinned the rise of Muslim separatism.

When one turns to the body of literature dealing with the political developments in the early period of Pakistan the most striking feature is the relegation of Muslim identity to the background. Arguments based on this allegedly primordial identity are generally absent from the explanations of the political developments. In fact the religious dimension in Pakistan politics has been revived only in the 1980s as a deliberate policy under Zia's dictatorship. The emergence of regionalism due to the tussle between the centre and periphery becomes a major focus of the debate represented by the works of Gowher Rizvi¹⁴ and Rangalal Sen.¹⁵ A variation on this theme is represented by Rounaq Jahan who emphasizes the structural imbalances as the reason for the politicization of Bengali ethnicity.¹⁶ Another line of investigation focuses on the failure of the political processes as a whole. Ayesha Jalal¹⁷ and Hamza Alavi¹⁸ argue a structural argument, maintaining that the growth of the military bureaucratic oligarchy accompanied the development of a political vacuum which resulted in shift in power in favour of the former. However other researchers such as Lawrence Ziring,¹⁹ Rafique Afzal²⁰ and Khalid Bin Sayeed²¹

⁹ E. Jansson, *India, Pakistan or Pakhtunistan: The Nationalist Movements in the North West Frontier Province 1937-47*, Stockholm, 1981.

¹⁰ A.K. Jones, 'Muslim Politics & the Growth of the Muslim League in Sind 1935-41', Duke Univ. Ph.D. thesis 1977.

¹¹ D. Gilmartin, *Empire and Islam. Punjab and the Making of Pakistan*. London, 1988.

¹² I.A. Talbot, 'The Growth of the Muslim League in the Punjab 1937-46,' London Univ. Ph.D. thesis 1981.

¹³ S. Bose, *Agrarian Bengal: Economy, Social Structure and Politics 1919-1947*, Cambridge, 1986.

¹⁴ B. Buzan, B. and G. Rizvi, *South Asian Insecurity and the Great Powers*, Basingstoke etc., 1986.

¹⁵ R. Sen, *Political Elites in Bangladesh*, New Delhi, 1987.

¹⁶ R. Jahan, *Pakistan: Failure in National Integration*, New York, 1972.

¹⁷ A. Jalal, *The State of Martial Law*, Cambridge, 1990.

¹⁸ 'Authoritarianism and Legitimation of State Power in Pakistan', by H. Alavi in S. Mitra, ed., *The Post-Colonial State in Asia*, London, 1990.

¹⁹ L. Ziring, *Pakistan, The Enigma of Political Development*, Kent, 1980.

oppose this view and maintain that the leadership crisis was the primary agency responsible for failure of parliamentary democracy.

The obvious lacuna in this literature has generally been overlooked: there is no research which examines historical continuities across the chasm of partition. A decade ago such a division of labour between history and political science was understandable due to the paucity of documentary evidence. But today with new archival sources in Britain and the United States becoming accessible such an artificial cleavage is no longer necessary and is indeed a hinderance to extending our understanding of South Asian Muslim politics. By focusing on an element of historical continuity it is possible to explain the casual links between the growth of Muslim nationalism in the 1940s and its eventual failure to provide a basis for cohesion in Pakistan? The present dissertation tries to explore these links in terms of a new hypothesis,- that the tension between centrifugal and centripetal forces is the element of continuity between pre-partition and post-partition Muslim politics. It provides an useful framework for the exploring both historically and thematically Muslims political responses to efforts at centralization. The thesis examines the element of continuity between the dominant concerns of Muslim politics in British India focusing on the United Provinces and the Muslim-majority provinces,- Bengal, Punjab, Sarhad and Sind, and the circumstances which eventually led to the replacement of constitutional democracy by military dictatorship in Pakistan. The thrust of the analysis is to understand the historical determinant of Pakistani politics.

The thesis is based on a wide range of archival sources listed in the bibliography. Most of these have been used very little up to now. *Inter alia* I have drawn upon the CID records in the National Documentation Centre, Lahore, which describe in minute detail the events occurring on the ground in the Punjab, Sind, and Sarhad and thereby provide new information essential for understanding the rise of Muslim nationalism in the 1940's. Similarly the material examined in the National Archive, Washington DC, and the Public Records Office offer new insights into the political processes in Pakistan. By examining hitherto unexplored evidence in the context of a new hypothesis which traces the roots of Pakistan's politics to the colonial era, I have tried to push the frontiers of enquiry into this subject beyond its familiar limits.

²⁰ R. Afzal, *Political Parties in Pakistan 1947-1958*, Islamabad, 1986.

²¹ K.B. Sayeed, *The Political System of Pakistan*, Boston, 1967.

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NOTE ON SPELLING

Diacritical marks have not been used. 'Old English' spelling such as Dacca instead of Dhaka has been used throughout, except in quotations form. Similarly no attempt has been used to standardize proper names. I have simply followed the spelling used by the person in question.

ABBREVIATIONS

AICC	All India Congress Committee
AIML	All India Muslim League
APML	All Pakistan Muslim League
BPC	Basic Principle Committee
BPML	Bengal Provincial Muslim League
CID	Criminal Investigation Department
CPI	Communist Party of India
CPP	Communist Party of Pakistan
CRO	Commonwealth Relations Office
CSP	Civil Service of Pakistan
DSF	Democratic Students Front
FO	Foreign Office
IOR	India Office Records
JAML	Jinnah Awami Muslim League
JUI	Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Islam
MEDO	Middle East Defence Organization
NAP	National Archive of Pakistan
NAUS	National Archive of the United States
NDC	National Documentation Centre
NWFP	North West Frontier Province
PPML	Punjab Provincial Muslim League
PRO	Public Records Office
PRODA	Public Representatives Disqualification Order
PWA	Progressive Writers Association
QAA	Quaid-i-Azam Academy
QAP	Quaid-i-Azam Papers
RG	Record Group
SEATO	South East Asian Treaty Organization
SHC	Shamsul Huq Collection

UP United Provinces
UPML United Provinces Muslim League

THE CONSTITUTIONAL PROCESS AND THE FORGING OF POLITICAL IDENTITIES

Indian Muslims in the early twentieth century were not a monolithic entity. Primordial identities based on language, sect and region as well as class interests competed with one other for their loyalty. In opposition to these were factors such as nationalism, both the Indian and the Muslim variant, which sought to counter the primordial pulls and class conflict by imposing an over-arching unity based on confessional faith or participation in the imagined community of the Indian nation. Another factor which affected the emergence of political identities was the introduction of constitutional reforms. In the inter-war years the parameters of Indian politics and its Muslim component in particular were defined by Dyarchy. What was striking about this development was that certain cultural referents of identity acquired crucial political significance because they were recognized as the basis for demarcating constituencies in the new legislatures. The interplay of these factors forged political identities which determined the course of the subsequent political process.

His Majesty's Government, on 20 August 1917, made the declaration that steps would be taken for 'the progressive realization of responsible government in India.'¹ However, Britain's ultimate intention in regard to India's status remained obscure and it was not until the Second World War that the vague promises on devolution of power gave way to unambiguous declarations of intent. Britain's position was Janus faced: constitutional advance was not designed to hasten her departure from India but to realign the structure of collaboration and control and thus ensure the flow of advantages. Edwin Montagu's August statement was an attempt to rally 'moderates' behind the Raj at a time when the Empire needed war-time allies.² The Reforms which later followed from this initiative encouraged interest groups to compete for collaboration with the Raj and thus help shield the administration from the onslaught of the nationalist movement. Consequently, it exacerbated the divisions in India between the princely states and British provinces and between non-Congress parties and the Indian National Congress.

¹ 'Secretary of State for India, announcement in the House of Commons 25 August 1917', cited in *Report on Indian Constitutional Reforms - Montagu-Chelmsford Report* (Cmd 9109, 1918), p.1.

² R.J. Moore, *Endgames of Empire. Studies of Britain's Indian Problem* (Delhi, 1988), pp. 10-13, 32. John Gallagher, *The Decline, Revival and Fall of the British Empire* (Cambridge, 1982), p.155.

The India Act of 1919 set in motion centrifugal forces which were responsible for deflecting Indian politics away from the all-India stage to the provinces. There was no responsible government at the centre and the Governors retained control over the reserved subjects. But the provincial councils were expanded, the number of elected members increased and matters concerning the provincial government and socio-economic development were transferred to ministers responsible to the legislature. The exclusion of the princely states from the Reform process demonstrated their separateness and by the late 1920s it became clear that India had been bifurcated into two political entities: British India and the princely states which were moving apart. The princes had become strong advocates of autonomy, they wanted to minimize British interference in their affairs and assurances that the paramountcy would not be transferred to an Indian dominated central government.³ The Raj by firmly retaining its grip at the centre, treating the Indian states separately and giving some power to the provinces, generated a pull, as was intended, towards the periphery

The devolution of power to the provinces also contained built-in biases. To ensure the loyalty of the provinces the government insisted on 30 per cent of the seats in each council being reserved for nominated and special interests. With the exception of the Central Province there was no province where the elected majority could command a majority in the legislature. The consequence was that in the absence of a Hindu-Muslim accord the balance of power lay with the government. The implication was that constitutional success was only possible through co-operating with the government. This was combined with the old policy, formulated in the Morley-Minto Reforms of 1909, of deliberately offsetting the urban politicians against the rural lobby. The English-educated professionals, politically the most active, were excluded from operating the new constitution.⁴ The councils were packed with the 'landed aristocracy' who were considered 'the natural and acknowledged leaders in country areas' with members from 'the smaller landed gentry' held in reserve.⁵

The centrifugal tendency was reinforced by the incorporation of separate electorates and reserved seats into the Reforms of 1919. Separate electorates were first conceded to Muslims in the Morley-Minto Reforms and later extended to Sikhs and others by the Lord Southborough Committee on franchise. The consequence of recognizing separate constituencies for some communities and specific interests such as landowners and universities was to sub-divide the political world into smaller units. Thus the building blocs

³ R.J. Moore, *op.cit.*, p.14.

⁴ David Page, *Prelude to Partition: The Indian Muslims and the Imperial System of Control 1920-32* (New Delhi, 1982), pp. 31-35.

⁵ *Report on Indian Constitutional Reforms -Montagu-Chelmsford Report-* (Cmd 9109,1918), pp. 94-95.

of constitutional politics became so many focuses for centrifugal tendencies. They manifestly fostered communitarian politics and mutually conflicting groupings based on vested interests. The mere fact that Muslims and Sikhs were granted separate electorates and non-Brahmins and Marathas were conceded reserved seats, encouraged political formations to take place along cleavages based on community at the expense of Indian nationalism. The logic of such arrangements was to encourage further divisiveness. The alleged monolithic unity of Muslims was shown to be false when the Anjuman-i-Islam Ahle-Sunnat-ul-Jamat [sic] demanded the extension of separate electorates for Sunnis in order to maintain their distinction from Shiah.⁶ But what made the system most destructive for political unity was the increase in communalism. Between 1923 and 1927 approximately 450 lives were lost in communal riots between Muslims and non-Muslims. However communal friction was not restricted to relations between the two major communities. In Bombay and the south tension developed between Brahmins and non-Brahmins, Marathas and non-Marathas and untouchables and high castes.⁷

The most significant impact of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reform on Muslim politics was the shift of power and influence from the Muslim-minority provinces to the Muslim-majority provinces. Before the introduction of Dyarchy all-India Muslim organizations were dominated by the western educated élite of the United Provinces, Bihar and Bombay. But Dyarchy shifted the political focus from the urban to the rural politicians. In the United Provinces the rural-agrarian constituencies were dominated by big *talukdars* and zemindars. Out of the 29 Muslim seats in the legislature 24 were held by landholders.⁸ They now eschewed all-India politics and became involved in regional affairs. In order to gain power they had to ally themselves with their Hindu counterparts and emphasize their common class interest. They were very successful at this and well rewarded for it. The Nawab of Chhatari between 1923 and 1928 climbed steadily from the office of a minister to that of Home Member and finally ended up as Acting Governor of the Province. Another prominent Muslim, Nawab Yusaf, acted as a minister from 1926 to 1937. However their success on the provincial level debarred them from the leadership of Muslim Indians as a whole.⁹

⁶ 'Addresses Presented in India to His Excellency the Viceroy and the Right Honourable The Secretary of State for India'. *Parliamentary Papers 1918*, xviii (Cmd 9178) p.564.

⁷ *Indian Statutory Commission* (Cmd 3568, 1930), i, pp. 27, 30.

⁸ *Return Showing the Results of Elections in India* (Cmd 1261, 1921), p.1

⁹ David Page, *Prelude to Partition*, pp. 37-38.

In the Punjab before Dyarchy, political activity was concentrated in the large towns of the province, mainly in the Lahore and the Jullundur divisions. But with the Reforms the political focus shifted to the Muslims of the rural areas. Twenty-seven seats out of thirty-two were allocated to the Muslim-majority districts of western Punjab. Thus the landlords and agriculturists benefited from the constitutional advance at the expense of the urban interests and the powerful Muslim zemindars of the Rawalpindi and Multan areas became dominant in the council. They became a major centre of centrifugal politics among Muslims. The Punjab Muslims with a strong home base were able to exploit the devolution of power to its hilt and became the strongest advocates of provincial autonomy. Similarly in Bengal 33 out of the 39 seats allocated to Muslims were for rural areas, mainly in the eastern districts of Bengal.¹⁰ But unlike their counterpart in the Punjab the Muslims were too disunited to take full advantage of the Reforms. The grip of communal parties also retarded the emergence of regionalism in the province. However once regionalism became a powerful factor by the early 1930s it influenced Bengal Muslim politics quite decisively.

The overall effect of Dyarchy was that it produced strong focuses of political power which were based on region and community. Thanks to separate electorates the Muslims in the provinces where they were in the majority, e.g., Bengal and Punjab, enjoyed ministerial power. Hence by 1929 when the decennial review of the Montford constitution was in progress Muslims in these provinces had become the strongest advocates for the maximum extension of provincial autonomy. Their political agenda favoured a weak federal structure, with weightages for Muslims in the federal government, and separate electorates. This was in direct opposition to the Congress Party's policy as expressed in the Nehru Report, where a strong unitary state and the replacement of separate electorates with joint electorates were advocated. This formula was also rejected by the princes who had no desire to be associated with a Congress dominated unitary government in British India.

The Muslims' and the princely states' opportunity for following their preferred trajectories came when the Congress refused to co-operate with the Raj. The deadlock over the demands for immediate *swaraj* and majority representation at the negotiations, led to the Congress boycotting the Round Table Conference. This allowed Muslims and the princes a free hand in influencing the constitution-making process of the 1930s in their favour. The India Act of 1935 reconfirmed and consolidated the centrifugal developments that had been initiated explicitly or implicitly by the Reforms of 1919. It envisaged an India Federation to be composed of the princely states and the provinces of British India and a legislature in which the

¹⁰ *Return Showing the Results of Elections in India* (Cmd 1261, 1921), p.1.

representatives of the majority of Indians would be permanently in a minority. There was no devolution of power at the centre, the Governor-General had exclusive authority over defence, foreign affairs and ecclesiastical matters and was advised by ministers nominated by him. This suited the princes who could decide how and when to federate and they were assured that the centre would remain in British hands. The anti-Congress Muslims were also satisfied. For it granted the provinces full responsible government free from central control except in certain crucial matters. The province of Sind was formed and the North West Frontier Province was granted full provincial status. The Muslims' position was further reinforced by the communal award which gave them separate electorates and weightages. Consequently the constitutional advance from the Reforms of 1919 to the India Act of 1935 encouraged, in the Muslim-majority provinces, powerful centrifugal forces based on community and regional identity.

Opposing the centrifugal effect of the Montford Reform was the centralizing influence of Indian nationalism. The most explicit manifestation of this centripetal tendency was the Khilafat and Non-co-operation Movement. But the demonstration of Hindu-Muslim solidarity on such a grand scale was to be the exception rather than the rule. The Muslim involvement with the Indian National Congress steadily decreased during the inter-war period. The number of Muslim supporters that Indian nationalism could command in the 1937 elections were a mere handful in comparison with the number of Muslims involved in the common struggle of the early 1920s. A testimony to the decline of Muslim support for the Congress, was Jawaharlal Nehru's unsuccessful Muslim Mass Contact Campaign of 1938. How and why did this rapid change take place in the relationship of former allies? The break up of the Hindu-Muslim alliance was partly due to the contradictions inherent in the strategy of using religious and cultural symbols to mobilize the respective communities. Muslim commitment to Indian nationalism was partly undermined by the disappearance of the Khilafat issue. Others have argued that the suspension of the joint struggle directed political energies into communal channels. These weakness were amplified by Dyarchy and reduced centripetal Muslim politics, especially its involvement in shared national goals, to a pale shadow of its former glory.

The first evidence of effective political co-operation between Hindus and Muslims came when the separate electorates, awarded by the Morley-Minto reforms of 1909, were exploited for purposes of unity in the Lucknow Pact of 1916 agreed between the All-India Muslim League and the Congress. This effectively blurred the divisions between the two organizations. Later in 1919, the *ulama* entered politics, overwhelmed the Muslim League and founded the All-India Khilafat Committee. Initially, the Khilafat movement included collaborators as well as nationalists. Even staunch loyalist *talukdars* from Awadh, such as the Raja of Mahmudabad and urban professionals from Punjab and Bengal such as Fazl-i-Husain and Fazlul Huq were

involved. The Raja acted as benefactor to many aspiring politicians and had given financial support to the Ali brothers, Khaliqzaman and Raj Ghulam Husain among others.¹¹ Fazl-i-Husain, a lawyer supported by Barkat Ali and Zafar Ali Khan, both journalists and Omar Hayat Khan Tiwana, a zemindar, were responsible for establishing Khilafat committees in the Punjab. In Bengal, Fazlul Huq, Abdul Kasem, and Mujibur Rahman Khan, all men with legal backgrounds and Akram Khan, a journalist, convened the first Khilafat meeting. But when the Montford constitution was promulgated, the centrifugal effects of the Reforms pulled away support from the movement. The lure of office was irresistible for Fazl-i-Husain and Fazlul Huq and they became involved in council politics.

The departure of the loyalists was hastened by the extra-parliamentary dimension that the opposition was developing. Religion had entered into politics and the movement was turning into a confrontation with British colonialism. However for the *ulama* to have a substantial impact they had to be united. The difficulty was that the theologians were divided by doctrinal, educational and personal differences. But the thin thread which bound them together was the shared cultural experience of the *Dars-i-Nizamia*, the curriculum they had all gone through at the different seminaries. Abdul Bari, supported by some of the Delhi *ulama* such as Mufti Kafayatullah, *maulanas* Ahmad Said and Hakim Ajmal Khan, Daud Ghaznavi of Punjab, Akram Khan from Calcutta, the *pirs* of Sind and a Bombay Shiah, Hakim Abu Yusaf Ispahani formed the original nucleus around which the Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Hind grew.¹² Later in 1920 the Deoband *ulama* joined and in March 1921 the Shiah *mujtahid* of Lucknow, Sayed Yusaf Husain issued a *fatwa* in favour of non-co-operation for Shiahs as well. However Ahmad Raza Khan, the leading divine, of the Bareilly seminary abstained from the Khilafat agitation;¹³ only Abdul Halim of Mainpuri participated from that seminary. As the cohesion among the *ulama* increased the agitation became more influential among illiterate peasants, artisans and weavers in the rural areas.

Abdul Bari, besides leading the Madrasa Nizamia at Firangi Mahal was also a respected Qadiri *pir* and for this reason he was able to win over Sindi Qadiri and Naqshbandi *sajjada-nashins* such as Pir Ghulam Mujaddid Sirhindi of Matiari, and from Larkana, Pirs Turab Ali Shah Rashdi and Ali Anwar Shah. Also many of Bari's *murids* such as the Ali brothers, Shaukat and Mohammad, Dr Mukhtar Ahmad Ansari, Mian

¹¹ Francis Robinson, *Separatism Among Indian Muslims. The Politics of the United Provinces' Muslims 1860-1923* (London, 1974), pp. 380-381.

¹² Gail Minault, *The Khilafat Movement: Religious Symbolism and Political Mobilization in India* (New York, 1982), p.82.

¹³ Syed Jamaluddin, 'The Bareilvis and the Khilafat Movement' in Mushirul Hasan, ed., *Communal and Pan-Islamic Trends in Colonial India*. (New Delhi, 1981), pp. 348-349.

Mohammad Chotani and Mushir Husain Kidwai became actively involved in the Khilafat movement. Other *murids* such as the Rani Jehangirabad assisted by raising funds.¹⁴

However the Non-co-operation Movement was suspended by Gandhi on 5 February 1922 in response to the serious riot at Chauri Chaura. The *ulama* were disappointed and angry at the suspension of non-co-operation. Hasrat Mohani and Abdul Bari had been arguing for the extension of non-co-operation to civil disobedience, instead it was called off. This was a major setback for the divines and struck at the central rationale of their active involvement in nationalist politics. Now the only way the divines could defend the caliphate and the holy shrines by exhorting the faithful in the name of the Koran and *sharia*. However once the political debate shifted to questions of council entry, the *ulama* become superfluous. Within a year Abdul Bari was complaining that the 'those who pretended to be our friends at one time and made a catspaw of the *ulama* now seem anxious to get rid of them.' By early 1924 Bari severed connections with the Congress and advised the *ulama* to return to their *madrasas* and *maktabs* and not to trust Hindus.¹⁵

The other result of calling off the non-co-operation movement was the break up of the Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Hind. Most of the divines returned to their seminaries, and old loyalties reasserted themselves. The Shiah left the Jamiat-ul-Ulama and reactivated the Shiah Political Conference. The Deoband, and the other schools became preoccupied with the *tabligh* and *tanzim* movements which emerged due to the increased communal tension in the aftermath of the Khilafat. As for the Firangi Mahal, its influence in the Jamiat was greatly reduced after the death of Bari in 1926. But from then on the Jamiat became an organization that was dominated by the Deobandis. However, not all the divines returned to their seminaries. Some of the *ulama* such as Azad from Calcutta, Mohani from Kanpur, Hakim Ajmal Khan from Delhi and Daud Ghaznavi and Ataulah Shah Bokhari of Punjab remained involved in nationalist politics.

The Khilafat movement was at death's door and it finally collapsed when Mustafa Kamal Pasha abolished the caliphate, in March 1924. The remaining Khilafatist, who were mainly urban professionals, were now divided between 'no-changers' and swarajists. Tassaduq Sherwani and Choudhry Khaliqzaman served as secretaries of the Swaraj Party from 1923. In Bengal, the participation by Khilafatist such as Akram Khan, Abdul Karim, Mujibur Rahman Khan and Wahid Husain, provided a strong base for the Swaraj Party among Calcutta Muslims and in the Chittagong and Rajshahi regions. However swarajists had little

¹⁴ 14. Sarah F. D. Ansari, 'Sufi Saints, Society and State Power: The Pirs of Sind 1843-1947'. (London Univ. Ph.D. thesis 1987), p.178. Francis Robinson, *Separatism Among Indian Muslims*, pp. 266, 419-420.

¹⁵ Abdul Bari's Press statement, 20 August 1923, Abdul Bari Papers, cited in Mushirul Hasan, *Nationalism and Communal Politics in India 1916-28* (New Delhi, 1979), p.196.

support in the Punjab due to the hold of the Unionists and in Sind due to the withdrawal of the *pirs*. Those who were against council entry such as Hasrat Mohani, the Ali brothers, Saifuddin Kitchlew, and Zafar Ali, had also had to find new issues to justify their political roles. Their extensive use of Muslim cultural symbolism led them to become first involved in the *tanzim* and *tabligh* movement and later in communal politics. Mohammad Ali now accused Gandhi of being under the influence of Lajpat Rai and Malaviya and moved away from the Congress. Finally, in 1925, in protest against these developments, M.A. Ansari resigned from Khilafat organization and concentrated on working only with pro-Congress Muslims.

The differences emerging among the Khilafatists reached a breaking point in the late 1920s. The all-white composition of the Simon Commission caused great moral outrage, and the nationalists responded by producing their own recommendations for a new constitution. However the Nehru Report of 1928, instead of reviving the Hindu-Muslim alliance, polarized relations between the two communities. Jinnah's earlier demands elaborated in the Delhi proposal of 1927 were only partially met. His demand that a third of the seats in the Central Legislature shall be reserved for Muslims was rejected. Ultimately the Nehru Report represented the maximum concessions that Hindu revivalists such as Lajpat Rai, Dr Moonje, M.R. Jayakar and M.M. Malaviya were willing to concede. Motilal urged Gandhi to concentrate on getting Mahasabha to accept one third representation as even Azad, Ansari and Sherwani were in favour of this concession.¹⁶

However, at the All-Parties National Convention at Calcutta in December that year, Jinnah raised new demands which were also rejected and the Nehru Report was ratified. The shift in Jinnah's position was a recognition that he had little support among Muslims and he was forced to fall in line with the All-India Muslim Conference in order to survive. The differences between the Congress and non-Congress Muslims, in a nutshell, revolved around two major issues- the nature of the central government and the electorate. The Nehru Report recommended a unitary structure at the centre and the replacement of separate electorates by weightages for minorities with joint electorates and reserved seats. Thus in the final analysis the report was taking back all the concessions that Muslims had gained since 1909 without giving anything in return. Consequently, Muslim opinion rallied around the All-Indian Muslim Conference, an organization which articulated the interest of the regional parties that had emerged under Dyarchy. The Conference demanded the retention of separate electorates and a federal centre with residuary powers vested in the provinces.

¹⁶ Motilal Nehru to M.K. Gandhi, 14 August 1929, in B.N. Pandey, ed., *The Indian Nationalist Movement, 1885-1947: Select Documents* (London, 1979), pp. 63-64. Lajpat Rai's speech at the Agra Provincial Hindu Conference, 27 October 1928. M.R. Jayakar to M.K. Gandhi, 23 August 1929, *ibid.*, 86-88.

Ansari's response to the failure of the convention was to rally pro-Congress Muslim opinion and he formed the All-India Nationalist Muslim Party in July 1929. The main organizers of the party were Khwaja Abdul Majid, Azad, Khaliqzaman, T.A.K. Sherwani, R.A. Kidwai, Asaf Ali, Sayed Abdullah Brelvi, Ghaffar Khan, Dr Mohammad Alam, Dr S. Kitchlew and Sayed Mahmud. However the party was not successful and fell between two stools. Ansari was lambasted by Shaukat Ali for co-operating with the Congress Party which had become 'an adjunct of the Hindu Mahasabha'.¹⁷ The Hindu communalists like B.S. Moonje saw the Nationalist Muslim Party as an attempt to put large numbers of Muslims into the Congress in order to manipulate it.¹⁸ It made little headway among Muslims, existed only in newspapers and could not establish an independent identity as it was 'backed by the Hindu Sabha press'.¹⁹

Its lack of influence among Muslims was amply demonstrated by the limited Muslim involvement in the Civil Disobedience Movement. Only in Calcutta and the Pakhtun areas of the Frontier was there any major involvement of Muslims in the agitations. In Punjab, Sind and Bombay there was little enthusiasm and in the United Provinces the organizers of the Civil Disobedience Movement deliberately minimized propaganda work in areas of high Muslim concentration in order to avoid a possible conflict.²⁰ But some UP Muslims such as Mohani, T. Sherwani and some of the Deobandis participated in the agitation. Despite the precautions, the movement triggered off a communal reaction in UP, Assam, Bombay and Dacca. This had a negative effect on the National Muslim Party and resulted in defections from its ranks. On 4 May 1931 the Majlis-i-Ahrar-i-Islam was founded by a break-away group from the Nationalist Muslim Party. It was organized by Daud Ghaznavi, Ataulah Shah Bokhari and Mazhar Ali. Zafar Ali was a sympathizer but later went on to establish the Ittihad-i-Millat.²¹ These groups co-operated with the Civil Disobedience campaign but were also involved in purely Muslim issues such as the Shahidganj agitation which precipitated communal tensions. By 1933 the Nationalist Muslim Party was defunct and nationalist Muslims received another setback when Ansari died in 1936.

¹⁷ Shaukat Ali to Dr Ansari, 19 May 1929, in Mushirul Hasan, ed., *Muslims and The Congress: Select Correspondence of Dr M.A. Ansari 1912-1935* (New Delhi, 1979), pp. 67-71.

¹⁸ Moonje Diaries, 22 August 1929. Moonje to Jayakar, 31 July 1929, Jayakar Papers, 437, cited Ibid., p. xxxii.

¹⁹ C. Khaliqzaman, *Pathway to Pakistan* (Lahore, 1961), p. 102.

²⁰ Gyanendra Pandey, *The Ascendancy of The Congress in Uttar Pradesh 1926-34. A Study in Imperfect Mobilization* (Delhi, 1978), p. 149.

²¹ NDC, CID, S 358 (The Ahrar Movement in the Punjab) pp. 2, 5-7, 47-50.

The Congress scored an impressive victory in the 1937 provincial elections but among the Muslim constituencies its results were not so good. With the exception of the Sarhad it could not claim to have any substantial following among Muslims. In the United Provinces, Kidwai was defeated by an unknown Muslim Leaguer. In recognition of the Congress' unpopularity Khaliqzaman stood on a League ticket. Even the pro-Congress organizations such as the Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Hind, Ahrars, Ittihad-i-Millat and the Shiah Conference did not fight as allies of the Congress platform and put up separate candidates.

Another group of Muslims, an even smaller one, which also emerged from the Khilafat Movement and were associated with the Congress were the Muslim communists and socialists. A small number of the *muhajirin* who were involved in the *hijrat* to Afghanistan came under Bolshevik influence and went on to Tashkent in the Soviet Union. Some of these *muhajirin* such as Shaukat Usmani turned to socialism. In the mid-1920s, the *muhajirin* returned, came into contact with small pockets of socialists which included Muslims, and established workers and peasants parties and trade unions mainly in Bengal, Punjab and the United Provinces.

The Labour-Swaraj Party was founded by Qutubuddin Ahmad, Qazi Nazrul Islam and Shamsuddin Ahmad in Calcutta and its general secretaries at various times were Abdul Halim, Muzaffar Ahmad and Abdul Razzak. They organized the substantial migrant Muslim population into various unions such as Khansamas' Union, the Seamen's Union and the Bengal Jute Workers' Association. In Punjab, socialist Muslims were responsible for organizing various unions and Abdul Majid, Gauhar Rahman Darveshi and Ferozuddin Mansur were elected to important positions on the Punjab Labour Research Bureau. Majid was later involved with Bhagat Singh and others in forming the Naujawan Bharat Sabha. While Darveshi and Mansur were elected to the leadership of the Kirti-Kisan Party. In the United Provinces, Shaukat Usmani was involved with the All-India Trade Union Congress and later in 1928 he worked with Habib Ahmad Nasim in setting up The Oriental Information and Publicity Bureau.²²

Associated with the Congress Socialist Party was another current of Muslim Socialists which had emerged from a different heritage. Many Indian students from prosperous families in the 1920s studied in Europe. Some of them came into contact with the Communist Party of Great Britain at university. Students such as Sajjad Zaheer, Mahmudul Zafar, Mian Iftikharuddin from Oxford University, Muhammad Din Taseer from Cambridge University and Dr Z.A. Ahmad, Hajra Begum and briefly Dr K.M. Ashraf from London, became involved in study circles organized by Ralph Fox and Clemens Dutt, both leading members of the

²² Sir David Petria, *Communism in India 1924-27* (Calcutta, 1972), pp. 126-129, 132, 254. Sir Horace Williamson, *India and Communism* (Calcutta, 1976), pp. 124, 264, 267.

Communist Party. By 1936 Sajjad Zaheer and Mulk Raj Anand founded the Progressive Writers' Association of India. Its purpose was to urge writers 'to consciously help through their writings the forces of enlightenment and progress'.²³ It attracted intellectuals and students such as Faiz Ahmad Faiz from Amritsar, and Sibte Hasan, Akhtar Raipuri, Hayat Allah Ansari, Dr K.M. Ashraf and Dr Abdal Alim from Aligarh.

However their influence was small due to personal differences, communalism and the intervention of the security forces. The Meerut Conspiracy trial weakened the socialist movement and they channelled their efforts into the youth leagues and the Congress in order to survive. Even this little success was denied to them, when the Indian Government, in 1934, banned the Communist Party of India, the Naujawan Bharat Sabha and all its affiliated bodies. A new organization was then established within the Congress, the Congress Socialist Party, so that some non-clandestine work could continue. The change in direction was facilitated by Nehru's leaning towards socialist ideas. Abdul Alim joined the executive committee of the Congress Socialist Party. Nehru appointed Z.A. Ahmad and K.M. Ashraf, to the Economic and Political Department of Congress and Sajjad Zaheer, to lead the UP Provincial Congress Committee and made Mahmudul Zafar one of his private secretaries. But this had the unforeseen effect of denuding the Communist Party of most of its Muslim membership.

The other organization which orientated Muslim politics in a pan-Indian direction as opposed to local ends or sectarian courses was the Muslim League. However, the League suffered even more than the Congress from the changes described above and could not claim to be the representative of the majority of the Muslims. The decline in fortune of the premier Muslim party began ironically with the Lucknow Pact of 1916. The nationalist wing of the League led by Jinnah along with Wazir Hasan, Mazharul Huq and the Raja of Mahmudabad wanted to reach an understanding with the Congress. However the League became divided and the loyalist wing, comprising the UP landowners disassociated themselves from the development. Many Bengali Muslims also resisted the pact, as it under-represented Bengal and demanded a revision of the terms. The accord reflected the interests of the Muslim élites of the Muslim-minority provinces. The United Provinces, Bihar and Bombay received greater representation than their population justified while Punjab and Bengal received less. Consequently the Hindu-Muslim concordat created dissension within the Muslim League.

However the divisions within the League were exacerbated by the centrifugal impact of the Montagu-Chelmsford constitution. The Muslim League lost the support of very influential yet conservative landlords of the United Provinces who were tempted away by the Reforms of 1919. Their tergiversation

²³ Khizer Ansari, 'The Emergence of Muslim Socialists in North India 1917-47' (London Univ. Ph.D. thesis 1985), pp. 259-271. S.S. Zaheer, 'A Note on the Progressive Writers' Association', in Sudhi Pradhan, ed., *Marxist Cultural Movement in India. Chronicles and Documents* (Calcutta, 1985) i, pp. 1-4.

from the leadership of all-India politics substantially weakened the Muslim League. The negative impact of the Reforms on the Muslim League was compounded by the emergence of the Khilafat and Non-co-operation Movement. The nationalist wing of the League was split this time between constitutionalist and those in favour of agitational politics. The Ali brothers, Azad and Hasrat Mohani, released from prison joined hands with the *ulama* led by Abdul Bari to overwhelm the League's opposition to *satyagraha*.

Jinnah, along with Sayed Raza Ali and Mohammad Yaqub were among the few all-India Muslim politicians who refused to participate and hence were bypassed by the Khilafat movement. These politicians had to mark time and could only become active in constitutional politics when the agitation was over. However the handful who were not prepared to wait, such as Mazharul Huq, accepted the fatal option of working with landlord politics. By the mid-twenties Huq had to retire from politics completely. The only other alternatives left were to accept jobs in the UP government or in the Indian States. The Raja of Mahmudabad and Wazir Hasan served as Home Member in the UP government and as Assistant Judicial Commissioner of Awadh respectively. Sir Ali Imam and Samiullah Beg opted out of British India for Hyderabad. Ali Imam became the Nizam's Prime Minister and the later became his Chief Justice.²⁴

By 1926 Mohammad Ali Jinnah's position was considerably marginalized by the various negative developments. He continued focusing on all-India issues and formed the Independent Party in the Imperial Legislative Council but it was not a Muslim party and there were only two Muslims in it including himself. His opportunity to make a comeback came with the controversy over the Simon Commission. But Jinnah by agreeing with the Congress over boycotting the commission lost further support. Over this issue, the Muslim League split into the Shafi and Jinnah League. With this even smaller power base Jinnah attempted to re-establish his position on the all-India stage. The Delhi Proposal of 20 March 1927 demonstrated his willingness to revive Hindu-Muslim solidarity by trading off separate electorates in exchange for extension of full provincial status to Sind, NWFP and Baluchistan and concession to the Muslims of one third of the seats in the Central Legislature. This offer was rejected by the right wing of the Congress as Jayakar was quick to point out that Jinnah did not speak for the bulk of the Muslims.²⁵

Most Muslims especially from the Muslim-majority provinces were adamant that they would not surrender separate electorates and rallied around the All-India Muslim Conference. Jinnah was now a voice in the wilderness spurned by all sides. He, in order to bolster up his position, reunified the two branches of

²⁴ David Page, *Prelude to Partition*, pp. 39-40

²⁵ M.R. Jayakar to M.K. Gandhi, 23 August 1929, in B.N. Pandey, ed., *The Indian Nationalist Movement, 1885-1947*, pp. 87-88.

the Muslim League and searched for an alternative strategy. His Fourteen Points proposal of March 1929 was a desperate attempt to avoid political oblivion. It accepted the Conference's position that the centre should be federal but left open the option of replacing separate electorates with joint electorate. The All-India Muslim Conference was never a true centralist party: its primary function was to present a united Muslim opinion at the Round Table Conference in order to extend the advantages which the Muslim-majority provinces had gained. In composition it was an uneasy amalgam of conflicting interests. The conservative nationalists who were represented by the rump of the Central Khilafat Committee and the Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Hind, had to join hands with the arch loyalists such as the princes and landlord parties as well as various other organizations such as the heterodox Ahmadiyya Association.²⁶

Fazl-i-Husain's role as the driving force behind the All-India Muslim Conference, organizing propaganda and maintaining unity between the different factions was crucial. The Agha Khan, President of the Muslim Conference, led the Muslim delegation and Fazl-i-Husain put pressure from within and outside the Executive Council to ensure that Muslim delegates followed the Conference line. He was concerned about Jinnah's presence in the delegation, fearing that if 'Jinnah starts....expressing his views' they may be accepted as the opinion of Muslims. To prevent Jinnah jeopardizing his carefully laid out plans he nominated Shafaat Ahmad Khan and Zafrullah Khan who were ready to cut Jinnah down to size if he got out of hand. Further Fazl-i-Husain persuaded Lord Irwin not to nominate the Congress' candidate, Dr Ansari, as a member of the delegation.²⁷ With this support he used the Conference to exert his authority on the constitutional developments that were taking place in the 1930s and stamped it with Punjab's interests.²⁸

At the Round Table Conference the Muslim delegation followed a two-pronged strategy of demanding the retention of separate electorates and the maximum extension of provincial autonomy. Implicit in this strategy was the calculation that any initiative from the majority community had to be sufficiently attractive to tempt Fazl-i-Husain into reconsidering his current position. But if there was no *quid pro quo* from the Hindus he would be unwilling to surrender separate electorates.²⁹ When it appeared that the Labour Government along with Shafi, the Nawab of Bhopal, Sultan Ahmad, Fazlul Huq and Jinnah were causing

²⁶ Organization of the Conference nd., List of Delegates attending the First All India Muslim Conference, Delhi, 31 December 1928 to 1 January 1929, in K.K. Aziz, ed., *The All India Muslim Conference 1928-1935. A Documentary Record*, (Karachi, 1972), pp. 24-26, 35-39.

²⁷ Azim Husain, *Fazl-i-Husain: A Political Biography* (Bombay, 1946), pp. 247-248. Fazl-i-Husain to Malcolm Hailey, 20 May 1930, in W. Ahmad, ed., *Letters of Mian Fazl-i-Husain*, (Lahore, 1976), p.75.

²⁸ A. Jalal and A. Seal, 'Alternative to Partition: Muslim Politics Between the Wars', *Modern Asian Studies*, 15,3,(1981), p.434.

²⁹ IOR, Mss. Eur. E 352 (Fazl-i-Husain Collection), f. 16-17 Fazl-i-Husain to Sikander Hayat, 26 Dec. 1930.

trouble by trying to reach an agreement over joint electorates,³⁰ Fazl-i-Husain was quick to react. He wrote to the delegation admonishing them for betraying the Conference's position and instigated the Muslim press and Muslim organizations to protest at this development. This was enough for the waverers to fall in line and the Agha Khan reinforced the action by repudiating Jinnah and Shafi.³¹

Similarly, Fazl-i-Husain responded in a determined fashion when he found out that the Muslim Conference represented by Shaukat Ali, Shafi, Shafee Daoodi and Iqbal met Congress Muslims, Sherwani, Ansari and Khaliquzzaman in order to reach a settlement before the second Round Table Conference. What Fazl-i-Husain did not want was to surrender separate electorates in a deal that would satisfy the Muslim-minority provinces at the expense of Punjab and Bengal as had happened before with the Lucknow Pact. The deadlock forced the British to surrender to Fazl-i-Husain's strategy and concede what the Congress had refused in order to retain his support. Both Punjab and Bengal emerged from the Communal Award of 1932 in a stronger position: they had more seats in the council than any other community. In Punjab, the Muslims had 49 per cent of the reserved seats and in Bengal, forty-eight, as well as separate electorates.³²

The announcement of the Communal Award cleared the way for the rest of the reforms. The other key issue left for Fazl-i-Husain and the Agha Khan was the question of federation. The Muslim princes were concerned that such a constitutional arrangement would not undermine their sovereignty by establishing a unitary structure. The Agha Khan argued for a 'United States of Southern Asia', a federation which would give the greatest amount of autonomy to its constituent units. The aspirations of the princes dovetailed with the Muslim-majority provinces. The Punjab and Bengal wanted to maximize provincial autonomy and NWFP and Sind wanted provincial status as well. Fazl-i-Husain's activities ensured that the Government of India Act of 1935 which eventually emerged would give the Muslim-majority provinces the maximum autonomy. However the demand that residual powers be vested in the provinces was not conceded: these remained with the Governor-General to be used at his discretion.

The All-India Muslim Conference had served Punjab's purpose and had nothing on its agenda except maintaining the status quo. Shafaat Ahmad Khan wrote to Fazl-i-Husain: 'The Muslim Conference programme has been exhausted. It is empty of content. I have been scratching my head in vain for the last two years in a vain search for a new programme for Muslim India,....You alone can do it. It will serve as a beacon to

³⁰ W. Ahmad, ed., *Diary and Notes of Mian Fazl-i-Husain*, (Lahore, 1976), 22 Dec. 1930, pp. 51-52.

³¹ Azim Husain, *Fazl-i-Husain*, pp. 254-256.

³² A. Jalal and A. Seal, 'Alternative to Partition: Muslim Politics Between the Wars', *Modern Asian Studies*, 15,3,(1981), p.443.

all of us.’³³ Fazl-i-Husain bluntly stated that taking on the status of an all-India leader was ‘suicide’ and told the élites of UP to find their own leader. He turned his back on all-India politics, returned to Lahore to reorganize the Unionist Party and called on his colleagues in UP and other provinces to follow his lead and form agriculturalist parties cutting across communal boundaries.³⁴

Both the princes’ and the majority provinces’ play for a weak centre left little room for Jinnah’s centripetal strategy. His hostility to federation was well known.³⁵ He realized that the new constitutional arrangement would be dominated by an array of collaborators determined to hem in the Congress. In this vista there was no scope for an alternative Muslim strategy. Jinnah remained in Britain after the conference and for all practical purpose was retired from politics. He practised in the Privy Council and tried to get nominated to the Council but his lack of success predisposed him to return to India in March 1934 at the urging of Liaquat Ali Khan.³⁶ Why did some Muslims especially those from the United Provinces turn to Jinnah? Fazl-i-Husain refusal to accept the all-India mantle combined with the leadership crisis in UP were the important factors. The British Indian Association and the Agra Province Zemindar Association by 1934 were responsible for the establishment of the National Agricultural Party of Awadh and the National Party of Agra respectively. Both organizations were reduced to ineffectiveness by personality clashes, desultory organization and by the increase in communal pressure. The Hindu *talukdars* became associated with the Awadh Liberal League and Muslims joined the Muslim Conference or the League.³⁷

Hesitantly Jinnah returned to revive the moribund League. He united the Aziz and Hidayat factions into which the League had split and attempted to reassert the old centralizing strategy based on co-operation with the Congress. Again, the nationalist approach was opposed by pusillanimous sycophants based in the provinces who preferred special privileges under the Raj’s protection. A short-lived revolt was led by the Hafiz Hidayat Husain and supported by Fazl-i-Husain and the Nawab of Chhatari. They formed the ‘Parliament Majlis’ but it collapsed on Hidayat’s death.³⁸ On 23 June 1935, Jinnah entered negotiations with

³³ Shafaat Ahmad to Fazl-i-Husain, 7 Nov 1935, in W. Ahmad, ed., *Letters of Mian Fazl-i-Husain*, p.469.

³⁴ Fazl-i-Husain to Abdullah Khan, 23 Sep. 1935, in W. Ahmad, ed., *Letters of Mian Fazl-i-Husain*, p.466. Azim Husain, *Fazl-i-Husain*, p.304.

³⁵ Jinnah’s statement to the house, 7 Feb. 1935, *Minutes and Debates of the Legislative Council of India and its Successors, 1935*, i, p.517.

³⁶ Stanley Wolpert, *Jinnah of Pakistan* (Oxford, 1984), pp. 29-30.

³⁷ P.D. Reeves, ‘Landlords and Party Politics in the United Provinces, 1934-7’, in D.A. Low, ed., *Soundings in Modern South Asian History* (London, 1968), pp. 268-274.

³⁸ Stanley Wolpert, *Jinnah of Pakistan* (Oxford, 1984), p.136.

Rajendra Prasad on the thorny issue of separate electorates which he was willing to surrender in return for other safeguards. There was some support for this move among the Muslims of east Bengal. But during the negotiations Jinnah kept raising the stakes, first asking for clear majorities in Punjab and Bengal, and finally insisting that the terms had to be accepted by the *bhadralok* of east Bengal, the Sikhs, Hindu Mahasabha and Malaviya. Eventually the Jinnah-Prasad talks broke down due to the implacable hostility of the *bhadralok* to the Communal Award but it became clear during the discussions that 'Jinnah is humbugging the Congress'.³⁹ This clearly exposed the weakness of Jinnah's position. He was only acting as a broker between the Congress and the regional Muslim parties and Fazl-i-Husain was unwilling to negotiate, especially with Jinnah as an intermediary.

Resistance to Jinnah's efforts to reorganize Muslim politics around a central body began to crumble just before the elections in 1936. The All-India Muslim Conference in March that year withdrew from the election and postponed the decision to merge with the Muslim League leaving the question to be decided by the Muslims elected to the provincial legislative assemblies.⁴⁰ This left the field clear on the all-India level for Jinnah and in April at the Bombay session of the Muslim League he again argued for minimum co-operation with the Congress. This move was again blocked by the regionalist leaders. But at this session preparations for the elections were made and Jinnah was allowed to preside over formation of the Central Parliamentary Board. He hoped that the tentacles of the Board would enable him to assert the League's leadership over Muslims. Fazl-i-Husain's death in June removed his greatest rival from inside the Board and, after consultations with prominent Muslims, he nominated Mohammad Iqbal, Liaquat Ali Khan, Shaheed Suhrawardy, Ismail Chundrigar, Mirza Abul Hassan Ispahani and the young Raja of Mahmudabad, Mohammad Amir Ahmad Khan.

With the establishment of the Central Board, Jinnah next tried to establish provincial counterparts. In Bengal he was able to get the United Muslim Party led by Khwaja Nazimuddin and Suhrawardy to merge with the League but Fazlul Huq at first dallied with the idea only to reject it later. In Punjab, Jinnah was told bluntly by Sikander Hayat not to meddle in the provinces affair.⁴¹ Only a handful of urban politicians such as Mohammad Iqbal, Khalifa Shujauddin and Barkat Ali supported the League. The situation in Sind

³⁹ Sarcar to R.M. Chatterji, 18 Dec 1935, N.N. Sarcar Papers, cited in John Gallagher, *The Decline, Revival and Fall of the British Empire* (Cambridge, 1982), p.197.

⁴⁰ N.N. Mitra, ed., *Indian Annual Register, Jan.-June 1936*, i, (Calcutta, 1936), p.303.

⁴¹ Sikander Hayat to Fazl-i-Husain, 1 May 1936, in W. Ahmad, ed., *Letters of Mian Fazl-i-Husain*, p.526.

and Frontier was even worse. In both provinces the Muslims were totally absorbed in local factional politics and ignored his call to join him.

Jinnah was more successful in the United Provinces. Just before the elections the Muslim Unity Board was formed, in 1933, by the merger of the Muslim Conference and Nationalist Muslims. The Board consisted of men such as the Raja of Salempur and Mahmudabad, Nawab Ismail Khan, Shaukat Ali, Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani, Ahmad Said, Liaquat Ali Khan and Choudhry Khaliquzzaman. Jinnah, by promising them a majority on the UP Parliamentary Board was able to persuade them to join the League. Khaliquzzaman, after the Communal Award, realized that Muslims fighting the elections on a Congress ticket had no chance and now left for the League. The move towards the League was facilitated by the ambiguous relationship between the League and the Congress: a 'number of Muslims....drifted gradually to the League side under the vague impression that it was much [sic] a curious affair'.⁴² Jamiat also supported the League thinking that there was little difference between the two organizations and that they would co-operate with each other after the elections.⁴³ However the Rajas of Salempur and Mahmudabad and Liaquat Ali fought the elections as independents and not on League tickets. The Muslim League made a poor show in the elections of 1937. It had been rejected by the regionalist parties in the Muslim-majority provinces and its only arena of influence was among the urban Muslims mainly from the United Provinces.

The analysis so far demonstrates that in relation to the aggregate Muslim population only a handful of Muslims participated or supported the centralist parties. Neither the Congress nor the Muslim League could claim to have a substantial following among Muslims. A major reason for this development was the centrifugal effect of the Montford constitution. The devolution of power to the provinces reinforced strong sub-nationalist groupings which were keen to consolidate and expand provincial autonomy. In those areas which were not governor's provinces, it created strong regionalist pressures for the duplication of devolution. Both Bengal and Punjab wanted more of the same, while the North West Frontier Province and Baluchistan wanted upgrading to full provincial status and Sind separation from the Bombay Presidency which would then allow them to enjoy the fruits of autonomy. However in each of these areas, the evolving centrifugal forces had their distinct and separate concerns and moved in different directions. Consequently the mix between regional and, Muslim identity and the class composition of the regionally orientated forces varied from area to area and over time.

⁴² Jawaharlal Nehru to Rajendra Prasad, 21 July 1937, in V. Choudhary, ed., *Dr Rajendra Prasad: Correspondence and Select Documents*, i, p.63.

⁴³ Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, *India Wins Freedom* (Calcutta, 1959), p.160.

The Punjab National Unionist Party, an agriculturalist organization formed in 1923, was the lucid expression of Punjabi nationalism and as well as the class interests of local landed classes reacting to the constitutional advance. It was a political combination formed in the council by the merger of the Punjab Muslim Association, representing Muslim landholders supporting Fazl-i-Husain and the Punjab Zemindar Central Association which represented Sikh and Hindu Jat supporters of Chaudhuri Chhotu Ram. Under Fazl-i-Husain's leadership the Unionist Party was to become the most successful constitutional party in India.

The wellspring of Muslim support for the Unionists came from the *zemindars* and *pirs* of western Punjab who prospered under British rule. The Raj had co-opted them into the colonial structure in order to utilize their *biraderi* networks and to make them perform demi-official functions as honorary magistrates, *zaildars* and *lambardars* etc. Apart from this western Punjab became the major recruiting ground for the British military machine in India providing half its recruits.⁴⁴ The Raj rewarded the Punjab, amply, for being the 'sword arm of the British Empire' in various ways. The canal colonies opened in the newly irrigated areas were used to reward the large landlords and peasants from the recruiting areas of western Punjab with land grants.⁴⁵ Taxation was kept as low as possible and in 1900 the Land Alienation Act was passed in order to protect the interests of the agriculturalists from the urban Hindu *bania*.

Rural Muslim politics broke down, not into an array of large individual landlords but into family blocks. The role of *biraderi* was a significant factor in giving the fractious *zemindars* a degree of cohesiveness in the political arena. The position of the leading families was strengthened by the hold over their tenants through *biraderi* links, recruitment to the army and in the case of the *sajjada nashins* they had a spiritual hold over their *murids*. A few families dominated Punjab politics, the Hayats of Wah, the Noon-Tiwana families of Shahpur and the Daultanas of Mailsi. Some of the other important families were the Legharis and Pirs of Taunsa Sharif of Dera Ghazi Khan, the Pir of Makhad from Campbellpur, the Multan Qureshis, Gardezis and Gilanis, the Baghbanpura Mians, the Mamdot family from Ferozepur and the Mokul and Qizilbash clans from the Lahore districts.⁴⁶ However the families had long-standing feuds, originating from cattle rustling and disputes over property, going back many generations and these differences were now being channelled into political rivalry.

⁴⁴ M.S. Leigh, *The Punjab and the War* (Lahore, 1922), p.44.

⁴⁵ Imran Ali, 'Malign Growth? Agricultural Colonization and the Roots of Backwardness in the Punjab', *Past and Present*, 114, Feb. 1987, pp. 119, 124.

⁴⁶ Craig Baxter, 'The People's Party vs the Punjab 'Feudalists'', in J.H. Korson ed., *Contemporary Problems of Pakistan* (Leiden, 1974), pp. 8-9, 10-11.

With the introduction of Dyarchy Fazl-i-Husain, was able to bring together the Hayat, Noon-Tiwana and Daultana families despite their rivalries into the Muslim group, which then allied itself with the Jat agriculturalists of the Ambala division. Together they worked the Reforms in a manner which undermined the position of the centralist parties. Fazl-i-Husain claimed that he simply carried out the Congress programme more successfully than the Congress had done else where in India.⁴⁷ There is no doubt that he had introduced reforms which favoured the agriculturalists in general but especially the Muslims. Legislations were enacted introducing compulsory primary education and construction of schools and dispensaries in rural areas which benefited the rural community generally. But quotas for Muslims in education and health facility and the terms of the Municipal Amendment Act were designed to specifically benefit Muslims at the expense of urban Hindus. As a result of all this, Punjabi regionalism based now on alliance of agriculturalist and Muslim communitarian interests effectively blocked the advance of all-India politics in the province; both the Congress and the Muslim League were restricted to the urban areas making little headway in the countryside.

With this strong provincial base Husain was able to play a major role in influencing the Round Table Conference in Punjab's favour. Patently, by holding on to the Punjab line he rejected the alternatives based on Muslim identity. Iqbal's call for a separate Muslim state and Choudhary Rahmat Ali's Pakistan scheme were ignored or dismissed. Similarly, the Sikh's proposal that Sind be joined with Punjab minus the Ambala division, made at the Second Round Table Conference was rejected. Fazl-i-Husain realized that Sindis who were clamouring for the separation of Sind from the Bombay presidency were suspicious of Punjabis and would not be prepared to be bundled into a 'Muslim Empire' dominated by Punjab. But a more serious objection was raised by Fazl-i-Husain himself pointing out that Sind was a deficit province and that amalgamation would threaten the financial viability of Punjab as well.⁴⁸

Fazl-i-Husain only encouraged Muslim unity around the Conference as long as it suited Punjab's interests. However once his aims had been accomplished he was happy to sacrifice Muslim unity and prepared to make a deal with the Hindus and Sikhs of Punjab. The Unionist Party could only exploit the reforms if it co-operated with the non-Muslim communities and Fazl-i-Husain was quite willing to negotiate away joint electorates but neither the urban Muslims nor the Hindus and Sikhs were willing to pay the necessary price.

⁴⁷ Fazl-i-Husain, 'Our Political Programme', *Mihr Collection* 87, cited in David Page, *Prelude to Partition*, p.68.

⁴⁸ A. Jalal and A. Seal, 'Alternative to Partition: Muslim Politics Between the Wars', *Modern Asian Studies*, 15,3, (1981), pp. 442-443.

Despite this setback, the India Act of 1935 was a triumph for Punjab. It incorporated the Communal Award and extended provincial autonomy and still allowed the formation of a cross-communal rural block.⁴⁹

Fazl-i-Husain returned to the Punjab and despite his precarious health reorganized and reconstituted the Unionist Party. His concern was that if Punjab was not to become India's Ulster the three communities should work together on the basis of 'a definitely liberal and socialistic programme', and work for 'the uplift of the Indian masses'. For this reason he refused to support openly the Kashmir and Shahidganj agitations because of their divisive nature. He saw communal tensions not as religious but as economic and political conflict.⁵⁰ Consequently the Punjab perspective was bound to conflict with Jinnah's resuscitated centralist approach. When Jinnah established a Central Parliamentary Board Fazl-i-Husain opposed it. He considered the very concept of a central party organ to be the antithesis of provincial autonomy; political decentralization. Also associating with the League would prevent co-operation with Hindu and Sikh agriculturalists and stoke the fires of communal tension. Clearly he was not prepared to witness Jinnah undoing what he had persevered so hard to establish and was intolerant of any interference in Punjab.

Jinnah visited the Punjab in 1936 in order to establish a Punjab Parliamentary Board but had little success. When he left he said 'I shall never come to Punjab again. It is such a hopeless place'.⁵¹ Fazl-i-Husain's policies were continued by Sikander Hayat after his death in 1936 and in the elections of 1937 the Unionist won seventy-five seats, of which a very large proportion was rural seats.⁵² Originally, two League candidates were successful, Raja Ghazanfar Ali and Barkat Ali but Ghazanfar Ali was tempted by the lure of office to join the Unionist Party. The election result was a clear manifestation of the victory of Punjabi regionalism over all-India Muslim politics.

Why did the Bengal Muslims follow a strategy similar to that of Fazl-i-Husain? Bengali Muslim society was deeply divided. The *ashraf-ajlaf* social dichotomy was reinforced by other divisions which emerged in colonial Bengal. The weakness of the Bengal Muslim élite and their lack of cohesion meant that they were not able to take full advantage of the Montford Reforms and exploit numerical superiority on either the provincial or the all-India level.

⁴⁹ Ibid., pp. 443-446.

⁵⁰ Fazl-i-Husain, 'Punjab Politics', cited in Azim Husain, *Fazl-i-Husain*, p.304.

⁵¹ Ibid., pp. 310-311.

⁵² *Return Showing the Results of Elections in India* (Cmd 5589, 1937), pp. 75-78.

The *ashraf* status groups, Sayed, Pathan, Mughal and Sheikh, represented a small minority of the Muslim population and were confronted by the *ajlaf* majority who originally were converts from low caste Hindus. The *ashraf-ajlaf* polarity was reinforced by the *ashraf*'s contempt for the Bengali language and preference for the use of Arabic, Persian or Urdu. The chasm between élite and popular Muslim culture greatly weakened the *ashraf*'s influence over the *ajlaf*.⁵³ However it was partly bridged by the proliferation of *anjumans* and communal associations, such as the Central National Mohammedan Association which established an ideological link between the *ashraf* and *ajlaf*.⁵⁴ The *ashraf* élite's position was further undermined by the Permanent Settlement of 1793. Only a small group of powerful zemindars, such as the Nawabs of Murshidabad, Bogra and Dacca survived the upheaval. Other rural *ashraf* families such as those of Nawab Abdul Latif, Obaidullah al-Obaidi Suhrawardy and Moulvi Abdul Jabbar came to terms with the new colonial reality and acquired western education. Thus two strands emerged from the surviving *ashraf* families, the western educated professional and the landed élite.

The other major influence on the development of the Muslim élites, and on Bengalis in general, was the overwhelming domination of the metropolis over the *mofussil*. Calcutta's magnetic attraction dominated the social cultural and economic life of the Bengali Muslim élite. The spoils of patronage and power to be gained in the metropolis undermined the importance of the isolated districts. The preoccupation of the Calcutta élite with the politics of the city and the class interests of the Muslim zemindars, meant that the leadership of the *proja* movement fell to the weak and disorganized Bengali speaking Muslim middle class. The movement was led by *jotedars* and supported by peasants and the rural proletariat. In the divisions of Dacca, Chittagong and parts of Rajshahi where Muslims were predominant, the principal antagonism was between the Hindu landlords and Muslim tenants over *abwabs*, interest rates and indebtedness and rent. Typically as most trading caste Hindus were simultaneously landlords, money lenders and traders the class conflict at times took on the shape of communal riots.⁵⁵

Politically, the *proja* movement emerged at the Kamariarchar *proja* conference at Mymensingh in 1914 which was attended by Fazlul Huq, Abul Kasem, Akram Khan, Maniruzzaman Islamabadi, Rajibuddin Tarafdar and Alimuzzaman Choudhry. By 1923, Proja Samitis were organized in the districts of Noakhali, Tippera, Dacca, Mymensingh, Pabna and Bogra and to a lesser degree in Bakarganj, Rangpur, Dinajpur and

⁵³ Asim Roy, *The Islamic Syncretistic Tradition in Bengal* (Princeton, 1983), pp. 58-71.

⁵⁴ Rafiuddin Ahmed, *The Bengal Muslims 1871-1906. A Quest for Identity* (Delhi, 1981), pp. 31, 167.

⁵⁵ Partha Chatterjee, *Bengal: The Land Question 1920-47* (Calcutta, 1984), p.187.

Murshidabad. However the leadership that organized the *samitis* were the supporters of Chittaranjan Das. Following his death and the Calcutta riot of 1926 the Calcutta based leadership of the Congress reasserted its control over the provincial Congress organization, repudiated the Bengal Pact between Hindus and Muslims, and removed the district leadership which had emerged with the Non-co-operation Movement. Many Muslims such as Akram Khan and Tamizuddin Khan left the Congress at this stage. The final blow to Hindu-Muslim solidarity, came when the amendment to the Bengal Tenancy Act, passed in 1928, was opposed by the Congress. The emerging political solidarity of Bengali Muslims was to develop henceforward outside the ambit of Indian nationalism.

The next stage in the development of their political solidarity came when the Calcutta élite decided to woo the support of the rural Muslim population they had ignored until then. Muslim politics in the legislative council had reached an impasse by the late 1920s. The Muslims had demonstrated that their greatest enemy was their own disunity. However in order to demonstrate that the Nehru Report had little credibility among Bengali Muslims it was not enough for the élite to be united. They had to demonstrate that they had support in the rural areas. Thus in 1929, the Nikhil Banga Proja Samiti, a rural tenant's association was formed with the co-operation of the Calcutta élite.⁵⁶ The leadership included loyalist conservatives as well as nationalists such as Abdur Rahim, Fazlul Huq, Abdullah Suhrawardy, Abdul Momin, Abdul Karim, Mujibur Rahman, Akram Khan, Shamsuddin Ahmed and Tamizuddin Khan.

The Nikhil Banga Proja Samiti was a turning point in Bengal politics. It was the first regional organization drawn along class lines. However the leadership was exclusively Muslim though it did have support from the *Namasudra proja*. But its class composition was repugnant to A.K. Ghaznavi, the Nawab of Dacca, Habibullah and other Muslim zemindars, who refused to be associated with it. The urban professionals of the metropolis, saw the Nikhil Banga Proja Samiti only as a political symbol and the organization remained inactive until 1932 when it began to function as an affiliating body. However at the grassroot level the peasant movement was very active in the 1930s. The slump in agricultural prices due to the depression exacerbated the relations between tenants and landlords. There was rapid increase in the number of Proja and Krishak Samitis in the eastern districts and the Krishak samitis showed signs of socialistic influence.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Abul Mansur Ahmed, *Fifty Years of Politics As I Saw It* (Dhaka, 1975), pp. 165-168.

⁵⁷ Bazlur Rahman Khan, *Politics in Bengal 1927-1936* (Dhaka, 1987), pp. 31-32.

The antagonism between the Urdu speaking *ashraf* élite and the Bengali speaking peasantry explains the role of Bengal in the Muslim Conference. Fazlul Huq backed separate representation because he considered it the only way a backward community could be adequately represented. But for many from east Bengal the issue of separate or joint electorates was not so important. The Districts Boards already elected members on the joint electorates, Muslim ineffectiveness was due to lack of experience and factionalism but by the 1930s these disadvantages had been overcome.⁵⁸ However, Fazlul Huq's support for the Conference's strategy was also informed by economic issues. He used the Round Table Conference to attack the Meston Award which had removed the jute tax from the provincial to the centralist list, and left the finances of the province in shambles. On this point all Bengalis,- the Hindus, Muslims and government officials concurred. The effect of the taxation was aggravated by the depression of the 1930s and it severely limited state patronage in matters such as expenditure on health and education. The jute growing districts worst affected by the Jute Tax provided Huq with his most crucial *proja* support. Eventually the Otto Niemeyer Report redressed the situation by assigning 62 per cent of the Jute Export Tax to Bengal.⁵⁹

However the short lived unity of Bengal Muslims broke down as soon as Abdur Rahim resigned the presidentship of the Nikhil Banga Proja Samiti in 1934. The Samiti split between two factions, west Bengal backing Abdul Momin and east Bengal backing Huq and Shamsuddin Ahmed for the leadership. The east-west split was also coterminous with the Urdu-Bengali division of the organization's leadership. Later at the Mymensingh conference of 1935-36, a bitter squabble ensued which finally forced Akram Khan, Momin and other west Bengal leaders to drop out of the *proja* movement leaving Huq in control. Under the leadership of younger and more radical men from the eastern districts the organization changed its name to the Krishak Proja Party (i.e., Peasant's and Tenants' Party), in order to widen its appeal and prepared for the elections of 1937.

The *ashraf* élite also reorganized themselves in preparation for the hustings. In 1932 the Calcutta merchants led by Ispahani had formed the New Muslim Majlis and later in 1936 H.S. Suhrawardy and Khwaja Nazimuddin organized the United Muslim Party. These two organizations merged with the Muslim League to form the Muslim League Parliamentary Board. Fazlul Huq also entered the negotiations for merger but insisted on the abolition of zemindari without compensation, while Jinnah favoured abolition with compensation. The Krishak Proja Party and the Bengal Muslim League entered the elections as opponents.

⁵⁸ John Gallagher, *The Decline, Revival and Fall of the British Empire* (Cambridge, 1982), pp. 166-178.

⁵⁹ *Government of India Act, 1935: Indian Financial Enquiry* (Cmd 5163, 1936), p.20. The issue was revived when the Pakistan Government reassumed control of jute revenues nearly a decade later.

Huq championing the aspirations of rural Bengal fought the campaign on the slogan *dal-bhat* (rice and lentils, i.e., adequate food), the abolition of *zemindari* and free primary education. The Bengal Muslim League on the other hand could only stress Muslim solidarity and depended on influence and on *pirs* to win seats. Their distance from the rural population was highlighted by the fact that with the exception of Akram Khan no other member of the League felt at home addressing a Bengali speaking audience. The Bengal Muslim League won 39 seats in the elections and the Krishak Proja Party secured only 36 but Huq was hoping to enter into an alliance with the Bengal Congress Party. However the All-India Congress Working Committee was unmoved by the pleas from the Bengal Congress that it should be allowed to form a coalition. Finally the Muslim League offered Huq the prime ministership in order to prevent him from co-operating with the Congress.⁶⁰

In the case of Sind the development of regional nationalism took a different course from that of the Punjab and Bengal. The movement for separation brought partial unity to the élites and forced them to raise the issue on the all-India level in conjunction with the centralist parties. However once Sind was established as a separate province the élites lost interest in all-India politics and became preoccupied with regional issues only. As a result the movement for separation established Sindi regional concerns and ethnic identity as the major force in the politics of the province.

Sind's Muslim politics was dominated by large landholders and they were the bedrock of the British administration. Power in the rural areas was in the hands of Baluchi *jagirdars* such as Mir Ali Murad Talpur and Ghaili Khan Chandio and Sindi *waderas* belonging to the Bhutto, Junejo and Soomro families. Some of these large landholders were also *pirs* such as Pir Ali Shah and Pir Abid Shah from Ghotki, and they combined temporal and spiritual authority which gave them tremendous social influence. Many *pirs* were Sayeds and formed a separate influential grouping in Sind politics. Together the *waderas*, *pirs*, Sayeds and *mirs* formed the traditional channel of authority through which government authority affected the rural masses. Symbols of honour, - such as chairs at the *darbars*, *lunghis* and other awards which enhanced their prestige - were used to secure the collaboration of *waderas* and *pirs*. *Izzat* confirmed status and power which helped *jagirdars* and *waderas* compete for influence over the small *zemindars* and *haris*. Similarly *pirs* needed to enhance their prestige to compete for *murids*.⁶¹ There were further divisions along ethnic lines between Sindis and Baluchis, which formed the basis of their factional groupings.

⁶⁰ Mohammad H. R. Talukdar ed., *Memoirs of Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy with a brief account of his life and work* (Dhaka, 1987), pp. 15-16.

⁶¹ David Cheesman, 'Rural Power and Debt in Sind In the Late 19th Century 1865-1901' (London Univ. Ph.D. thesis 1980), pp. 87, 96, 266-267.

The towns were not politically powerful and further weakened by division between Hindus and Muslims. The Hindus belonged for the most part to the Bhaiband mercantile communities and the Amil administrative caste. Among the Muslims the most important groups were Memons, Khojas and Bohras concentrated in Karachi and Hyderabad. The Muslim middle class consisted of these groups almost entirely.⁶² From the urban groups several provincial leaders emerged. Among these were Abdullah Haroon, a Memon, Hatim Alavi, a Bohra and Mohammad Hashim Gazdar from Karachi.

The first phase of Sindi regionalism was characterized by Hindu-Muslim solidarity and the process of defining regional nationalism. Hindus were more active than Muslims on the issue of separation. Harchandrai Vishindas and Ghulam Mohammad Bhurgiri worked in conjunction to press the Sindi demand for autonomy. Both were members of the Indian National Congress and in 1913, Vishindas raised the question of separation of Sind from Bombay as a new province at the Karachi session of the Congress. Sind, it was argued, was geographically, ethnographically, linguistically, economically and administratively self-contained and distinct from the rest of the Bombay Presidency. The region's distinctive identity was also expressed in its opposition to Punjab. The settlement of Punjabis in the Jamrao Canal colony generated apprehensions among Sindis that they would be absorbed by its larger neighbour.⁶³ However the Sind Muhammadan Association, a landlord organization, petitioned Lord Montagu on his trip to India in 1917 that they wanted a separate province composed of Sind and Baluchistan.⁶⁴ This ambiguity in identity reflected the significant number of Baluchi tribes in Sind and the prominence of their leaders the *mirs* in the Association. However, constitutional advance had been rejected for Baluchistan and it was to remain under direct rule from the centre which resulted in the proposal being dropped.⁶⁵

Sind remained with the Presidency under the Act of 1919 and the demand for separation became more vociferous. Bhurgiri and Vishindas in the early 1920s argued that the devolution of power which was introduced by Dyarchy was vitiated by the special status of the Commissioner of Sind. His autocratic position minimized the benefits of reform and strengthened the argument for separation. But Bhurgiri's death in 1924

⁶² A.W. Hughes, *A Gazetteer of the Province of Sind* (London, 1874), p.84.

⁶³ Speech by Harchandrai Vishindas (extract), Chairman, Reception Committee, Annual Session, Indian National Congress at Karachi, 1913, in H. Khuro, ed., *Documents on the Separation of Sind from the Bombay Presidency*, (Islamabad, 1982), i, p.1. The anxiety of Punjabi domination is a constant theme in Sindi politics which became more significant after partition.

⁶⁴ 'Addresses Presented in India to His Excellency the Viceroy and the Right Honourable The Secretary of State for India'. *Parliamentary Papers 1918*, xviii (Cmd 9178) p.553.

⁶⁵ Report of the Sub-Committee Appointed by the Fifth Sind Provincial Conference to Consider The Position of Sind in the Mont-Ford Reforms 1918, op. cit., i, pp. 15-16.

coincided with greater Muslim involvement in regionalism and increasing Hindu opposition to the idea of a separate province. The Khilafat movement threw up new leaders such as Sheikh Abdul Majid Sindhi, Noor Mohammad Vakil and Abdullah Haroon. Sheikh Abdul Majid took over from his mentor Bhurgiri and concentrated on turning the demand for separation into an all-India issue. He raised the question with the All-India Khilafat Committee and the All-India Muslim League. He also gained the support of the young leaders who emerged with the Non-co-operation Movement, such as Mohammad Ayub Khuro, Ghulam Mohammad Sayed, Sayed Miram Mohammad Shah, Allah Buksh Soomro and Ali Mohammad Rashidi. But Sir Shah Nawaz Bhutto was against separation as he had close links with Bombay and had all-India aspirations.

The communal polarization which followed the collapse of the Khilafat and Non-co-operation Movement also affected Sind. The Larkana communal riots of 1927 widened the rift between the two communities and the Hindus now actively opposed the demand for separation. Dr H.L. Chablani's main argument was that the province was economically unviable. This argument was quite fallacious and had been previously disputed by the Hindu dominated Sind Provincial Conference, in 1918.⁶⁶ Undaunted, the anti-separationists enlisted the support of the Hindu Mahasabha and influenced the Nehru Report's position on the question of separation. The Report introduced a proviso that separation had to meet economic and administrative criteria.

The demand for separation was adopted by the All-India Muslim Conference and incorporated into the Muslim demands raised at the Round Table Conference. The Hindus led by Hiranand Kensingh and G.T. Hingorani intensified their activities and organized a vocal anti-separationist campaign. In reaction Muslim opinion gathered momentum around an informal organization, the Sind Azad Conference established in 1932. This platform gave a semblance of unity to Muslim politics which up to then was dominated by factionalism. But the central government was nervous about Sind emerging as a deficit province due to the heavy expenditure made on the Sukkur Barrage. At the Round Table Conference in London following discussions and two investigations into the financial arguments, it was agreed in 1932, to separate the province and subventions equivalent to a capital grant of twenty crore Rupees were allocated to help the new province.⁶⁷

However, the temporary unity between the rural élites and the middle class professionals and merchants which emerged in the quest for regional autonomy collapsed once provincial status was granted.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p.20.

⁶⁷ *Government of India Act, 1935. Government of Burma Act, 1935 Draft (Cmd 5181, 1936)*, p.13.

Now the tenuous links which Sindi regionalists had formed with all-India Muslim politics were allowed to wither away. Three parties based on the rural élites emerged from the Sind Azad Conference to contest the 1937 elections. In reality they were just conglomerations of factions which lacked any organization. The Sind Azad Party was formed when the Karachi Khilafat Committee, the Sind Hari Association and the Jamiat-ul-Ulama Sind merged. Led by Abdul Majid Sindhi, it established ties with the Muslim League in order to improve its electoral chances. Otherwise it was exclusively a regional grouping not interested in all-India matters. Jinnah attempted unsuccessfully to persuade Majid to merge with the League and when he visited the province in 1936 he was unable to establish a parliamentary board. The main local party was the Sind United Party which was established by Abdullah Haroon along the lines of the Unionist Party. Even though no Hindu joined the party there were some contact with the Congress. But the personality clash between Ghulam Mohammad Hidayatullah and Shah Nawaz Bhutto divided the party and Hidayatullah left to form the Sind Muslim Party which was an exclusively Muslim organization. Later the Sind Muslim Party was joined by M.A. Khuro and Mir Bandeh Ali Talpur. It also gained the support of the Junejo and Jatoi families.⁶⁸

The polls simply confirmed the domination of *waderas*, *pirs*, Sayeds and *mirs* and expressed their exclusively regional concerns. The only party which had any claim to an all-India outlook, the Azad Party, did badly in the polls. However the success of the United Party at the polls was vitiated by the defeat of its leading personalities, Bhutto and Haroon. The Governor Sir Lancelot Graham, added to the confusion by nominating Hidayatullah as premier. The consequence was large scale defections from the United Party forcing it to sit on the opposition benches under the leadership of Allah Buksh Soomro. With the tenuous link with all-India politics broken after the separation of Sind, Muslim politics in the province was totally absorbed with provincial affairs.

The North West Frontier Province was formed in 1901, by separating the five Political Agencies and the adjoining districts from the Punjab and incorporating them into a new province. It was a novel approach to security as the region was controlled directly by Delhi and not as previously by the provincial government in Lahore. Security considerations dominated the administration's perspective on the province and none of the moves towards responsible government were implemented. Here political development was not along the road charted out by the Morley-Minto and Montford Reforms. The lack of political advance combined with Sarhad's specific topography was responsible for a more turbulent political evolution.

⁶⁸ A.K. Jones, 'Muslim Politics and the Growth of the Muslim League in Sind 1935-41' (Duke Univ. Ph.D. thesis 1977), pp. 251-253. G.M. Sayed, *Struggle for New Sind: A Brief Narrative of the Working of Provincial Autonomy in Sind* (Karachi, 1949), pp. 3-19.

The major division in the North West Frontier Province was between the Pakhtun and non-Pakhtun populations. In the 'settled' districts, Peshawar, Kohat, Bannu, Hazara and Dera Ismail Khan, the urban-rural divide coincided with the religious division in province. The Hindus and Sikhs made up eight per cent of the population and were a substantial minority in Dera Ismail Khan. Non-Muslims were mainly traders and merchants and also dominated the professions and the higher ranks of the bureaucracy. On the other hand the Muslims of the 'settled' areas were mainly rural and were not an ethnically unified entity. The Pakhtuns were a minority comprising only 37 per cent of the total Muslim population. The non-Pakhtun population, mainly Awans and Jats, were 55 per cent of the total and in overwhelming majority in the Hazara district.⁶⁹ But despite being in a minority, the Pakhtuns were the dominant ethnic group in the region and the only one that traditionally owned land. The exception were the *pirs*, the only non-Pakhtun who were traditional landholders. This gave them the necessary material prerequisite to compete for political dominance. The *sajjada nashins*, such as Pir Khels of Kohat, Jadun Pirs of Rajuya, Kaka Khel Mians, Gilani Pirs of Kohat, and the Manki Pirs, advantage over the *khani* élite was that their influence transcended tribal loyalties.

However Pakhtuns were in overwhelming majority in the 'tribal' areas. In these agencies, Malakand, Khyber, Kurram, North Waziristan and South Waziristan, the tribes were conceded a degree of autonomy in the running of their internal affairs in return for loyalty to the British. They were regulated by the *jirgas* which dispensed justice according to their custom of *pakhtunwali*. The British administration, maintained loose control, over these semi-autonomous enclaves, through a combination of subsidies and punitive expeditions.⁷⁰ The consequence of this policy was that the tribal social structure was left intact and became the vehicle for centrifugal tendencies. Typically, their particularism was combined with anti-colonialism and resulted in a series of revolts led by religious leaders such as the Faqir of Ipi, Mirza Ali Khan.⁷¹

Among the Pakhtuns of the 'settled' districts the British ruled with the collaboration of the large *khans* such as the Nawab of Hoti, Sir Akbar Khan and the Nawab of Teri, Arbab Sher Ali Khan. However, the introduction of the civil administration resulted in the withdrawal of executive and judicial powers from the leading chiefs and they became increasingly dependent on the British. The extension of the Punjab Land Alienation Act to the Frontier in 1904 further undermined their authority. The Act's main beneficiaries were the small *khans* who were closer to the land than the big *khans*. As a result the landlord money-lenders

⁶⁹ *Census of India, 1931 Vol xv NWFP, Part 1 Report and Part 2 Tables* (Peshawar, 1933), pp. 47, 187, 201-202.

⁷⁰ Akbar S. Ahmed, *Religion and Politics in Muslim Society* (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 29-39.

⁷¹ Haji Mirza Ali (Faqir Saheb Ipi) to Nehru, 16 Sep. 1937., in Jawaharlal Nehru, ed., *A Bunch of Old Letters*, (London, 1960), pp. 253-254.

acquired more land and large numbers were reduced to the position of tenants. The hold of the landlords, mostly small *khans*, over the petty proprietors also increased and this shift in power resulted in the smaller *khans*, who were not dependant on the British, acquiring increased importance in Pakhtun society. The upshot was that the loyalist big *khans* suffered a decline in their power and were challenged by the small *khans* supported by tenants and *kamins*.⁷²

It was from this milieu that Pakhtun nationalism emerged. The leaders such as Ghaffar Khan and Dr Khan Sahib were minor chiefs and their supporters were tenants and *kamins* from the Peshawar and Mardan districts where landlord-tenant relations were tense. However their influence was weakened by the interlocking of party politics with *tarburwali* (i.e., rivalry between close kin). Politically the roots of regionalism can be traced to the combination of three factors, the Third Afghan War of 1919 and the rise of King Amanullah, the Azad schools movement started by Ghaffar Khan and the Khilafat movement. After the failure of the *hijrat* Ghaffar Khan formed the Anjuman-i-Islah-ul-Afghania to initiate cultural reform in Pakhtun society and later, in 1928, started a Pushtu journal called *Pakhtun*. By then, the residue of the Khilafat Committee, the Frontier Congress, the Afghan Jirga and its sister organization the quasi-military Khudai Khidmatgars began to work together in the Civil Disobedience Movement. Once the movement started the ranks of the Afghan Jirga came to be dominated by new members which explains the decentralized character of the agitation. However the robust repression of the civil disobedience campaign was met by fierce resistance which culminated in the *de facto* control of Peshawar by the Congress and to serious unrest in the Political Agencies. Ghaffar Khan was arrested and the mailed fist was used to crush agitation. The rebellion continued for the next few years and was finally suppressed after the deployment of reinforcements and by the extensive use of a air power. During the 1930s there were more troops in Waziristan than in the rest of India.⁷³

From this point Pakhtun nationalism became a significant force. The Khudai Khidmatgars spread mainly to the villages in the Peshawar and the Mardan districts and organized the tenants and artisans against the *khani* élite by combining a resolute nationalist posture with vague demands for the reduction of revenue assessment. The peasantry was seriously affected by the depression and relations between landlords and tenants were tense. However the agitation was divided by agnatic rivalry and had little influence in the

⁷² E. Jansson, *India, Pakistan or Pakhtunistan: The Nationalist Movements in the North West Frontier Province 1937-47* (Stockholm, 1981), pp. 41-45.

⁷³ Stephen A. Rittenberg, 'The Independence Movement in India's North-West Frontier Province 1901-1947' (Columbia University, Ph.D. Thesis, 1977), pp. 103-109, 151-171.

non-Pakhtun areas due to the uncompromising position of Ghaffar Khan who said 'this country belongs to a Pathan [sic] and Pathans will rule over it, and nobody else has the right to govern it.'⁷⁴ Despite this drawback he was able to consolidate his position by leading the Afghan Jirga and Khudai Khidmatgars into joining the Congress in 1931. There was initially a factional dispute between the urban, non-Muslim Congressmen and the rural Pakhtun orientated Afghan Jirga. But the All-India Congress Committee sided with Ghaffar Khan. The result was that the Frontier Congress was captured by regional nationalists, the Khudai Khidmatgars rather than the Congress dominated the new nationalist awareness and the All-India Central Committee accepted this state of affairs in order to claim that it had support in the province.

Among the big *khans* and loyalists there was a weaker current of regionalism which was articulated on the constitutional plane. The Frontier administration was dead against any constitutional advance in the province. Even the Simon Commission found the strategic and defence consideration to be so important that they could not consider any form of responsible government for the region. In order to press their claim they became associated with the All-India Muslim Conference. Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum Khan was a member of its Working Committee and Abdul Aziz, Azizullah Khan of Toru, Fateh Mohammad Khan Khattak and Nawab Khaliqdad Khan Bhaya were also associated. Fazl-i-Husain's regionalist strategy naturally appealed to Abdul Qaiyum and at the Round Table Conference he projected the demand argument that the North West Frontier Province should have full provincial status in a weak federation.⁷⁵ But despite the unanimity between the Congress, Muslim League and the Muslim Conference on this issue, the Indian Government refused to budge. However the later was forced to concede reforms partly as a result of the Peshawar Disturbance. It was admitted by officials that the disturbances could had been avoided if there had been constitutional means to express grievances.⁷⁶ Thus it was directly as a consequence of the Civil Disobedience Movement that the constitutional reforms that were operating in the rest of India were applied to the Frontier.

With the operation of Dyarchy the *khani* élite's interest in regionalism subsided and they became absorbed in factional rivalry. There were three groups in the legislative council,- Malik Khuda Buksh's Azad Party, Nawab Hamidullah Khan of Toru's Liberal Party and Ghulab Rabani Khan's Progressive Party. The Minority Party represented the Sikhs and Hindus and there were a series of acrimonious disputes between the

⁷⁴ Ghaffar Khan, PJ7/5612, 1931 No 917 Letter 299-P.S. 19 Jan.1932 NWF to Foreign Department cited in *ibid*, pp. 175-176.

⁷⁵ *Indian Round Table Conference* (Cmd 3778, 1931), i, p.142.

⁷⁶ *India Constitutional Reforms: Government of India's Despatch on the Proposal for Constitutional Reforms* (Cmd 3700, 1930), p.78

Muslims and non-Muslims in the council over the communal composition of the administration, the replacement of Sanskrit by Urdu and English in government schools and the various agricultural legislations.

When elections were announced for 1937 the polarization that took place in Sarhad politics was between the loyalist landholders on the one hand and the Pakhtun nationalist backed by tenant farmers on the other. The big *khans* were divided by agnatic rivalry but some Hazara *khans* formed a block around Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum Khan. However his past disdain for the *khani* élite and his modest family background made him an anathema to many *khans*. They turned to the Nawab of Hoti, Akbar Khan and formed another loose group around him. In 1936, Jinnah tried to revive the provincial Muslim League but the one Muslim body which could have provided a constituency had been pre-empted by the Congress. Jinnah was forced to turn to urban professionals such as Pir Buksh and Malik Khuda Buksh of the Azad Party, and Allah Buksh Yusafi and Rahim Buksh Ghaznavi of the Peshawar Khilafat Committee and co-opt them to the All-India Muslim League Parliamentary Board. However most of the members deserted to the Congress and the remainder fought the elections as Azad Party candidates. The Frontier Congress benefitted from the divisions in the opposition and was the most successful party in the elections. But its success was due to the linking up with Pakhtun nationalism which gave some credibility to its claim of representing Muslim as well as non-Muslims appear more credible.

Community consciousness was the other cultural identity which was politicized by Dyarchy. Sometimes identities based on class, region and nation became subordinate to this dominant awareness. Muslims labourers under particular political conditions came to see themselves first as Muslims then as workers. This influence subsumed communalism, i.e., an attitude of aggressive intolerance *vis à vis* non-Muslims. 'Communal conflicts were an articulation of community consciousness,...but were not a necessary attribute of community consciousness.'⁷⁷ The dividing line between urban groups which were communitarian and those which were communal was thin at times. The willingness to co-operate with the Congress was a criterion that separated the former from the latter. With the introduction of the Montford reforms Muslim identity had acquired a political edge. It became the basis for competition with non-Muslim élites for power and patronage. Friction between the communities increased as some politicians deliberately exacerbated communal tensions in order to get access to the institutions of power. This reinforced the tendency of all political parties to exploit Muslim identity.

⁷⁷ Dipesh Chakrabarty and R. Das Gupta. 'Some Aspects of Labour History of Bengal in the Nineteenth Century: Two Views'. (Centre for Social Sciences, Calcutta, 1981), Occasional Paper no 40, p.7.

Muslim identity was inextricably intertwined with the complexities of town politics. The urban areas were dominated by competing factions led by the *rais* who exerted influence on the politics of the *mohallahs*. The local 'neighbourhood leadership' itself depended on the shifting alliances between the *ulama*, petty merchants and 'bazaar factions'.⁷⁸ In Calcutta the Muslim élite was composed of the *ashraf* stratum backed by mercantile families from Kutchi Memon, Dawoodi Bohra, and Ismaili sects. Despite the participation of Azad, Huq and others in the Khilafat, communalism was always simmering below the surface. Bazaar faction leaders such as Hakim Rehat Hussain who were rabid communalists kept the Khilafatists under constant pressure. Later the friction between communities over *korboni* and music before mosques was aggravated by the emergence of *shuddhi* and *sangathan* movement and their Muslim counterpart the *tanzim* and *tabligh*.⁷⁹ The only group to remain independent of the Khilafat leadership and also free from communalist influence were the migrant labour from Bihar and Punjab which had become unionized. The radicalized labour unions refused to support the élite leadership on the grounds that their primary interest were economic.

The emergence of nationalism and the radicalization of labour caused consternation in the Government of Bengal and among conservative Muslims. The Bengal administration aided and abetted the arch communalist Abdul Rahim's efforts to sabotage the Das Pact and thus countered the developments they feared.⁸⁰ Husain Shaheed Suhrawardy originally a supporter of Das was influenced by Abdur Rahim, his father-in-law and became involved deeply in communal politics. In the Calcutta riots of 1926 which were spontaneous, Suhrawardy and Y.C. Ariff stoked the fires of sectarianism among merchants and artisans from up-country. Fazlul Huq and Mujibur Rahman were forced to bend to communal pressures from below but were more restrained. The net result of the riots was that Hindu-Muslim solidarity broke on the rocks of communalism. Rahim and Suhrawardy emerged with the largest block of Muslim supporters in the city mainly composed of migrant labour from Bihar and north India. Furthermore the radicalization of the Muslim working class was aborted and Suhrawardy formed the National Labour Federation, in 1927, to which most Muslim workers affiliated.⁸¹ However communalism was only used as means to gain power and was a source of electoral support. The fact that Rahim formed a short lived coalition ministry with Byomkesh Chakravarti

⁷⁸ C. A. Bayly, 'Local Control in Indian Towns. The Case of Allahabad, 1880-1920', *Modern Asian Studies*, 5, 4, (1971), pp. 291-293.

⁷⁹ Kenneth Mcpherson, *The Muslim Microcosm: Calcutta, 1918 to 1935* (Wiesbaden, 1974), pp. 55, 72.

⁸⁰ J.H. Broomfield, *Elite Conflict in a Plural Society: Twentieth Century Bengal* (Berkeley, 1968), p.274.

⁸¹ Mohammad H. R. Talukdar ed., *Memoirs of Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy with a brief account of his life and work* (Dhaka, 1987), p.13.

showed that communalism was just another tool in Dyarchic politics. The communalist groups merged with the Muslim League in 1936.

In the case of urban Punjab, the Ahrar's political practices not only widened the gap between Muslims and non-Muslims. They also attempted to redefine Muslim identity. The Ahrar's support was mainly concentrated among the lower middle class of urban Punjab and led by urban professionals and the reformist *ulama*. They came to prominence in 1931, in opposition to the Kashmir State's appropriation of Mosques, Muslim graveyards and other holy places. The Ahrar became involved in a tussle for the leadership of the opposition with the All-India Kashmir Committee which included among others, Dr Iqbal and the Ahmadiyya leader, Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmed. The political rivalry which revolved around the latter's insistence on using constitutional methods was compounded by doctrinal differences between orthodox Sunnis and the Ahmadiyyas. The Ahrar's successful civil disobedience campaign enhanced the prestige of the organization and widened their support. The issue transcended the limits of the Kashmiri *biraderi* to become a concern of all Muslims in India. The success led them declare themselves an all-India organization in 1932,- the Majlis-i-Ahrar-i-Hind. However their involvement in an exclusively Muslim issue did not mean that they had become a communal organization. Despite their differences with the Congress, the Ahrar wanted to incorporate demands on Kashmir into the Congress campaign. They participated in the Civil Disobedience Movement and were suspected of accepting the Congress' funds.⁸²

The Ahmadiyyas had emerged in the *tanzim* as champion of Islam against the Arya Samaj but were considered by the orthodox Muslim to be heretics. Their heterodox character became an issue among Muslims when in 1933 they became more assertive and were involved in a dispute with the Mubahila group, in their stronghold in Qadian.⁸³ The Ahrar already hostile to the Ahmadiyyas over the Kashmir Agitation, supported the Mubahila attacks against them. The anti-Ahmadiyya campaign took off and the Ahrars, joined by Zafar Ali, reached the height of their power. However they made a tactical error in handling the Shahidganj agitation which was just beginning in July 1935. The Muslims claimed that Shahidganj was a mosque while the Sikhs claimed it to be a gurdwara. The Ahrars decided to leave the matter to the Anjuman-i-Tahaffaz-i-Masjid for several reasons. First they did not want to deflect attention from the anti-Ahmadiyya campaign, lose the support of the Congress in becoming involved in an overtly communal

⁸² NDC, CID, S 358 (The Ahrar Movement in Punjab) pp. 25-26, 58-61.

⁸³ NDC, CID, S 358, *ibid*, pp. 32-35. NDC, CID, Sc 359 (The Ahmadiyya Sect) pp. 15-16. The Mubahila group was started by ex-Ahmadiyyas, Abdul Karim and Fazal Karim, who attacked the sect for its heterodox views and its treatment of non-Ahmadiyyas in its stronghold Qadian. NDC, CID, Sc 359, *ibid*, p.13.

issue and finally were unwilling to go to jail just before the elections. They were hoping to convert their street popularity into electoral support and become influential in the provincial assembly.⁸⁴

Over Shahidganj the Ahrars became divided and their opponents such as the Khaksars attempted to replace them. Zafar Ali now became hostile to the Ahrars, and established the Ittihad-i-Millat. Pir Jamaat Ali Shah was declared head of the Blue Shirts and invoked the support of other rural *pirs*. Support for the Shahidganj movement spread from the urban to the rural areas. However sufi *pirs* were subject to influences from the government and collaborators hesitated to call for civil disobedience on the issue. Jamaat Ali Shah now was under pressure especially from the reformist *ulama* and to shore up his position he temporarily enlisted the support of the Khaksars but repudiated the alliance over doctrinal differences. However due to Jamaat's vacillation and the proximity of the elections the agitation died down and was reactivated only after the hustings. Zafar Ali was elected to the Central Assembly and the Ittihad-i-Millat won two seats in the provincial legislature. The Ahrar Party's loss of prestige was reflected in its poor showing in the poll. They won only two seats in the Punjab and three in Bihar.⁸⁵

The Montford Reforms reinforced the centrifugal tendency among urban Muslims trying to organize on the basis of religious identity and their aspiration became interlocked with the political rivalry between the communities. Appeal to communal identity became the channel to power in the legislative council for urban politicians. The use of religious and cultural symbols had varying impact depending on the context. In the case of a heterogeneous metropolis such as Calcutta only those religious and cultural artifacts which stressed Muslim unity were employed. In order to unify Muslims, schismatic differences had to be temporarily relegated to the background by the use of religious symbols which only highlighted differences with non-Muslims. Conservative Muslims exploited communalism to break the nationalist hold over Muslims. The Ahrars had similar aspirations but their willingness to co-operate with the Congress meant that they could not adopt an uncompromisingly communal stance. In fact they redefined Muslim identity in a different manner which excluded the Ahmadiyya from the fold of Islam. This does show that the Muslim position could be flexible, but not totally. Some symbols relating to the basic precepts of Islam such as the *ummah* and Koran were primordial in character and appealed to all Muslims. But clearly the process of selecting the symbols to be used was subject to political exigencies.

⁸⁴ NDC, CID, S 358 (The Ahrar Movement in Punjab) pp. 37-46.

⁸⁵ *Return Showing the Results of Elections in India* (Cmd 5589, 1937), pp. 75, 87.

The Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms set in motion centrifugal forces which deflected Indian politics away from the all-India level to the provinces. The Act's in-built biases in favour of the rural lobby at the expense of the urban professionals and the retention of separate electorates combined to create a strong pull to the periphery. Separate electorates also fostered communitarian politics and implicit communalism. By the time of the decennial review, Muslim-majority provinces became the strongest advocates for greater provincial autonomy, weak federal centre and for the retention of separate electorates. The Congress' boycott of the Round Table Conference allowed the Muslims to put their imprint on the Government of India Act of 1935 which reinforced political groupings based on religion and region and discouraged nationalist politics.

The AICC's centralizing influence was able to neutralize the centrifugal impulses among its non-Muslim constituency but the Congress lost support of the Muslims. There was a steady decline in Muslim support following the giddy days of the Khilafat movement. On the eve of that movement itself the loyalist Muslims were the first to depart in order to participate in council politics. Later they were joined by the *ulama* after Gandhi called off the non-co-operation campaign. The remaining Khilafatists also lost their unity, joining 'no changers' or the swarajists; the latter were limited mainly to Bengal. The 'no changers' in their commitment to agitational politics became increasingly communal through their involvement in the *tabligh* and *tanzim* movement. Most of the remaining Muslims left the party in reaction to the Nehru Report which represented the maximum constitutional concessions that the right wing of the Congress, afraid of losing even their Hindu support, were willing to make. Dr Ansari attempted to stem the haemorrhaging by forming the All-India Nationalist Muslim Party but his efforts were undermined by Hindu communalists within the Congress. Eventually the Nationalist Muslim Party was splintered when the Civil Disobedience Movement triggered off communal riots resulting in the formation of the Ahrars and the Ittihad-i-Millat. However the outflow of Muslims was reversed on a smaller scale when Muslim socialists and communists joined the Congress Socialist party after the Communist Party of India and its affiliates were banned.

Overall these developments deprived the Congress of Muslim support in the 1937 provincial elections. The little support it had were mainly among the small urban groups such as the Ahrars, Ittihad-i-Millat, Shiah Conference, socialists and Congress Muslims such as Azad and Asaf Ali. However the North West Frontier Province was an exception where it had rural support. Here the Khudai Khidmatgars had taken over the local Congress organization and transformed it into a vehicle of Pakhtun nationalism. Generally speaking, the Congress had been reduced into a Hindu dominated organization. Overt or covert Hindu communalists acquired considerable power within it and even its liberal or radical elements could devise no means to win back the waning Muslim support.

The decline was acquiring an irreversible character. The Khilafat movement had marginalized the constitutional wing of the Muslims League and the few politicians such as Jinnah who remained in all-India politics staged a tentative return over the Simon Commission controversy. Jinnah attempted to revive Hindu-Muslim unity but his efforts to bridge the widening abyss were unsuccessful. His proposals were spurned by the right wing of the Congress and rejected by the All-India Muslim Conference, around which most Muslims had gathered. The Muslim Conference's primary function was to represent provincial interests, particularly those of Punjab, at the Round Table Conference. The announcement of the Communal Award paved the way for the Government of India Act of 1935 and the organization's main function completed, it became redundant. Fazl-i-Hussain turned his back on all-India politics and returned to the Punjab. Jinnah who had effectively retired from politics was urged to return and revive the moribund Muslim League. He again attempted to reach an accommodation with the Congress. The move faced resistance from within the Congress and Jinnah's proposals were never accepted by the Muslim parties in the provinces. One major obstacle in his path was removed when the Muslim Conference withdrew from the elections but the regional forces refused to co-operate with Jinnah and the Central Parliamentary Board.

The regional parties were not simply unwilling to come to terms with the Congress. They rejected centralist politics as a whole. This was amply demonstrated by the election results which underlined Jinnah's irrelevance to Muslim politics. The Muslim League's only minor success was among urban Muslims of the United Provinces and Calcutta. Certainly, they could not have formed the coalition ministry in Bengal if the Congress had played its hand judiciously.

Most rural Muslims backed the non-Congress regional parties. The Unionist Party, Krishak Proja Party and the Sind United Party were vehicles of regional Muslim interests. They expressed the centrifugal tendencies nurtured by the various constitutional reforms. They varied from region to region in their origin, social composition and extent of support which explains their varying success at the hustings. The Unionist Party was based on big landlords who had been pampered by colonialism for strategic reasons. Their political cohesion was increased by the role of *biraderis* which acted as a traditional channel of influence in the rural areas. This strong political base allowed the Punjab to stamp its interests on the constitutional negotiations and to prevent the Muslim League from making any headway in the provincial elections. By contrast Bengali Muslim regionalism was weak. The cultural chasm between the Urdu speaking urban élites and the Bengali speaking rural population was reflected in the political arena. The divisions in the provincial politics forced them to accept Punjab's leadership on the all-India level. The failure of Fazlul Huq to get a clear majority

was a reflection of these divisions and created the window of opportunity for the Muslim League to form a coalition government with him.

In Sind the demand for separation from the Bombay Presidency was encouraged by the advantages of provincial status seen to have been gained by other provinces. It led to temporary unity between the urban professionals and the landlords who linked up with all-India politics in order to achieve provincial status. However as soon as provincial status was gained Sindi politics reverted to its local focus ignoring the all-India stage and soon lost its fragile unity. Similarly in NWFP the big *khans* became associated with the Muslim Conference in order to press their claim for provincial status. Despite being unanimously supported by all the parties the administration initially rejected the demand for responsible government for the province. However, in reaction to the Peshawar Disturbance, provincial autonomy was introduced. Its consequence was that the fragile unity of the non-Congress élite collapsed. They became totally absorbed in factional rivalry to the exclusion of all-India politics and were unable to oppose effectively the Khudai Khidmatgars in the elections.

The other centrifugal force which was reinforced by the reforms was communitarian politics. It was inextricably linked with urban factionalism and its politicization exacerbated rivalry between communities. Communalism was a powerful weapon used by unscrupulous politicians to win the support of voters. But the very varied communally orientated groups were not all hostile to the Congress. The Ahrars were pro-Congress and moderately successful in promoting a *Sunni* Muslim identity which led them into conflicts with Muslims as well as non-Muslims. However the openly communalist elements such as the Calcutta group which had joined the Muslim League were electorally more successful as a result of the rivalry between Muslims and non-Muslim.

The basic parameters of Muslim politics were established by 1937. Muslims were divided between weak centripetal and strong centrifugal forces. This tension the natural end result of development since 1919, was crystal clear by that time. The opposition between the two forces formed the framework for the political developments of the 1940s. Redefined in a new context, it remained the basis of politics in Pakistan.

TOWARDS POLITICAL UNITY: COMMUNITY CONSCIOUSNESS VERSUS REGIONAL PULL, 1937-1944

The 1937 provincial elections clearly demonstrated that there was no such thing as a Muslim political monolith. Politically, Muslims were heterogeneous in character, had different interests and aspirations and most of them were not interested in presenting a unified front on the all-India level. However these simple facts raise several questions. Why did the strong centrifugal forces become involved with all-India issues and fall into line with the League centralist strategy? How did religion move on to the centre stage? These questions are significant because the advent of the League as an influential organization transformed the Congress-Raj contest during the 1940s into a three cornered fight which had multiple ramifications.

The strategy which Jinnah eventually developed was neither an instantaneous response nor immediately successful. Only after a period of trial and tribulation did his approach gain coherence and popularity. An important factor, responsible for the success of his strategy, was the transformation of the political context during the war. The tussle between the Raj and the Congress Party opened for him the door of opportunity. Patently he was in a vulnerable position and the AIML's new centralist strategy a charade. In reality he had made major concessions to the Muslim-majority provinces to gain their support and in the process was reduced to becoming their *vakil* at the centre.¹ Jinnah's political survival depended on the success of the gambit, of turning the Muslim League into a credible all-India force. In the face of the Congress' hostility he hinted to the acting Viceroy, Lord Brabourne, in August 1938 that the League was prepared to collaborate with the British in return for protection from the Congress in the provinces.

However with the outbreak of the war it was the Viceroy who was cultivating Muslim support. Linlithgow's brusque declaration which brought India into the war against Germany without consulting any Indian politician was a tactical indiscretion. The Congress which governed eight of the eleven provinces wanted clarification on Britain's war aims and consultation on India's constitutional future after the war as the price for co-operation. This gave the Muslim League an opportunity to declare support for the war, even though it was conditional, in order to win the government's favour. Linlithgow now saw Jinnah as a useful ally and began to stress the importance of the Muslim League view point, strengthening it as a counter-

¹ A. Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman* (Cambridge, 1985) pp. 38-41, 46.

balance to the Congress, implicitly accepting its claim that it spoke for all Muslims and that the Congress was a Hindu body. Jinnah was gratified by Linlithgow's action which helped hold his party together and for recognition of the AIML as the representative of the Muslims in the sub-continent. Linlithgow was motivated by the exigencies of the war and sponsored the Muslim League as a counterweight to the Congress demands. To this end he counselled Lord Zetland, the Secretary of State for India, to reaffirm in Parliament, that a precondition for constitutional progress was that there should be an agreement between Hindus and Muslims. Linlithgow used the impasse between the Congress and the League as a pretext to reject the Congress' demand for constitutional advance and received invaluable aid from Jinnah, by his refusal to reach an accommodation with Gandhi during their discussion in November 1939.²

Jinnah was granted recognition as an all-India leader, previously beyond his reach. The honour was built into the August Offer of 1940 which gave the League a veto on constitutional advance and allowed Jinnah the time to develop his organization. His position was further boosted by the Cripps Mission of 1942 which conceded the principle of Pakistan, even though Jinnah rejected the proposals because it only accepted Pakistan by implication. He was taken aback by the degree it went to accommodate the League's demand that the Muslim provinces would not be compelled to join an Indian Union and be allowed the option of forming a separate federation.³ The growth in his stature as a sub-continental leader was the product of the new relationship with the Raj meant to cut the Congress down to size and concurrently boosted his attempt to corral Muslims into the League.

The Congress' differences with Linlithgow played right into Jinnah's hand. The long awaited statement by the Viceroy on the war aims and the political future of India was an implicit rejection of the Congress demands which called their bluff, forcing them to resign or eat humble pie. The resignation by the Congress ministries was a major miscalculation. It left the field open for Jinnah. The withdrawal removed the umbrella of patronage and power under which pro-Congress Muslims and their allies were operating. Despite the setbacks, the Congress dug in its heel and refused to accept Jinnah's claim of being the 'sole spokesman' of the Muslims without a challenge. The All-India Azad Muslim Conference, convened in April 1940 by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Allah Buksh Soomro, Asaf Ali, Mian Iftikharuddin and other Congress leaders, enhanced the credibility of this opposition and provided an alternative all-India platform for the pro-Congress groups. Prominent organizations associated with the Conference were the Jamiat-ul-ulama-i-Hind,

² G. Rizvi, *Linlithgow and India* (London, 1978), pp. 109-114.

³ R.J. Moore, *Churchill, Cripps, and India* (Oxford, 1979), pp. 67, 85.

Ahrar Party, All-India Momin Conference, Ittihad-i-Millat, Khudai Khidmatgars, some Shiah groups, the Kashmir National Conference and the Communist Party. The Conference's prestige was enhanced when Fazlul Huq fell out with Jinnah in 1941 over joining the Defence Council and joined the anti-League rostrum.⁴ However the Quit India Campaign in 1942 proved to be a source of advantage for the Muslim League. With the majority of influential Congressmen locked up for the entire duration of the war, the opposition to League's rhetoric and activities disappeared. Jinnah was able to press home the advantage when Muslim League governments were formed in Bengal, Assam, Sind, and NWFP. The charade that some sort of popular and elected government was operating in India was important for winning over public opinion in the United States for the war. The Congress' position was further eroded by the support that the Pakistan slogan received from the Communist Party.⁵

Jinnah's new strategy did not emerge immediately after the 1937 elections. At this stage he was still prepared to co-operate with the Congress.⁶ Jinnah's main electoral success came from the Muslim-minority provinces and there was an expectation that Muslims in the United Provinces would enter into a coalition with the Congress. Consequently Jinnah's response to the Congress at the all-India level had to wait for developments in the UP. The UP Muslim's loyalties were divided between the Congress, the Muslim League and the National Agricultural Party. But provinces non-Congress Muslim élites became the staunchest supporters of Jinnah, loyal to him right to the end, owing to three factors. It is probable that without their financial and political resources, Jinnah would not have survived his journey through the political wilderness. The first consideration which motivated them was that the Congress took a hard line in the negotiations with the Muslim League insisting that it should merge with the Congress Party. Why did the Congress Party take such a provocative step? The negotiations between Govind Ballav Pant and Choudhry Khaliqzaman were creating strains within the Congress itself. It was opposed by Socialist Congressmen such as Abdul Wali and Nehru was also concerned about antagonising the Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Hind and those who had left the League

⁴ Linlithgow to Amery, 2 March 1942, in Nicholas Mansergh, ed., *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, (London 1970), i, p.293. [Hereafter Linlithgow to Amery, 7 March 1942, *TP*, i, pp. 361-62.]

⁵ Sajjad Zaheer perceived the Muslim nationalism as the right of self determination of a minority nationality and conceded the essence of Pakistan by arguing that an independent India would be a union of autonomous states. *Bombay Chronicle*, 14 Dec. 1942. Ibid, June 1943.

⁶ Jinnah on Elections Results, 2 March 1937, in P.N. Chopra, ed., *Towards Freedom*, (New delhi, 1985), i, p.189.

such as Hafiz Mohammad Ibrahim. He feared that by favouring the Congress' opponents with ministerial positions, it could alienate pro-Congress Muslims.⁷

However the temptation of winding up the United Provinces Muslim League and absorbing it into the Congress was too much for Nehru. The all-India ramification of such an act 'would mean a free field for our work without communal troubles'. With these considerations in mind Nehru, Azad, Pant, Kripalani and Narendra Dev decided to offer strict terms to the United Provinces Muslim League which had to be accepted in toto if in return Khaliqzaman and Nawab Ismail Khan were to be co-opted into the cabinet. Khaliqzaman, hesitated and eventually demanded that the Muslim League members of the assembly should be free to vote on Muslim matters.⁸ The Congress rejected the provision, dropped the idea of forming a coalition with the Muslim League and instead nominated Hafiz Mohammad Ibrahim, backed by Maulana Husain Madani and Rafi Ahmad Kidwai who had the support of the socialist dominated provincial committee. The party thus defused the tension which was building up within the ranks over the issue.

Khaliqzaman's eventual reluctance to merge with the Congress was dictated by the second factor:- the Mass Muslim Contact Campaign and its impact on the internal politics of the Muslim League in the United Provinces. Most non-Congress Muslims feared the successful conclusion of the campaign and were determined to resist it.⁹ The Nawab of Chhatari who led the interim government, tried to win them over, but they rejected his overtures out of loyalty to the League and due to their unwillingness to join a cross-communal alliance. Instead they waited for a lead which could only come from Jinnah as Khaliqzaman was busy negotiating with the Congress.¹⁰ Jinnah publicly stated his opposition to any deal made by Khaliqzaman.¹¹ Obviously, he was very disturbed by the developments in the United Provinces which could have had dealt a lethal blow to the All-India Muslim League.

⁷ Abdul Wali to Nehru, 23 March 1937, *ibid*, pp. 288-289. Nehru to Prasad, 21 July 1937, in V. Choudhary, ed., *Dr Rajendra Prasad*, i, pp. 63-67.

⁸ C. Khaliqzaman, *Pathway to Pakistan* (Lahore, 1961), p.162.

⁹ The mass contact campaign had a degree of success in the urban areas of the United Provinces, Bihar and Punjab. However it eventually foundered on the resistance of the right-wing of the Congress who saw the campaign as a threat to their political dominance. G.B. Pant and J.B. Kriplani created impediments so that Nehru would not have a solid base among the Muslims. Other Congressmen's opposition was based on the awareness that the previous large influx of Muslims at the time of the Khilafat movement resulted in the influencing Congress policy. Mushirul Hasan, 'The Muslim Mass Contact Campaign: An Attempt At Political Mobilization' (Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, Occasional Papers No XIV), pp. 25-26, 34-36.

¹⁰ IOR, Mss. Eur. F 125/113 (Linlithgow Collection), Haig to Linlithgow, 7 May 1937. *Ibid*, Haig to Linlithgow 24 May 1937.

¹¹ *Bombay Chronicle*, 26 April 1937.

Once Jinnah had made clear his opposition to joining the Congress, he enlisted Shaukat Ali's support in the inevitable showdown with Khaliqzaman. Jinnah's supporters estimated that if Khaliqzaman was forced out of the League he would take with him not more than ten assembly members. However in the trial of strength which took place in May 1937, Khaliqzaman was completely defeated and acquiesced to Jinnah's line. The latter's victory was largely due to the considerable alarm over the Congress' Muslim Mass Contact Campaign which many in the League felt was a direct assault on Muslim identity.¹² With Jinnah's authority over the United Provinces Muslim League established and the vacillation in the League ended, he launched a communal counter-attack against the Congress which was spear-headed by the *ulama* and funded by Mohammad Amir Ahmad Khan, the Raja of Mahmudabad.¹³ The Bundelkhand election was the testing ground of the sectarian strategy which was responsible for the Muslim League's victory. Shaukat Ali led a team of *maulanas* such as Jamal Mian and Mufti Inayatullah of Firangi Mahal, Abdul Hamid Badauni and Karam Ali and toured the Jhansi constituency. The tactic of using *maulvis* who raised the slogan 'Islam in Danger' resulted in three more bye-election victories by the end of that year.

The final factor which made Muslim élites of the province rally around Jinnah was the issue of land reforms. The Pant ministry in April 1938 introduced the Tenancy Bill and the landlords led by the Nawab of Chhatari were considering delaying it in the upper chamber. Their main concern was about proposals related to ejection and realization of rents. The Governor, Haig, was urging them to compromise on the reforms fearing that delay would result in peasant radicalization. Pant also wanted to avoid a confrontation, knowing that the left wing of the Congress and the Kisan Sabha would use it to demand the total abolition of the zemindari system.¹⁴

The left's activity constrained the Premier's ability to negotiate with the landholders and allowed the Muslim League to take the initiative. The Congress Parliamentary Sub-Committee composed of Vallabhbhai Patel, Rajendra Prasad and Abul Kalam Azad offered to arbitrate between the United Provinces government and the landlords. On this question the unity of the landholders broke down. The Agra zemindars and some of the older Awadh *talukdars* were willing to accept arbitration on the Tenancy Bill but most of *talukdars* were intransigent. The anti-arbitrationist's resistance was stiffened by the Muslim League which was

¹² IOR, Mss. Eur. F 125/113 (Linlithgow Papers), Haig to Linlithgow, 23 April 1937. Ibid, Haig to Linlithgow, 24 May 1937.

¹³ IOR, Mss. Eur. F 115/2B (Haig Collection), Memo, nd.

¹⁴ IOR, Mss. Eur. F 115/2A (Haig Collection), Haig to Brabourne, 26 Sep. 1938.

implacably hostile to any compromise initiated by the Congress high command.¹⁵ By taking a strong stand against arbitration the League was able to win over the Muslim landlords.

However the League now adopted a restrictive policy on membership. No Muslim League worker was allowed to be a member of a landlord party. The Nawab of Chhatari and Sir Mohammad Yusaf were forced to remain in the National Agricultural Party.¹⁶ Despite the restrictions which were imposed on the Muslim zemindars and *talukdars* many of them, including Chhatari and Yusaf, surreptitiously gave financial support to the League.¹⁷ The zemindars themselves saw the League as another line in the defence of their vested interest and for this reason placed their 'money and influence' at the service of Jinnah.¹⁸

As soon as it became clear to Jinnah that no coalition was going to emerge in the United Provinces he responded to the call made by Iqbal and others to reorganize the League into a popular body. At the Lucknow session of the Muslim League in October 1937, 'full independence' was declared to be the goal of the party, membership was reduced to two *annas*, and an economic, social and educational programme was formulated. All these changes were designed to encourage the Muslim masses into joining the organization.¹⁹ For Jinnah the problem at this stage was clear: how could a party geared to the object of Muslim unity under a central leadership meet the expectations of the Muslim political groups whose orientation was local? The two pronged tactic that he employed was to use sectarian propaganda to heighten communal tensions on the one hand and on the other to come to some agreement with the provincial groups. He co-opted the community based parties and their leaders who had previously resisted being associated with the League. Sayed Abdul Aziz of the United Party of Bihar, Sayed Rauf Shah of the Muslim Parliamentary Party of the Central Provinces, Zafar Ali Shah of the Ittihad-i-Millat of Punjab and Liaquat Ali Khan of the National Agricultural Party of the United Provinces, who had all fought the elections on non-League tickets now joined Jinnah. In the majority Muslim provinces it was the reaction to the Congress' electoral success that allowed the Muslim League to gain a toe-hold, by exploiting their fear of a Congress dominated centre where they lacked a voice. However their strong sense of independence and the League's weak position made them

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ IOR, Mss. Eur. F 125/101 (Linlithgow Collection), Hallett to Brabourne, 26 Aug. 1938.

¹⁷ C. Khaliqzaman, *Pathway to Pakistan* (Lahore, 1961), p.190.

¹⁸ QAA, Shamsul Hasan Collection, United Provinces, vi/24, Nawab Yusaf to Jinnah, 14 Jan. 1946. [Henceforth SHC.]

¹⁹ 25th Session, Lucknow, Oct. 1937, in S.S. Pirzada, ed., *Foundations of Pakistan*, (Karachi, 1970), ii, p.274.

unwilling to join the League. One *ad hoc* solution to this problem was the Sikander-Jinnah pact in Punjab. The pact allowed Jinnah to claim that he had support in the province. In fact the Unionist Party took over the Punjab Provincial League as the price for giving substance to the charade. A similar agreement was reached between Fazlul Huq and the cost to the League here probably was even higher than in Punjab. Here it prevented the Bengal Muslim League from setting up a ministry itself. The arrangement, allowed the provincial parties to maintain their organizational identities in return for accepting the AIML as their representative on the sub-continental level.

Jinnah now made a determined effort to consolidate the League's position and pull the remaining urban Muslim organizations into the ambit of Muslim nationalism. The AIML selected points of tension between the Muslim and non-Muslim communities and turned them into all-India issue. The aim was to widen the gap between the communities and the process was reinforced by the increasing involvement of many Congressmen in sectarian organizations. Consequently the League succeeded in making it difficult for pro-Congress Muslim groups to operate and was effective in winning over the urban élites. The nationalist Muslims, however, retaliated by emphasising the differences among Muslims and became involved in an agitation which was designed to expose the myth of the Muslim monolith. The League was joined by the Anjuman-i-Khaksaran in this struggle and they both tried to play down the differences among Muslims. The arrival of the Khaksars gave the League the opportunity to expand its sphere of influence into mass urban politics but this was a complicated process which had many ups and downs.

Communal tension was on the increase in the United Provinces and Bihar due to the involvement of many Congressmen in the Hindu Sabha and the Arya Samaj. Their actions, such as the closing down of the slaughter house in Benares, resulted in a steady rise in tension, culminating in communal rioting. From 1937 there was a continual deterioration in the relation between the two communities. This led to fierce clashes in Allahabad and Benares, in 1938, and in some of the incidents Congressmen were involved.²⁰ Conflict between tenants and zemindars further aggravated the tension because the Congress agitating for tenants against non-Congress landlords who were mainly Muslims.²¹

For their part the Muslim League contributed to sectarian tension by launching a virulent campaign against the Congress governments. In the case of United Provinces, Haig was confident that if the Muslim

²⁰ In the Dadri riot in Ballia, in 1937, the Hindus were urged on by Baba Raghav Das who was member of the AICC. His behaviour only reinforced the League accusation that the Congress was a Hindu party. Chandan Mitra, 'Political Mobilization and the nationalist Movement in Eastern Uttar Pradesh and Bihar 1937-42' (Oxford Univ. Ph.D. thesis 1983), p.74.

²¹ IOR, L/P&J/8/686 Coll. 117/E1 (Muslim Grievances under Congress Ministries 1939-1942), Haig to Linlithgow, 10 May 1939.

League joined the cabinet the communal issue would die down.²² But the League aggravated tensions by publishing allegations of 'atrocities' and discrimination against Muslims. The Pirpur Report as well as the ones prepared by Shareef and Fazlul Huq attacked the Congress across a wide front. The Mass Contact Campaign, the Wardha scheme of education, the use of Hindi in the administration, the singing of *Bande Matram*- all these came in for criticism as attacks on the Muslim identity. Further there were allegations of discrimination against Muslims in government service as well as other issues. All these charges were vigorously denied by the Congress and Rajendra Prasad suggested to Jinnah that these should be investigated by Sir Maurice Gwyer, Chief Justice of the Federal Court.²³ Jinnah realising how flimsy the accusations were declined the offer of a judicial probe. Linlithgow asked the Governors of Bihar, Central Province and the United Provinces to report on the Muslim grievances against the Congress governments. The general conclusion reached by these investigations was that the Muslim League did not have a case.²⁴

Khaliqzaman admitted later to Hallett, the Governor of United Provinces, the hollowness of the charges. 'I admit that the charges against Hindu Congress Governments are not proved or not wholly proved' but the Muslims perceived that they were threatened.²⁵ It becomes clear that the various reports were for home consumption designed to rally Muslims around the League by playing on their fears. The League-Congress controversy polarized Hindu-Muslim relations making it difficult for Muslim élites to remain outside the League.

However the *Madh-i-Sahabah* dispute was a different type of communal issue. Unlike the other issues where the Muslim League intervened this was an intra-community dispute reactivated by the Ahrar Party and the Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Hind. It was a counterattack by pro-Congress Muslims designed to highlight the divisions among Muslims. The fact that Jinnah, the Nawab of Mahmudabad and other prominent Muslim League leaders were Shiaah made the *Madh-i-Sahabah* a divisive issue which had the potential of dividing the League along sectarian lines. However the Anjuman-i-Khaksaran's entry into the dispute complicated matters and eventually the original issue was forgotten as the conflict between the authorities and the Khaksars became the central concern. Even though the Khaksars backed the League's view of subordinating differences

²² Ibid.

²³ Rajendra Prasad, *India Divided* (Bombay, 1947), p.147.

²⁴ IOR, L/P&J/8/686 Coll. 117/E1 (Muslim Grievances under Congress Ministries 1939-1942), Replies from the Governors of Bihar, Central Province and United Provinces to the Governor-General's enquiries on Muslim grievances.

²⁵ IOR, Mss. Eur. F 125/104 (Linlithgow Papers), Hallett to Linlithgow, 29 Sep. 1941.

among Muslims, there was rivalry between the two. The League had hoped to expand its influence among the urban poor at the expense of the nationalist Muslims but found that Allama Mashriqi was recruiting more effectively and was also poaching members from the Muslim National Guards. Mashriqi competed for influence in the same arena as the League and was more successful because he was prepared to resort to extra-parliamentary action.

In the late 1930s Sunni-Shiah relations sharply deteriorated in UP and there were violent clashes between the two communities in several towns. The commonest cause for friction between the two communities was the recital of *tabarra*, a highly provocative practise of denigrating the first three caliphs of Islam for usurping Ali's right as successor to the prophet and for the murder of Husain at Karbala. The Sunnis had retaliated by reciting *Madh-i-Sahabah*, the praise of the companions of the prophet. The recital was first started in 1906, which triggered off serious riots in 1907-8 in Lucknow. The committee of enquiry, chaired by Justice Piggot, concluded that *Madh-i-Sahabah* was a recent innovation and should not be recited during *Ashura*, *Chehlum*, and the 21st of Ramazan. These recommendations were reluctantly accepted and there was by 1909 no public recital of *Madh-i-Sahabah*.²⁶

However, opposition to the restrictions imposed by the Piggot Committee on the recital of *Madh-i-Sahabah* was smouldering in the background. The issue was originally used by pro-Congress Muslims as a divisive tactic to demolish the Muslim League claim that Muslims were a homogenous group.²⁷ The Congress always argued that Muslims 'cannot unite on the purely religious issues' and that they were divided between Sunnis, Shiahs, Ahmadiyya and other groups which 'continue to ... riot'.²⁸ The Sunnis received direct encouragement from Hafiz Mohammad Ibrahim, a minister in Pant's government. The friction between the two communities resulted in the Tila Mosque riot which prompted the United Provinces government to appoint Justice Allsop to examine the issue. The Allsop Committee upheld the abstract right of Sunnis to recite praises of the first three caliphs in public but saw the practice as a deliberately provocative action against Shiahs which could not be condoned or allowed. The publication of the findings of the committee

²⁶ IOR, L/P&J/7/2587 (Sunni-Shiah Controversy in Lucknow) Haig to Linlithgow, 18 April 1939.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Asaf Ali to Jinnah, in P.N. Chopra, ed., *Towards Freedom*, (New Delhi, 1985), i, p.573.

in 1938 angered Sunnis and when negotiations with the government were exhausted, Madani launched a civil disobedience campaign in March 1939 which resulted in over 2000 arrests.²⁹

Govind Ballav Pant appeared to have been playing a double game which eventually backfired on him. During the Sunni agitation the Congress and the Shiah had patched up their differences. But when the government succumbed to pressure and conceded to the Sunnis the right to recite *Madh-i-Sahabah* on *Barawafat* day, the Shiah became violently hostile. The Congress government's volte-face angered and shocked them and Maulana Nasir Husain, a leading *mujtahid*, led the counter agitation which resulted in 7000 arrests. Those arrested included a large number of women.³⁰ At this juncture the Muslim League and the Anjuman-i-Khaksaran intervened only to further complicate the dispute. Both were motivated by the political need to perpetuate the myth of monolithic Muslim unity.

Allama Mashriqi, in his inimitably bombastic style, issued a number of diktats which were ignored and then personally intervened. When negotiations between the two Muslim communities commenced he took the credit for the suspension of the Shiah agitation despite the fact he was not involved in the negotiations.³¹ At this stage Jawaharlal Nehru and Dr Mahmood tried to win over Mashriqi. However by spring 1939 it became clear that the Khaksar organization was determined to remain independent and the Congress' attitude to them changed. The Majlis-i-Ahrar led the attack calling the Khaksars the 'grave diggers of Islam'. This was accompanied by a flood of anti-Khaksar *fatwas* and leaflets. The campaign was intensified by the importation of Ahrar reinforcements from the Punjab.³² Despite this the Anjuman-i-Khaksaran gained in popularity at the expense of the Ahrar for their intervention in the *Madh-i-Sahabah* affair. Mashriqi returned to Lahore securing the release of a number of Khaksars on the promise that he would not return to Lucknow for a year. The Ahrars taunted him alleging that the release was secured with an unqualified apology. This was too much for his pride to swallow. He returned to the United Provinces and was promptly arrested. His arrest became the focus of a civil disobedience campaign by the Khaksars. A large number of them came

²⁹ IOR, L/P&J/7/2587 (Sunni-Shiah Controversy in Lucknow) Haig to Linlithgow, 18 April 1939. Ibid, Press Communique of the UP Government 30 March 1939.

³⁰ NDC, CID, S 360 (Note on the Khaksars), L.V. Deane, 12 April 1940, p.28. IOR, L/P&J/7/2587 (Sunni-Shiah Controversy in Lucknow), Haig to Linlithgow, 18 April 1939.

³¹ NDC, CID, S 360 (Note on the Khaksars) L.V. Deane, 12 April 1940, pp. 28-29.

³² NAP, Quaid-i-Azam Papers, F101/47-50, Abdul Aziz to Jinnah, 10 Oct. 1939. [Henceforth QAP]

from NWFP and Punjab. Many of whom were ex-soldiers, and they became involved in violent clashes with the police resulting in 1000 arrests and six deaths.³³

At this juncture the Muslim League's attitude to the Anjuman-i-Khaksaran changed and they backed them in their conflict with the United Provinces Government.³⁴ The Muslim press which previously had been hostile, swung behind Mashriqi and accused Pant's ministry of victimising the Khaksar organization. The deaths stirred popular feelings in the Punjab and greatly increased sympathy for the organization. Negotiations behind the scene secured the release of Mashriqi in October that year and he returned to Lahore without solving the Sunni-Shiah dispute but with his prestige greatly enhanced. However the relationship between the League and Anjuman-i-Khaksaran was a complex one based on their common hostility to the Congress. Once the antagonism with the United Provinces Government ended, the friction between the conflicting ambitions of Mashriqi and Jinnah began to emerge.

Allama Mashriqi attempted to sustain his new found popularity in his typically magniloquent style. Mashriqi's *firman* published in the *Al-Islah* stated that he wanted to recruit 25 lakh volunteers by the end of June 1940. What concerned the League was that the Khaksar recruitment drive used deception to enrol Muslim Leaguers by stating 'that the two organisation[s] League and Khaksar are identical'.³⁵ The Khaksar's action created misgivings within the League and the lack of clear policy had a detrimental effect on the latter's work. In United Provinces the number of the National Guards fell from 18,448 by 6,401 and the Khaksar numbers increased in proportion from 6,738 to 13,855.³⁶

Jinnah had been hesitant in taking a hard stand with Allama Mashriqi for two reasons. First the Khaksar's prestige among Muslims was in ascendancy and the League gained credibility as an all-India organization by being associated with him. For this reason the League was willing to sustain the drain of manpower from the National Guards to the Khaksar particularly in the United Provinces. The other consideration was that Jinnah entertained the hope that at some stage in the future the Khaksar organization would be merged into or absorbed by the National Guards. This possibility came close to being realized when

³³ NDC, CID, S 360 (Note on the Khaksars) by L.V. Deane 12 April 1940, pp. 28-29. Shan Muhammad, *Khaksar Movement in India* (Meerut, 1973), p.38.

³⁴ NAP, QAP, F101/50, Abdul Aziz to Jinnah, 10 Oct. 1939. QAA, AIML 248/10, Press Statement of Abdullah Haroon, 27 Sep. 1939.

³⁵ NAP, QAP, F915/7-9, Syed Imtyaz Karim to Jinnah, 30 Dec. 1939.

³⁶ IOR, L/P&J/8/678 Coll. 117-C-81 (Volunteer Movement in India), Secretary to the Governor-General to Secretary of State, 23 Aug. 1940.

the Anjuman-i-Khaksaran was banned and Mashriqi was locked up.³⁷ In the Punjab the Khaksars lost half of their membership³⁸ and the Muslim League not only began to enrol these members but considered absorbing the entire organization. Abdul Baqi and Bahadur Yar Jung represented the pro-League faction in the Khaksar and were interested in working in close co-operation with Jinnah.³⁹

Both organizations were moving closer to each other and Jinnah was anxious that amalgamation should take place. Allama Mashriqi was offered a place on the Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League and prominent Khaksars would be associated with the executive of the Provincial Leagues. But the sticking point in the negotiations was Mashriqi's insistence that a settlement between the Congress and the Muslim League was a condition for co-operation. When Sir Stafford Cripps visited India this difference reached new proportions as Mashriqi urged Jinnah for a united Indian demand to be put to the British. However Jinnah totally rejected out of hand the Congress proposal for a national government and was adamant in his demand for Pakistan. By now even Mashriqi had become an ardent advocate for Pakistan but he argued that it could only be achieved if India was independent. Consequently Mashriqi's continued attempts to reach an accord between the Congress and the League only widened the gap between him and Jinnah.⁴⁰

At the same time Mashriqi's popularity suffered a sharp drop when a Khaksar, Rafi Shabbir attempted to assassinate Jinnah in July 1943. The Anjuman-i-Khaksar incurred considerable opprobrium from the incident which shifted Muslim opinion away from them creating dissension in their ranks. Some wanted to disband the organization while other rank and file members became critical of Mashriqi's leadership, left the organization and joined the League. Jinnah now clearly distanced himself from Mashriqi and stressed that Muslims could not owe allegiance to two organizations. By mid-1944 the Khaksar's total membership had fallen to 20,000 from 23,000 a year earlier. Even more significantly leaders such as Dr Nami and Ghulam Mustafa Bhurgiri resigned from the organization.⁴¹ The Muslim League consolidated its position at the expense

³⁷ Mashriqi republished two pamphlets, *Aksariyat ya Khun* and *Bayt-ul-Maal* in which he argued for the violent overthrow of the Raj. Sikander Hayat's banning of the Khaksars led to Mashriqi initiating a civil disobedience campaign which culminated in a bloody confrontation with the police near Unchi Mosque in Lahore. The organization was proscribed in the Punjab, Mashriqi was arrested and Dr Mohammad Ismail Nami took over.

³⁸ NDC, CID, S 360 (Note on the Khaksars) by L.V. Deane, 12 April 1940, pp. 1-9.

³⁹ QAA, SHC, UP iv/25, Nawab of Mahmudabad to Jinnah, 7 Dec. 1940.

⁴⁰ Shan Muhammad, *Khaksar Movement in India*, pp. 128-132.

⁴¹ IOR, L/P&J/8/680 117-C-82, (Khaksar Movement), Extract from Addendum to the Note on Khaksar Movement, 1943-5.

of the Khaksar organization, established itself as a major influence among the urban masses and became the exclusive champion of Muslim identity.

With the increase in Jinnah's prestige, popularity and influence coinciding with the crumbling of the Muslim opposition, he attempted to discipline and contain the various groups which had collected around the League. On paper Jinnah instigated the increasing concentration of power in the central organs of the League, particularly the Working Committee and its peripatetic ambassador the Committee of Action. Originally the 1938 constitution of the AIML was federal in character, with the Working Committee's powers limited and dependent on AIML Council for its authority. The 465 members were elected by the provincial Leagues and in order to win support of the Punjab and Bengal Jinnah had to increase their representation. However the right to co-opt representatives to the Working Committee was reserved for the President of the League, Jinnah, which allowed him to pack it with loyalists from the Muslim-minority provinces, particularly the United Provinces.⁴² However the rapid rise in Jinnah's prestige, due to the August Offer, the Cripps Mission and the increasing popularity of the Pakistan slogan allowed him to amend the constitution. By the mid-1940s the Working Committee became the principal executive body of the League by assuming new powers which allowed it to 'control, direct and regulate all activities' and to 'suspend, dissolve or disaffiliate any Provincial League' or to take disciplinary action against any member.⁴³ It became the instrument of domination which was used to discipline independent minded provincial leaders such as Sikander Hayat and to expel Fazlul Huq and G.M. Sayed. Jinnah kept a firm grip over the Working Committee nominating only those men who were personally loyal to him. He rebuffed attempts by Shaheed Suhrawardy to increase the Bengali representation in the Working Committee and nominated Ispahani and Khwaja Nazimuddin, his supporters, who were hardly typical members of the Bengal Muslim League.

However the success Jinnah had in establishing a centralized command structure which controlled the provincial Leagues was limited. The central office at first simply issued organizational, political and financial directives to the provincial organizations and urged them to comply but to little effect. However by April 1942 the League formed the Committee for Defence consisting of Nawab Mohammad Ismail Khan, Khwaja Nazimuddin, Choudhry Khaliquzzaman and Qazi Mohammad Isa, who toured the provinces ostensibly to rally and organize Muslims for civil defence but simultaneously used the tours to organize the provincial League and encourage the dissemination of propaganda in the districts. Great emphasis was placed on

⁴² A. Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman*, pp. 40-41.

⁴³ QAA, AIML 111, *Amendments Proposed In the Constitution and the Rule of the All India Muslim League*, nd.

recruiting the Muslim youth into the National Guards which were supposed to train well disciplined and highly motivated cadre for the social and economic welfare programmes.⁴⁴ By December 1943 the Committee of Defence was superseded by the Committee of Action which continued famine and civil defence work, carried out by its predecessor, and reintensified the propaganda battle by establishing the Committee of Authors, the Constructive Programme, the Economic Committee, the Education Committee, Muslim trade unions and the Women's sub-committee. These were formed in order to bring together the greatest possible number of Muslims under the Pakistan banner.⁴⁵

The reports of the Committee of Defence and the Committee of Action made sorry reading and showed how uneven, at best, the centralising process was. Not only was the authority of the central leadership over provincial affairs weak but the influence of the provincial headquarters over the affairs of the district and primary Leagues were also tenuous. In the case of the Punjab Muslim League, up to June 1944, before the expulsion of Khizr Hayat, the district Leagues and the National Guards existed only on paper, there was no methodical record of primary membership which was estimated to be about 150,000 and no proper accounts. The Punjab Muslim Students Federation was in an equally disorganized state.⁴⁶ The position in the NWFP Provincial League was even worse. The Committee of Action in April 1945 dissolved the Frontier League and a year later an Organizing Committee was formed with the responsibility for reorganization and the enrolment of primary and district Leagues.⁴⁷

In Sind the situation was marginally better. A rudimentary organization with nearly five hundred and fifty branches had spread to the district and local level and the membership was claimed to have increased to 177,000 by 1944.⁴⁸ However a confidential report pointed out that the rapid increase in membership was due to competition between some of the groups in the Sind League and that many of the

⁴⁴ QAA, SHC Organizational Matters, i/48(1-5), AIML to all Provincial Muslim Leagues, 4 Nov. 1941. QAA, AIML 319/6, Liaquat to the President of the United Provinces Provincial Muslim League, 13 April 1942. AIML 319/17, Appeal issued by Nawab Ismail Khan to the Muslim Youth.

⁴⁵ QAA, AIML 192/4-7, Proceedings of the First Committee of Action, 2-3 Feb. 1944. AIML 192/12-27, Proceedings of the Second Committee of Action, 25-28 March 1944.

⁴⁶ QAA, AIML 201/8, Inspection Report 10, On the General Administration of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League and its Central office, 26 Feb. 1945. QAA, SHC Punjab 1/6, Mumtaz Daultana to Committee of Action, 28 July 1944.

⁴⁷ QAA, AIML 193/4, Resolution passed by the Committee of Action, 13-15 April 1945. AIML 193/13, Committee of Action, 11-18 April 1946.

⁴⁸ QAA, AIML 200/37-47, Annual Report of the Sind Provincial Muslim League for the year 1943-44 by G.M. Sayed President Sind Provincial Muslim League.

so called primary branches were later found to be phoney.⁴⁹ The organizational arrangements in Bengal was equally inadequate, despite the great progress made by the Bengal Provincial Muslim League in recruiting primary members. Abul Hashim, the General Secretary, estimated that membership was about 550,000 in 1944 but there was no real attempt to form the National Guards or implement a Constructive Programme and famine relief.⁵⁰

Only in the Muslim-minority provinces was the effort to establish the authority of an all-India party and leadership successful. The United Provinces Muslim League was an outstanding example of Muslim political unity under the League. Only five of the districts and five towns had no League presence and the total membership was more than 270,000. The provincial League supervised and kept in constant touch with local branches. Its office was well organized and proper accounts were maintained. AIML directives concerning the National Guards, the popularizing of the *Dawn* and *Maushoor* were followed only the Constructive Programme inspired little activity.⁵¹

But the United Provinces Muslim League's most important contribution was its conquest of the citadel of learning, Aligarh. While Deoband, Nadwat-ul Ulama and Firangi Mahal were divided over the question of Pakistan, Aligarh University became the mouthpiece which rallied Muslim intellectuals throughout north India. The League used old boys, such as Liaquat Ali Khan, Choudhry Khaliquzzaman and the Nawab of Chhatari to win over their Alma Mater. The Muslim Students Federation in conjunction with the League was involved in intensive publicity campaign, set up fourteen libraries in different hostels, published extensive pro-Pakistan material, mainly by Mohammad Noman and Jamiluddin Ahmad and gained the support of the influential *Aligarh Magazine*. The transformation of Aligarh into a League stronghold was facilitated by the administration and staff such as the Vice-Chancellor, Ziauddin Ahmad, his deputy, A.B.A. Haleem, the treasurer Obaidur Rahman Khan Sherwani and senior lecturers such Jamiluddin Ahmad, M.B. Mirza and Mohammad Afzal Husain Qadri who had become committed supporters of Jinnah. They also provided the intellectual muscle to man the Education Committee and Writers Committee of the League. Aligarh's support

⁴⁹ QAA, AIML 200/49, Quarterly report of the Progress of the Muslim League in Sind, n.d.

⁵⁰ QAA, AIML 201/13, Remarks and instructions on the BPML, by Syed Zakir Ali, 29 March 1945.

⁵¹ QAA, AIML 200/24, Inspection report No 3 on the working of the UPML by Syed Zakir Ali, 24 July 1944.

for the Pakistan movement was crucial for winning over the Muslim intelligentsia throughout India and putting them in the forefront of the movement.⁵²

We still need to explain a paradox. If the supporters of the Muslim League in the greater part of the territory were so disorganized then how did the party transform itself into a powerful political force with popular roots after the war? The key to understanding how the metamorphosis occurred is ideology. Muslim India from the 1930s onward was in a state of intellectual ferment. The Government of India Act was considered by an increasing number of people to be inadequate in safeguarding Muslim interest and this perception gained greater credence after the Congress victories in the 1937 elections. There were several schemes, claiming to resolve the problem which influenced Muslims. They varied a great deal in their characteristic strengths and weaknesses. Some were discarded by the Muslim League after examination and others rejected out of hand. The remaining options were never spelled out but instead disguised under a lot of rhetoric.

The emergence of the Pakistan idea was far more complex than has often been suggested. The influence of two men was responsible for initiating the process which eventually culminated in the Lahore Resolution. Iqbal's famous presidential address in 1930 to the annual session of the All-India Muslim League calling for the establishment of a separate Muslim state carved out of the provinces of north-western India initiated the process. It was complemented by the activities of Choudhary Rahmat Ali who in 1933 invented the acronym Pakistan which stood for the four north-western province of India. He argued that South Asia was a multinational entity and Muslims needed to assert their social, cultural, economic and political independence by organizing themselves into a separate federation. He differed from Iqbal by treating the north-western block as a federation and not a single unit.⁵³

During 1937-1939 Choudhary Rahmat Ali's influence was responsible for the establishment of various associations and societies, such as the Majlis-i-Kabir-i-Pakistan and the Anjuman-i-Khalida. The Anjuman-i-Khalida had among its sympathizers the Nawab of Mamdot, Abdullah Haroon and Sardar Aurangzeb Khan. The Punjab Muslim Students Federation had adopted the Pakistan idea and tried to get

⁵² Mushirul Hasan, 'Nationalist and Separatist Trends in Aligarh, 1920-1946', in A.K. Gupta ed., *Myth and reality: The Struggle for Freedom in India, 1945-1947* (New Delhi, 1987), pp. 18-37.

⁵³ Originally Choudhary Rahmat Ali considered only north-western India but by 1944 he had projected ten Muslim nations: Pakistan out of the north-western provinces, Bangistan through the merger of Bengal and Assam and Osmanistan from the Deccan States; to this were added seven more Muslim countries, Siddiqistan in central India, Faruqistan in Bihar and Orissa, Haidaristan in Hindustan, Munistan in Rajastan, Maplistan in southern India, Saifistan in western Ceylon and Nasaristan in eastern Ceylon. These ten nations would then form the Pak Commonwealth of Nations. Chaudhary Rahmat Ali, *Pakistan: The Fatherland of the Pak Nation*. (Cambridge, 1947) pp. 301-302.

the Muslim League and Jinnah to accept the scheme.⁵⁴ Rahmat's ideas also provoked intellectual responses which resulted in the formulation of alternative strategies, such as Latif's zonal scenario or Sikander's federation model. Both these schemes claimed to overcome the shortcomings of the Pakistan idea.

Within the ranks of the Pakistan National Movement some members such as Mian Kifayat Ali and Dr Afzal Husain Qadri were later to produce alternative schemes to Pakistan which were quite influential within League circles.⁵⁵ The Aligarh Scheme proposed by Professor Sayed Zarul Hasan and Dr Muhammad Afzal Husain Qadri suggested the division of British India into three wholly independent states, - north-west India, Bengal and Hindustan, with Muslim urban enclaves where they were in a majority; Hyderabad was to be recognized as an independent state on the same lines as Nepal. The authors intention was to protect the interest of the Muslims of the minority provinces who were neglected in Iqbal's as well as Rahmat's original schemes.

However, the separatist implications which were emerging were countered by two federalist solutions proposed by Dr Sayed Abdul Latif and Sikander Hayat Khan. Latif's answer which was favoured by Abdullah Haroon, was the concept of cultural zones. India was divided up into four Muslim (a north-west, north-east, Delhi-Lucknow and Deccan blocks) and eleven Hindu areas and the religious homogeneity of the zones would be consolidated by the transfer of population. These culturally autonomous units would then form a federation where the centre would have limited powers and in this way would avoid the separatist consequences of Rahmat's scheme.⁵⁶

Another federal proposal came from Sikander Hayat in May 1939 and he wanted to reduce the authority of the centre to the minimum. Based on this premise he produced a seven unit federation scheme and he deliberately included non-Muslim areas to the north-western block so that it would not be associated with the separatist scheme, Pakistan, which he was strongly against. The centre was weakened in favour of the provinces and left to deal with only foreign affairs, military matters, communications and customs.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ K.K. Aziz, *Rahmat Ali- A Biography* (Lahore, 1987), pp. 199-201.

⁵⁵ K.K. Aziz, *A History of the Idea of Pakistan* (Lahore, 1987), pp. 600, 536.

⁵⁶ Sayed Abdul Latif, *The Cultural Future of India* (Bombay, 1938), pp. 1, 12-17. Sayed Abdul Latif, *A Federation of Cultural Zones for India* (Hyderabad, 1938), pp. 2, 6.

⁵⁷ The seven units were: Madras presidency and the southern Indian States; Bombay, Central Provinces and Hyderabad; Bengal; Bihar, Orissa, and the eastern states; the United Provinces and the princely states within its borders; a central unit consisting of Rajputana and central Indian states; a north-western unit composed of Sind, Sarhad, Punjab, Kashmir and the Punjab states. IOR, L/P&J/8/689, Coll. 117-7-4A (Alternatives to the 1935 Act), Sikander to Laithwaite, 29 June 1939. Ibid, Extract from a report from CIO Lahore, 21 March 1939. IOR, Mss. Eur. F125/86 (Linlithgow Collection), Craik to Linlithgow, 5 June 1938.

In reaction to the federal proposals a confederal perspective was elucidated in the *Confederacy of India* by A. Punjabi, a pseudonym used by Mian Kifayat Ali. He condemned the Latif and Aligarh plans for suggesting migration of population and partition which to him was an unacceptable price to pay. He castigated Sikander's regional federation on the ground that the Punjab Muslims would not have an overwhelming majority *vis-à-vis* the non-Muslim population in the north-western unit. Kifayat Ali's alternative was an Indian confederacy composed of five federations and he hoped in this way to avoid reshaping of the provincial boundaries and partition. He also went out of his way to allay the fears of the other constituent elements of the north-western block and assure them that they would not be dominated by Punjab.⁵⁸ The scheme was financed by Abdullah Haroon and the Sir Mohammad Shah Nawaz Khan, the Nawab of Mamdot and was published with Jinnah's approval. But the name Pakistan was dropped from the title at his insistence.⁵⁹

The All-India Muslim League formed the Foreign Committee in 1938 which was directed to examine the various schemes. It was made clear that no particular scheme was favoured and that the whole question was being examined with a view to producing a plan which would optimize Muslim interests. However the committee could not arrive at any conclusion despite being convened several times. Finally by December 1940 the Foreign Committee produced a plan, based on the principles outlined by the Lahore Resolution. It recommended the formation of two sovereign Muslim states: one in the north-west consisting of Sind, Baluchistan, NWFP, Punjab and Delhi and the other in the north-east comprising of Bengal and Assam excluding the districts Bankura and Midnapore but including the Bihar district of Purnea.⁶⁰ The report was sent by the Committee to the AIML where it lay gathering dust and when Haroon leaked the report, it was immediately repudiated by Jinnah.⁶¹ He, later, also disavowed claims that Latif's plan was being considered by the Foreign Committee, stating only that all the various options were being appraised.⁶²

⁵⁸ The confederacy consisted of five federations: Industan Federation, Hindustan Federation, Rajastan Federation, the Deccan States' Federation and the Bengal Federation. 'A Punjabi', *A Confederacy of India* (Lahore, 1939), pp. 6-17, 195-200.

⁵⁹ K.K. Aziz, *A History of the Idea of Pakistan*, pp. 533-536.

⁶⁰ NAP, QAP, F274/141, Abdullah Haroon, Chairman Foreign Committee AIML to Jinnah, 23 Dec. 1940.

⁶¹ K.K. Aziz, *op. cit.*, p.651.

⁶² NAP, QAP, F370/65, Jinnah to Latif, 15 March 1941.

Jinnah had clearly rejected the various schemes for federation⁶³ but why did he initially disavow the Haroon report? First it satisfied the regional demands of the Muslim-majority provinces but the Muslim-minority provinces fell outside these independent states, leaving the interests of his staunchest supporters undefended. Secondly its separatist angle showed Rahmat's influence, either directly or via the Aligarh scheme which Jinnah was unwilling to admit. In the Punjab the Lahore Resolution was perceived as Pakistan but Jinnah bitterly resisted acknowledging the term up to 1941, partly due to his antipathy to Rahmat⁶⁴ and partly to pressure from Sikander who was hostile to the Pakistan slogan.⁶⁵ But Jinnah reluctantly gave way when he realized how it had fired the imagination of Muslims in the Punjab. Perhaps the confederal option suggested by Mian Khilafat Ali was the only viable alternative which could accommodate all the different shades of opinion and Jinnah's readiness to accept the Cabinet Mission Plan appears to confirm this. But for purposes of negotiation he tacitly revived the essence of Haroon's report. From 1941 right down to 1946 Jinnah's and the Muslim League's understanding of the Lahore Resolution was that it called for the establishment of two separate and sovereign Muslim states.

Jinnah's vagueness was reinforced by the different interpretations which became popular in Bengal. Most of them emerged in reaction to the Lahore Resolution. Fazlul Huq was thinking in terms of an independent state and others such as Khwaja Nazimuddin were opposed to any kind of centre. Another view was represented by the East Pakistan Renaissance Society, which rejected Muslim nationalism and was the original proponent of Muslim Bengali ethnicity. It was founded by a group of intellectuals led by Mujibur Rahman Khan and included in its membership associates of the Bengal Muslim League such as Abul Mansur Ahmed, Abul Kalam Shamsuddin and Khairul Anam Khan.⁶⁶ However with the Jinnah-Gandhi talks, in 1944, the protagonist of Purba Pakistan shifted their focus on to defining its boundaries. In the Bengal Muslim League there were two alternative objectives,- Greater Bengal and divided Bengal. Raghbir Ahsan's scheme, Confederacy of East Pakistan and Adibistan, envisaged bringing Bangsman (Bengal and Assam) and the tribal

⁶³ Sikander's plan was disavowed by the separatist implication of the Lahore Resolution.

⁶⁴ Jinnah had labelled him an 'irresponsible person' and his plan as crazy. In turn Rahmat ridiculed Jinnah as the 'Boozna of Bombay' and pilloried the AIML as a crowd of careerists and opportunists. The dispute continued for six years and ended with the Lahore Resolution of 1940. But relations remained cool and the Muslim League refused to acknowledge the fact that they had adopted many of Rahmat's ideas and attributed the honour for inventing the Pakistan scheme to Jamaluddin Afghani and Iqbal. Khan A. Ahmad, *The Founder of Pakistan: Through Trial to Triumph* (1942), pp.19-20. Finally when Rahmat Ali visited Pakistan in 1947 he was threatened by Liaquat Ali, the Prime Minister, that if he did not leave, he would be declared *persona non grata*. K.K. Aziz, *Rahmat Ali*, pp. 303-304.

⁶⁵ There was a rupture between Sikander and Jinnah over the phrase Pakistan. He wanted Jinnah to drop it but was the only one against the term on the Working Committee. The differences led Sikander to consider the political implications if he resigned from the party; calculating that an open split would cost him only six or seven urban seats. IOR, L/P&J/8/690 Coll. 117-E-4-B (Pakistan), Craik to Linlithgow, 4 March 1941.

⁶⁶ Abul Mansur Ahmed, *Fifty Years of Politics as I saw it* (Dacca 1975), pp. 242-243.

areas of Bihar,- Chota Nagpore, Santal Parganas, Surguja and adjoining districts, into a confederation.⁶⁷ Shaheed Suhrawardy, Abul Hashim, Hamidul Huq Choudhry and the 'young party' were for Greater Bengal and were content with a 51 per cent majority provided they got the mineral wealth of Burdwan and Singbhum. It was claimed that this would ease the Hindu opposition as they were demanding the unification of the Bhooms with Bengal.⁶⁸ An alternative scheme was supported by Nazimuddin and Akram Khan which visualized a streamlined Purba Pakistan (all of Assam, Bengal less Burdwan division and a part of Purnea district in Bihar) which would leave Muslims with a 58 per cent majority.⁶⁹

Consequently it becomes understandable that Jinnah in order to maintain apparent harmony between the conflicting perceptions of the Lahore Resolution preferred not to define it. The ambiguity allowed the coexistence of both the Punjabi and the Bengali interpretations which were popular rallying calls in their respective province. This probably explains Jinnah's continuous demand that Pakistan had first to be conceded in principle before the scheme had precise connotation. The League's dominance over Muslim politics was greatly facilitated by the increasing popularity of the Pakistan demand. The nebulous Pakistan slogan electrified the urban Muslims who in response generated a substantial volume of pro-Pakistan literature and propaganda which further strengthened the League's ideological grip. In fact it is difficult to imagine Jinnah achieving such dominance without the ideological hegemony which was established by the Pakistan slogan. It gave a sense of common purpose and direction to the protagonists of Muslim nationalism, encapsulating their conflicting interests and demands within a nebulous symbol.

Simultaneously it became the ideological cutting edge which was responsible for the disarray and confusion among nationalist Muslims. The siren call of the Pakistan slogan drew the pro-Congress Muslims closer to the League until, there was very little to differentiate the two. The former now wavered in their opposition to the Lahore Resolution and qualified their support for the Congress by demanding protection from Hindu domination. The Punjab Majlis-i-Ahrar in March 1943 declared that they rejected the division of India and that their conception of Pakistan was 'a form of Government based on the law of the *Shariat*'. The All-India Muslim Majlis took the position that India should be reconstituted into a federation composed

⁶⁷ NAP, QAP, F204/324-329, *Confederacy of East Pakistan and Adibistan*, 1944.

⁶⁸ NAP, QAP, F204/320, Raghieb Ahsan to Jinnah, 14 Aug. 1944.

⁶⁹ IOR, L/P&J/5/151, Casey to Wavell cited in H. Rashid, *The Foreshadowing of Bangladesh* (Dhaka, 1987), p.183.

of units which would have the right of secession.⁷⁰ Madani who had so vociferously argued against the two nation theory as divisive and playing into the hands of British Imperialism was by 1942 modifying his position by proposing an alternative to the strong unitary structure favoured by the Congress. He favoured the establishment of a religious department to protect the religious, economic, cultural and social interests of Muslims. It would run purely along religious lines, empowered to legislate in order to reform the community and free from Federal Government interference.⁷¹ Such shifts in position created the perception that there was not much difference between the Muslim federalism of the nationalists and the Pakistan demand of the League.

As Jinnah's all-India status grew he increasingly turned his attention to the Muslim-majority provinces where he had established tenuous links with the regional parties. The convergence of Muslim nationalism and community consciousness placed an array of significant political assets at Jinnah's disposal. The economically powerful élites of the United Provinces, the influential intelligentsia and the extra-parliamentary clout of the urban poor which were all unified behind the Pakistan slogan were arrayed increasingly against the regional parties. However as the multiplicity of identity present in each province meant varying degrees of success for the Muslim League. Generally speaking, regionalism was deeply embedded in the constitutional framework and continued to flourish despite the increasing pressure which was brought to bear against it by Muslim community consciousness emerging as an overarching nationalism.

The matrix of Muslim Bengali politics was divided by two currents,- the Krishak Proja Party informed by Bengali ethnicity and the Muslim League, the flagship of community consciousness. Neither element emerged from the 1937 elections with a clear lead and an alliance was necessary to form a government. Fazlul Huq turned to the Bengal Congress Party for support but when the AICC hesitated, he accepted the League's offer of a coalition. Evidently the arrangement was a marriage of convenience. Jinnah needed, urgently, to demonstrate that the AIML was more than a party of the Muslim-minority provinces and Bengal's support was a feather in his cap. For Huq the compact allowed him to become premier and gave Bengal a voice at the centre where the Congress was dominant.

Huq had to pay a high price for the coalition with the *proja's* traditional enemies, the zemindars, and the long term consequence was the rise of the Muslim League at the expense of the Krishak Proja Party. The *quid pro quo* the Muslim League demanded was moderation of the Proja Party's election manifesto. The

⁷⁰ Presidential Address by Nawabzada Mahmood Ali, to the Punjab Majlis-i-Ahrar Conference, 31 March 1943, in A.M. Zaidi ed., *Evolution of Muslim Political Thought in India*. (Delhi, 1979), vi, p.582.

⁷¹ Presidential Address by Maulana Madani, to the Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Hind, 20 March, 1940. *ibid*, p.598.

abolition of the zemindari system was replaced by a pledge to hold a committee of inquiry and the promise of free primary education was made ambiguous. The election promise to release political prisoners was so circumscribed in effect as to make it ineffective. Furthermore the League, represented by Nawab Habibullah, Nawab Musahriff Husain, Khwaja Nazimuddin and Shaheed Suhrawardy, took four of the six Muslims seats in the cabinet and the Governor, Sir John Anderson, blocked the nomination of Shamsuddin Ahmad, leaving only Huq and Sayed Nausher Ali to represent the Proja Party.

The preponderance of the *ashraf* élite and the shelving of Huq's election promise of *dal-bhat* was to cause a split between the parliamentary wing of the Krishak Proja Party, headed by Huq and the organization led by Shamsuddin Ahmad and Nausher Ali. The Shamsuddin group held an annual conference in Rangpur District which passed a motion of no-confidence in the Chief Minister. Huq retaliated by convening the assembly party, expelling seventeen members and installing Abul Quasem as secretary. With Nausher Ali's departure the only Proja member left in the cabinet was Huq.⁷² He was encircled by the Khwaja group and became dependant on them for a majority in the house. However the Premier was able to improve his position by negotiating the return of Shamsuddin Ahmad and Tamizuddin Khan. But Shamsuddin did not remain in the cabinet for long resigning when he was unable to keep his promise to his followers- to reduce the ministers salaries, abolish nominations to all local bodies and introduce free primary education. He teamed up with the Congress and was responsible for the agrarian unrest, particularly in Chittagong and Burdwan. The 'general intensification of 'left-wing' agrarian movements' caused great trepidation among the Muslim assembly members and ministers, who feared that the radicalization of the *proja* would undermine their support.⁷³ Huq and the Muslim League denounced Shamsuddin and whipped up communal passions to counter the radicalization of the Muslim cultivators.⁷⁴

Concurrent with the decline of the Krishak Proja Party the Muslim League consolidated its position. The existing Muslim League, a 'dead organisation', was disaffiliated in August 1937 and at the Lucknow Session of the AIML, Jinnah appointed an Organizing Committee, chaired by Akram Khan to reorganize the Bengal Provincial Muslim League and to establish a parliamentary party.⁷⁵ There was great enthusiasm

⁷² H. Rashid, *The Foreshadowing of Bangladesh*, pp. 88-96.

⁷³ IOR, Mss. Eur. F 125/39 (Linlithgow Collection), Brabourne to Linlithgow, 17 Feb. 1939. Ibid, Reid to Linlithgow, 5 May 1939.

⁷⁴ Ibid, Reid to Linlithgow, 22 May 1939.

⁷⁵ NAP, QAP, F305/30, Hassan Ispahani to Jinnah, 19 Jan. 1939.

demonstrated at the AIML session in Calcutta in anticipation of its growth. The Proja Party was seen as the only weapon the League could use against the Mass Muslim Contact Campaign of the Congress and the League's strength grew at the cost of the latter in all the districts.⁷⁶ However the reorganization of the League was delayed by the rivalry between Akram Khan and Suhrawardy and Jinnah had to sort out their differences at the Patna Session of the AIML. Most of the organizational work was done by Suhrawardy and by August 1939, fourteen district branches had been established. But the League was still a paper organization with hardly four thousand members and little support among the peasantry.⁷⁷ The limited support for the Bengal League prevented Jinnah from forcing Fazlul Huq to surrender the presidentship of the Krishak Proja Party.⁷⁸ Jinnah's unwillingness 'to disturb the hornets nest' and tolerate the status quo was a clear sign of weakness. However the kudos for the various watered down legislations such as the Bengal Tenancy (Amendment) Act, the Agricultural Debtors' Act and the Moneylenders' Act went to the League. The Tenancy Act which made many *abwabs* of the landlords illegal and reduced the rate of interest on rent arrears by nearly half, proved to be popular with the cultivators.

Fazlul Huq tried to break his dependence on Jinnah and exploited the wavering in the party. Nazimuddin and Suhrawardy considered Jinnah's intractability harmful to the Muslim cause and wanted that he should state clearly his demands. Herbert had the distinct impression that Huq was ready to break with Jinnah in order to secure greater independence and saw supporting the war as an opportunity to legitimize his action. Many in the cabinet such as Nazimuddin sympathized with his actions and were disappointed that the AIML failed to give unconditional support for the War Committees and the Civic Guards.⁷⁹ Jinnah was only willing to throw his full weight behind the war effort if he was given assurances on the Pakistan demand, otherwise he would adopt a neutral position. Fazlul Huq and Sikander Hayat flouted Jinnah's ban, joined the National Defence Council and the Premier of Bengal was aspiring to lead a national all-party government pledged to the war effort.⁸⁰ Jinnah was warned of the danger of a party split on the issue⁸¹ and

⁷⁶ IOR, Mss. Eur. F 125/37 (Linlithgow Collection), Brabourne to Linlithgow, 5 May 1938.

⁷⁷ The figure was calculated on the basis that BPML submitted fifty rupees to the AIML as ten per cent of its membership fees, of two annas per member. QAA, AIML 39/12, Fazlul Huq to the secretary of the AIML, 9 Aug. 1939.

⁷⁸ NAP, QAP, F305/35, Hassan Ispahani to Jinnah, 11 April 1939.

⁷⁹ IOR, Mss. Eur. F 125/40 (Linlithgow Collection), Herbert to Linlithgow, 22 June 1940.

⁸⁰ Ibid, Herbert to Linlithgow, 10 July 1940.

advised not to fight Huq but to keep him in the AIML Working Committee so that he could not oppose Pakistan.⁸² However when Sikander resigned from the National Defence Council, Huq's position became untenable and he resigned from the Council, the Working Committee and the League.

Huq, in December 1941, formed the Progressive Coalition Party and started negotiating with Sarat Bose. Originally the Governor wanted Nazimuddin to form a cabinet⁸³ but the plan had to be dropped due to the defection of the Nawab of Dacca and to the Congress' hostility. Subsequently Fazlul Huq was commissioned to form a government and almost immediately was handicapped by the arrest of Sarat Bose under the Defence of India Rules. The new ministry, despite nominating Shamsuddin Ahmad was unable to recover the lost prestige of the Proja Party which was now only a parliamentary grouping. It was dependant on Huq's personal popularity which was rapidly declining. His inclusion of Shyama Prasad Mookerjee, of the Hindu Mahasabha, laid him open to attacks from the League. His vulnerability was exposed by the Dacca riots of 1941 which also increased communal tension in Khulna, Bakarganj and Chittagong. Huq was denounced as a traitor to Islam and this along with the increase in popularity of the Pakistan slogan began to swing Muslim support away from him.⁸⁴ It is ironical that the Pakistan Resolution, proposed by Huq, played an important part in his downfall. Huq was so shaken by the rising strength of the League that in 1942 he was prepared to retire from Bengal politics if a dignified way out, such as a seat on the Executive Council was offered. Instead his fall from power was rather undignified and the Governor, concerned that the cabinet was not giving its full support to the war effort, practically forced him to resign from office.⁸⁵

Nazimuddin with the support of the European block in the assembly formed a new ministry. Ispahani wanted Jinnah to assist in the selection of the ministers but realising he had little clout in enforcing any decision, the latter tactfully declined saying that provincial matters had to be decided by the parties concerned.⁸⁶ However the League ministry, rather than becoming a credit to Jinnah, was a major

⁸² NAP, QAP, F392/45-48, Nazimuddin to Jinnah, 10 June 1941.

⁸³ NAP, QAP, F364/25-27, Khaliqzaman to Jinnah, 24 June 1941.

⁸⁴ IOR, Mss. Eur. F 125/41 (Linlithgow Collection), Herbert to Linlithgow, 5 Dec.1942.

⁸⁵ IOR, Mss. Eur. F 125/42 (Linlithgow Collection), Secretary of the Governor of Bengal to the Secretary to the of the Viceroy, 4 Aug. 1942.

⁸⁶ Ibid, Herbert to Linlithgow, 23 April 1942. Mss. Eur. F 125/43 (Linlithgow Collection) Secretary of the Governor of Bengal to the Secretary of the Viceroy, 29 March, 1943.

⁸⁷ Jinnah to Hassan Ispahani, 15 April 1943, in Z.H. Zaidi, ed., *M.A. Jinnah: Ispahani Correspondence, 1936-48*, (Karachi, 1976), p.357.

embarrassment to AIML high command due to its inability to deal adequately with the Bengal Famine which resulted in at least two million deaths.⁸⁷

Nazimuddin's difficulties were exacerbated by the rivalry between the parliamentary wing and the organization. Suhrawardy's rivalry with the Khwaja group began when he was appointed secretary of the provincial League. He was keen on expanding and organizing the party but was met with lack of enthusiasm from the Dacca Nawab family. Being the premier Muslim zemindar they wove a complex web of deference and patronage in Muslim Bengal and did not want the delicate balance of power disturbed. In 1943, Nazimuddin included his brother, Shahabuddin in the cabinet, another family member was a parliamentary secretary, and the Dacca District Muslim League was their pocket borough. Ahsan Manzil's clientele included Nurul Amin and Ghayasuddin Pathan of Mymensingh, Yusaf Ali Choudhry of Faridpur, Hamidul Huq Choudhry of Noakhali, Fazlur Rahman of Dacca and others, many of whom were members of the Working Committee. The parliamentary group was accused by Hashim of running a parallel structure consisting of their placemen and ignoring the provincial League.

However this monopoly was challenged when Suhrawardy was forced to step down as secretary of the party on Jinnah's directives and his nominee Abul Hashim was selected. Unlike his predecessor whose social base was limited to Calcutta, Abul Hashim went to great length to popularize the League in the northern and eastern districts of Bengal and by 1944, the Bengal Muslim League had penetrated the *mofussil* to become a mass party. Hashim's success was attributed to winning over the *proja* by turning the League into a socialistic and anti-zemindari mass movement.⁸⁸ But the Pakistan slogan he was popularizing differed from Jinnah's interpretation. Hashim rejected the two nation theory, espoused a multi-nationality concept, in which Bengal was one of the many nations in the sub-continent.⁸⁹

Hashim combined the expansion of the party with its democratization and reorganization and wanted to assert party control over the ministry. The constitution of the League was amended, every district, irrespective of population, was entitled to 25 members in the League Council and the number of members the President could nominate to the Working Committee was reduced.⁹⁰ The move undermined the

⁸⁷ Several factors were responsible for the major catastrophe, the loss of rice imports from Burma due to the Japanese advance, the Denial Policy which caused the collapse of the distribution system, the League's failure to deal with the refugees or food distribution and Downing Street's preparedness to see Indians starve. P. Moon, ed., *Wavell: The Viceroy's Journal*, (London, 1973), pp. 68, 122.

⁸⁸QAA, SHC, Bengal iv/18, Raghieb Ahsan to Jinnah, 15 Nov. 1944.

⁸⁹ Abul Hashim, *In Retrospection* (Dacca 1974), p.23.

⁹⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 62, 66.

parliamentary leadership as the Dacca District League up to then had existed only on paper and the Khwaja group had prevented its organization. Khwaja Shahabuddin, M.R.A. Salim, Fazlur Rahman and others supporters of Ahsan Manzil who were running for office in the Dacca League suffered a stunning defeat at the hand of Hashim's supporters. With their stranglehold over Dacca city broken the Khwaja coterie launched a slanderous campaign in the press against Hashim accusing him of being a communist⁹¹ and they lined up the parliamentarians against him in a concentrated effort to win control of the Working Committee. Suhrawardy supported the Khwaja group's effort in replacing Abul Hashim with A.M. Malik as secretary but the vociferous opposition from the delegates blocked this move.⁹² When this failed, a compromise suggested by Suhrawardy was accepted by the two groups giving them almost parity on the Working Committee.⁹³

The setbacks for the Khwaja group was also a rebuff for Jinnah. They had followed Jinnah loyally and he had rewarded them by nominating Nazimuddin to the AIML Working Committee and Khwaja Shahabuddin to the Planning Committee. However with the rise of Hashim, the conservative leadership was replaced by young radicals who turned the League into a mass party, propagated an egalitarian vision of Bangsman which differed from Jinnah's Pakistan. Bengali ethnicity was parading in Muslim nationalist clothing and Jinnah had no control over the only provincial League which had been transformed into a mass organization.

In the elections of 1937 the Muslim Punjabis overwhelmingly voted for the Unionist Party, demonstrating their loyalty to a Punjabi identity rather than one based on community or nationalism. Surprisingly, by October, Sikander Hayat was hobnobbing with Jinnah at the AIML Lucknow Session and the meeting between the two produced a compact, the Jinnah-Sikander pact. Jinnah had to pay a heavy price for the arrangement whereby the AIML represented the Unionists at the centre. Sikander openly declared that the League would be nothing without the support of the Muslims of the Punjab and Bengal 'and that both he and the Bengal Premier were agreed in using this fact as a lever for insisting' on no interference by Jinnah in provincial matters.⁹⁴ What did Sikander gain from the pact? The scale of the Congress victory had swept aside all the various assumptions concerning the working of the federation. The apprehension which

⁹¹ QAA, SHC, Bengal iv/18, Raghieb Ahsan to Jinnah, 15 Nov. 1944.

⁹² QAA, SHC, Bengal iv/19, Raghieb Ahsan to Jinnah, 17 Nov. 1944.

⁹³ QAA, SHC, Bengal iv/21, Raghieb Ahsan to Jinnah, 19 Nov. 1944.

⁹⁴ IOR, Mss. Eur. F 125/88 (Linlithgow Collection), Craik to Linlithgow, 17 May 1939.

preoccupied the Unionists was that a Congress government at the centre would run roughshod over the constitutional provisions designed to protect the minorities, meddle in provincial affairs,- eventually pressurize the Governor-General to relax his control over the army and increase the share of other provinces in defence at the expense of Punjab. It was the need for a voice at the centre and the desire that the League-Congress deadlock should continue for a few years which prompted Sikander to throw in his lot with Jinnah.⁹⁵

Sir Khwaja Mohammad Iqbal, Malik Barkat Ali and Ghulam Rasul expressed their concern at the way Sikander was manipulating the pact and devouring the Muslim League. After much delay a reorganized Punjab Muslim League was formed by Sikander, it included loyal Unionists and Nawab Shah Nawaz of Mamdot was made president. The 'old' Muslim League supporters were outraged by this development, some resigned, the Montgomery District League asked Jinnah not to affiliate the 'bogus' League and Barkat Ali warned Jinnah of the detrimental effect on morale that Sikander's triumph had caused. To the disbelief of Jinnah's supporters in Punjab the Committee of Enquiry sent by the AIML, in February 1939, recommended the affiliation of the Punjab Muslim League.⁹⁶

The take-over by the Unionists sealed the fate of the Punjab Muslim League and for the next seven years it ceased practically all activities. The only notable contribution it made towards the cause of Muslim nationalism was to organize the Lahore session of the AIML in 1940. Not only was it dormant, the limited expansion which had been undertaken turned out to be only on paper. Its claim of having established thirteen districts Leagues and a membership of just under 13,000 were patently false. Khalilur Rahman, member of the Punjab Muslim League Working Committee, admitted that the recorded membership figure was only 4,800 and that Sayed Ghulam Mustafa Shah Gilani toured the province, dissolving the phoney branches and establishing genuine ones.⁹⁷ Only limited work was done to popularize the Muslim League and that was carried out by the Punjab Muslim Students' Federation. The Pakistan Rural Propaganda Committee which was established at a Muslim Students Federation conference chaired by Jinnah, in March 1941, toured the Sheikhpura District addressing meetings, explaining the programme of the League and opening up primary

⁹⁵ Ibid, Craik to Linlithgow, 19 May 1939.

⁹⁶ Ian Talbot, 'The Growth of the Muslim League in the Punjab, 1937-1946' (London Univ. Ph.D. thesis 1981), pp. 153-165.

⁹⁷ NDC, CID, S 410, (Punjab Police Abstract of Intelligence), no 8 by Deane, 21 Feb. 1942, pp.89.

branches. 'In spite of the criminal neglect of rural areas' by the Punjab League they found an enthusiastic response to the Pakistan slogan.⁹⁸

Sikander by keeping the Unionist Party united gave very little opportunity for his opponents to make any headway in the province. He introduced various legislations, encouraged by Chhotu Ram, which proved to be popular with the peasants. The agrarian reforms such as the Six Year Programme of Rural Reform, the Amendment to the Punjab Land Alienation Act and the Registration of Moneylenders' Act, consolidated the Unionists hold over their Muslim, Sikh and Hindu supporters.⁹⁹ Sikander also carefully guarded his Achilles heel, communalism which, if aggravated, would have disrupted the cross-communal alliance. He remonstrated with Jinnah for his highly communal speech at the Calcutta session of the AIML, defused the Shahidganj issue in a masterly manner and restrained the Muslim League into keeping 'Deliverance Day' quiet.¹⁰⁰ Later when the Pakistan slogan became popular he planned to bury it because he considered it to be too provocative.¹⁰¹

However what Sikander did not foresee was the war and the impact it would have on Indian Muslims politics. When war clouds darkened the horizon the Unionist pledged their loyalty and Sikander complained to Jinnah that he was not using his strong position at the centre. He wanted the Muslim League to increase its co-operation with the government in order to extract greater concessions.¹⁰² Instead, Jinnah banned Muslim League members from joining the War Committees and the Civil Guards. Sikander defied Jinnah's ban on joining the War Committees and was preparing to resign not only from the Working Committee of the Muslim League but also his basic membership. His antipathy to the Pakistan slogan and the need to bolster the morale of his Hindu and Sikh colleagues drove him to break with the Muslim League.¹⁰³ However Linlithgow intervened and instructed the Governor of Punjab, Henry Craik, to persuade Sikander not to resign. He did not want Sikander's government to be overthrown on the Pakistan issue because of his successful

⁹⁸ QAA, AIML 230/10, Muhammad Ashraf to Jinnah, 28 June 1941.

⁹⁹ Ian Talbot, *op. cit.*, pp. 142-146.

¹⁰⁰ IOR, Mss. Eur. F 125/86 (Linlithgow Collection), Craik to Linlithgow, 25 April 1938. *Ibid*, Emerson to Linlithgow, 5 April 1938. Mss. Eur. F 125/88 (Linlithgow Collection), Craik to Linlithgow, 28 Dec. 1939. [Hereafter Mss. Eur. F 125/88.]

¹⁰¹ Mss. Eur. F 125/91, Glancy to Linlithgow, 10 July 1942.

¹⁰² Mss. Eur. F 125/88, Craik to Linlithgow 26 Feb. 1939.

¹⁰³ Mss. Eur. F 125/90, Craik to Linlithgow, 4 March 1941.

management of the war effort nor did Linlithgow want to split the League which he had cultivated so assiduously as a counterbalance to the Congress.¹⁰⁴

Sikander was now in the unenviable position where his ability to stand up to Jinnah was undermined by official pressure despite the deep differences between the two. The terrain was set for Sikander's capitulation over the National Defence Council row. The Viceroy invited Sikander, Huq and Assadullah to serve on the Council but made the mistake of not inviting them as provincial Chief Ministers but as representatives of the Muslim community. Jinnah was quick to react and assert his claim that only the League represented the Muslims and ordered the Premiers to resign. Sikander's prestige was considerably weakened, many Muslims were 'seriously upset by his abasement at Bombay' and considered his action damaging to Punjab's prestige.¹⁰⁵ Jinnah's stock soared in the province and Sikander became powerless to resist the popularization of the Pakistan slogan.

The Unionist Party unanimously appointed Khizr Hayat Khan Tiwana as Premier, in January 1943, to fill the vacancy created by Sikander's sudden death. Jinnah was anxious to assert control over the new Chief Minister but Khizr used the Jinnah-Sikander pact to thwart him. Even though he failed to prevent the establishment of a separate League Party, Khizr remained the head of the Punjab League. When Jinnah insisted that the Unionist government should be renamed the Muslim League coalition, Khizr rejected it. Glancy encouraged Khizr to resist Jinnah so that the war effort would not be disturbed.¹⁰⁶ His strategy was to trap Jinnah by either fighting him on the issue of the war effort or wait for him to make a false move. Khizr feared that a direct assault on Jinnah would provoke him into playing the Islamic card which Khizr's Muslim supporters would find difficult to resist in the absence of any convincing battle cry to rally around.¹⁰⁷

However Khizr's resolve weakened when Jinnah returned to Lahore in April 1944 and he was ready to surrender. The Unionists existed only in name and had no organization. The Pakistan slogan would be the decisive factor in the next elections and many of his supporters would desert. He feared that the loyalists would be dumped after the war and that the only two parties to matter would be the Congress and the

¹⁰⁴ A.I. Singh, *The Origins of the Partition of India, 1936-47* (Delhi, 1987), pp. 65-66.

¹⁰⁵ Mss. Eur. F 125/91, George Abell to Gilbert Laithwaite, 11 Jan. 1942.

¹⁰⁶ A.I. Singh, *op. cit.*, p.100.

¹⁰⁷ Mss. Eur. F 125/92, Brander to Laithwaite, 21 July 1943.

Muslim League and for this reason did not want to antagonize Jinnah.¹⁰⁸ During the protracted discussions Jinnah wanted Khizr to change the name of the Unionist ministry, openly adopt Muslim League policies and drop Chhotu Ram from the cabinet.¹⁰⁹ However Wavell and Glancy encouraged Khizr to stand up to Jinnah and Glancy suggested the dismissal of Shaukat Hayat as a warning to all the other turncoats.¹¹⁰ Khizr followed this up by forming the Zemindari League to bolster the party and appointed Jamal Khan Leghari and Nawab Ashiq Hussain to the cabinet in order reduce the number of desertions from the Unionist ranks down from thirty to eighteen.¹¹¹

The talk of forming a Muslim League ministry set off a scramble between the various groups in the League to seize control of the party. There were three groups within the Punjab League,- Mamdot supported by Jinnah and the Muslim students Federation, Jamal Khan Leghari and his supporters and Nawabzada Rashid Ali Khan, the President of the Lahore Muslim League, backed by Barkat Ali. Rashid Ali Khan had already challenged Mamdot unsuccessfully earlier in the year by forming the Workers Board to launch a campaign for mass enrolment and form a Muslim League Assembly Party. This time he wanted to seize control of the party so that he would be called to form the League ministry.¹¹² Jamal Khan Leghari had the same intention but when it became clear that the Unionist were not going to fall he accepted Khizr's offer of ministership.

Even though the Pakistan slogan was increasing in popularity in the province, the Unionist Party kept a tight grip over the reigns of power. The continued dominance of Unionists strangled the League and prevented it from becoming a mass party. Punjabi ethnicity was strong, all the attempts to undermine regional solidarity by involving communalism were only marginally effective, Jinnah had very little control over developments in the party and was unable to impose a semblance of unity.

In Sarhad the polls confirmed the political dominance of Pakhtun ethnicity in the province but the hesitation of AICC in accepting office gave the Governor George Cunningham the opportunity to engineer an anti-Congress coalition. Shaibzada Abdul Qaiyum's minority ministry was short lived and Cunningham

¹⁰⁸ Glancy to Wavell, 14 April 1944, *TP iv*, p.880.

¹⁰⁹ NDC, CID, S 412, (Punjab Police Abstract of Intelligence), no 14 by Rich, 1 April 1944, pp.191.

¹¹⁰ Wavell to Glancy, 15 April 1944, *TP iv*, p.882. Glancy to Wavell, 24 April 1944, *TP iv*, pp. 922-925.

¹¹¹ Wavell to Amrey, 16 May 1944, *TP iv*, p.969.

¹¹² NDC, CID, S 411, (Punjab Police Abstract of Intelligence), no 26 by Deane, 26 June 1943, pp.359 .

was forced to accept a Congress government led by Dr Khan which was formed in combination with defectors from the Democratic Party and the Hindu-Sikh Nationalist Party. The cabinet's position was strengthened when Dr Khan aided by Nehru settled the differences with the 'old school' who had left in 1931 and prepared the way for the reunification of the NWFP Congress.¹¹³

Dr Khan's ministry followed policies similar to the other Congress governments but took the lead in dismantling the colonial structure used to support the big *khans*. The measures introduced against his political opponents were the abolition of the posts of honorary magistrates and *zaildars*, and most of the *zemindari inams*. The practice of recruiting government personnel from the *khani* élite was suspended. The reforms introduced in 1938, such as the Teri Dues Regulation Repealing Bill and the Agricultural Debtors' Relief fell below the expectation of the radicals. They desired land redistribution which was unacceptable as it would have destabilized the *khani* élite as a whole. Instead, Dr Khan selectively exploited *kisan* grievances against the non-Congress *khans* which resulted in increasing friction with them. The Charsadda *khans*, the backbone of the Muslim League, were involved in a bitter dispute with the provincial government and accused ministers of stirring up their tenants. In retaliation they refused to pay their dues to the government which brought them in collision with the authorities. Ministers accused them of simply evicting tenants for not supporting the Muslim League. However, it was a double edged sword and the issue came to head with the agrarian agitations in Mardan and Dr Khan was eventually obliged to use force to restore order at the expense of his popularity.¹¹⁴

The all-India decisions of the Congress Party to oppose the war was out of tune with the feelings in the provinces which welcomed military recruitment as it provided scarce resources in economically difficult times. Opposition to the war became another major reason which affected the popularity of the NWFP Congress. Most Congressmen did not welcome the decision of Dr Khan's ministry to resign or the individual *satyagraha* and there was very little reaction when Azad was arrested.¹¹⁵ Ghaffar Khan tried to step up the campaign with trained *satyagrahis* but this failed to attract support for the campaign which fizzled out.¹¹⁶ The lack of enthusiasm allowed Cunningham to resist the Home Office's and the Viceroy's pressure to take a hard

¹¹³ NDC, CID, S.393, (NWFP Political General), no 42, 18 Oct. 1937, p.30.

¹¹⁴ S.A. Rittenberg, 'The Independence Movement in India's North-West Frontier Province, 1901-1947' (Columbia Univ. Ph.D. thesis 1977), pp.238-244. , IOR, Mss. Eur. F 125/72 (Linlithgow Collection), Cunningham to Linlithgow, 26 May 1938.

¹¹⁵ NCD, CID, S 401, (NWFP Police Secret Abstract), no 1 by Hodder, 7 Jan. 1941, p.1.

¹¹⁶ Ibid, no 7 by A. St. John Wood, 18 Feb. 1941, p.22.

line against the Congress during the Quit India Campaign. He accurately assessed that it was not necessary to ban the party, unlike elsewhere in India, and the agitations were mild in comparison.¹¹⁷ The Congress led agitations culminated in *hartals*, picketing of government offices, police stations, courts and liquor shops but once the leadership was arrested the civil disobedience petered out.¹¹⁸

The Governor Cunningham, deployed *maulvis* in the tribal as well as the settled areas to work up anti-Congress sentiments with an intensive propaganda campaign.¹¹⁹ He directed the network operating in the tribal areas until 1941 when it was taken over by military intelligence which then worked through the District Commissioners and the Political Agents. In the 'settled' districts K.B. Kuli Khan was successful in winning over some element of the Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Sarhad and together orchestrated an anti-Congress and pro-war campaign. Dr Khan's daughter's marriage to Flight Lieutenant Jaswant Singh, a Christian, provided ample opportunity for the *ulama* to attack him for being un-Islamic.¹²⁰ Significantly, most of the *maulanas* deployed were pro-Muslim League but, more importantly, the initiative established a network of religious propagandists which later was to be exploited by the League.

Concurrent with these development, rifts developed within the ranks of the Congress. Tensions between Dr Khan's ministry and the Provincial Congress Committee emerged over the degree of co-operation with the Raj. Dr Khan ignored the AICC, met the Viceroy and compelled the Peshawar District Board to present an address to him.¹²¹ The Provincial Congress Committee's inability to exercise any influence on the ministry's policies led to a breach between Dr Khan and Ghaffar Khan. Ghaffar Khan accused the ministerial group of ignoring dedicated workers and rewarding toadies and sycophants which weakened the movement.¹²² Differences also emerged within the provincial Congress committee, Ghaffar Khan felt that the increasing influence of the Forward Block, led by Ghulam Mohammad Khan of Lundkhwar, was inimical to the Khudai Khidmatgars and he separated it from the party bringing it under his personal control. His resignation from

¹¹⁷ Rittenberg, *op.cit.*, p.6.

¹¹⁸ NDC, CID, S 402, (NWFP Police Secret Abstract), no 37 by Hodder, 15 Sep. 1942, p.104. Ibid, no 44 by Hodder, 3 Nov. 1942, p.124.

¹¹⁹ Cunningham to Linlithgow, 28 Sep. 1942, *TP iii*, p.56.

¹²⁰ Cunningham to Linlithgow, 8 Aug. 1942, *TP ii*, p.5. The political nature of these attacks become all the more apparent as the pro-Muslim League *ulama* ignored the religious transgression by Jinnah's daughter of marrying a Parsi, in March 1940. NDC, CID, S 400, (NWFP Police Secret Abstract), no 13 by Wagstaffe, 26 March 1940, p.92.

¹²¹ NDC, CID, S 393, (NWFP Political General), by Attaullah, 25 April 1938, p.131.

¹²² NDC, CID, S 393, (CID Peshawar) diary no 45, 2 Jan. 1946, p.42.

the AICC Working Committee caused unease among some of his supporters who thought that he had resigned from the Congress.¹²³ The cumulative impact of failure to form a credible anti-war campaign, the enthusiasm for the war, intra-party differences, the anti-Congress and Islamic propaganda and the personal attacks against the Khan brothers resulted in the fall of the Congress membership by over half to just over 10,000.¹²⁴

Pakhtun ethnicity lost influence by siding with Indian nationalism but Muslim nationalism was too deeply divided to exploit the situation. The Frontier Muslim League was reorganized, in September 1937, when the supporters of Shaibzada Abdul Qaiyum who had formed the Peshawar District Muslim League merged with the Provincial League headed by Maulana Mohammad Shuaib. It was a take-over by the Peshawari *khans* and Maulana Shuaib was reduced to titular status and finally replaced by Sadullah Khan.¹²⁵ The Muslim League was a collection of rural élites divided by agnatic and personal rivalries who in reaction to the anti-*khani* policies of Dr Khan's government and the Khudai Khidmatgars' emphasis on Pakhtun ethnicity banded together in opposition to the Congress. To compensate for the lack of organization and programme they concentrated on religious appeal and exploited communal tension. The tactic of employing *maulvis* to disseminate propaganda was not successful. The Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Sarhad remained loyal to the Congress and the *pirs* were indifferent. Capitalising on communal tensions, such as the attempts to revive the Shahidganj issue which led to violence in Mardan and the Hindu-Muslim riots in Dera Ismail Khan, in 1939, gave moderate results.¹²⁶

Muslim League's chance came in 1943 when Aurangzeb Khan, leader of the parliamentary wing of the party, managed to form a ministry. Aurangzeb's majority was doubtful and depended on ten of the Congress members of the assembly remaining in jail and on the support of twenty-two independents including non-Muslims.¹²⁷ Lacking organization and ideology, the only adhesive which held his loose coalition together was the promise of patronage and this was the root cause of the downfall of the Muslim League ministry.

¹²³ NDC, CID, S 394, (CID NWFP), Report, 24 July 1939, p.88-93. Ibid, (Weekly Confidential Diary, Peshawar), 3 March 1939, p.29. The Khudai Khidmatgars were estimated to be between forty and sixty thousand strong in 1938, mainly concentrated in the Peshawar-Mardan area and organized into two hundred eighty Village Committees. They were well drilled and uniformed but Ghaffar Khan was genuinely non-violent. IOR, Mss. Eur. F 125/72 (Linlithgow Collection), Cunningham to Linlithgow, 9 June 1938.

¹²⁴ Rittenberg, op. cit., p.292. The figures do not include the Khudai Khidmatgars membership but a similar drop also occurred there.

¹²⁵ QAA. SHC, NWFP i/74, Sadullah Khan to Jinnah, 7 March 1944.

¹²⁶ Rittenberg, op. cit., pp. 257, 267.

¹²⁷ The Akalis had joined Aurangzeb's cabinet on the strict understanding that the question of Pakistan would not be raised and because Dr Khan refused to guarantee seats for the Sikh's in a future government. The Mahasabha were also prepared to enter into an alliance but negotiations broke down when Aurangzeb refused to concede the speakership of the House to Mehr Chand Khanna. A.I. Singh, *The Origins of the Partition of India*, p.92.

The rampant corruption and partisanship resulted in popular displeasure¹²⁸ with the regime which was aggravated by the effects of the war, resulting in shortages and inflation. The ministry used favours e.g., through its management of war time rationing to pay off political debts. The '*Quran-Talaq* Ministry' liberally distributed government contracts and permits to assembly members in order to remain in power.¹²⁹ The Governor extended the life of Aurangzeb's ministry by postponing the assembly session in the spring of 1944 but Aurangzeb was forced to face the house the following year resulting in his expected downfall. Despite the League gaining office Muslim identity and Jinnah were irrelevant to the province and the local concerns of power and Pakhtun ethnicity were the dominant interests.

In Sind power politics based on agnatic and personal rivalries were the primary concern of the Muslim leadership. Sindi ethnicity became an overt influence only where external inputs such as separation of Sind from the Bombay Presidency or the settlement of Punjabis in the canal colonies were the question at issue. Otherwise it remained in the background providing the context for the overwhelming emphasis on provincial affairs. As to Muslim identity, it came into play primarily in the arena of all-India politics and was brought into the provincial sphere only to shore up one's advantages in local competition. Consequently Sindi politics was highly fluid with groups forming and reforming into political combinations according to the shifting requirements of local power games.

The chaotic situation in the Sind Provincial Assembly which preceded the formation of Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah's ministry clearly showed that both communal-religious identity and nationalist consciousness were secondary considerations compared to regional power politics. The Sind United Party, the flag carrier of pro-Congress Muslims, was reduced to a rump by desertions to the ministerial group. However, within a short time Hidayatullah was brought down by Allah Buksh Soomro who with only six Muslim supporters, turned to the Congress and Hindu independents in order to form a government. Allah Buksh attempted to consolidate his precarious position by negotiating with Jinnah but the talks eventually collapsed. However, his position improved in 1939 when he won over Hidayatullah with a cabinet post. The latter brought with him a group of *mir* supporters and reduced the Muslim League overnight to a hollow shell.¹³⁰

¹²⁸ QAA, SHC, NWFP, i/74, Sadullah Khan to Jinnah, 7 Nov. 1944.

¹²⁹ Expression literally means taking an oath on the Koran and reneging on it. The ministry acquired this nickname owing to its readiness to make promises which were unlikely to be fulfilled. QAA, SHC, NWFP i/60, Sadullah Khan to the Committee of Action, 8 Aug. 1945.

¹³⁰ *Report of the Court of Inquiry appointed under Section 3 of the Sind Public Inquiries Act to enquire in to the Riots which occurred at Sukkor in 1939* (Karachi, 1940), p.48. [Hereafter Report on Sukkor Riots.] QAA, AIML 248/15, Political Situation in Sind by Muhammad H. Rashidi, nd.

The Muslim League was determined to harass and bring Allah Buksh down and deliberately selected the Manzilgah issue to expose his dependence on Hindus. The Manzilgah dispute was over the status of a building in Sukkur which Muslims claimed was a mosque but was under the control of the Sind Government. The Hindus were opposed to returning the building to the Muslims as it was located near a ghat from which Hindus embarked to visit the sacred shrine of Sadhbelo. The matter had been brought to Ghulam Husain Hidayatullah's notice but before he announced his decision Hidayatullah was forced out of office and replaced by Allah Buksh Soomro. The files showed that the deposed premier had decided that no action would be taken but Allah Buksh, within eleven days of his taking office, reopened the case.¹³¹ Why had Allah Buksh reversed his predecessor's decision? His final card was to use the restoration of the Manzilgah building to Muslims in the hope of winning back the Muslim vote if a general election was forced on him.¹³² However the Muslim League's intervention in the Manzilgah dispute, which culminated in the Sukkur riot of 1939, was to turn his trump card against him. The immediate reaction to the government's decision to forcibly take control of the building from the Manzilgah Restoration Committee was two days of rioting in Sukkur, resulting in 45 deaths followed by police violence against Hindus who too had become infected with communalism. Eventually troops had to be despatched to Shikarpur before the situation was brought under control.¹³³

The protest was an ideal weapon for the Muslim League to use against Allah Buksh. He had already decided to restore the building to the Muslims but if he did it under duress then the League would take credit for it. However his refusal would result in a Muslim revolt in his home constituency. The communal dispute also increased strains within his cabinet and divided it along communal lines causing it to vacillate. The Chief Minister usurped the function of the Home Minister, Djalma Daulatram after he had leaked information to Moonje and Nichaldas Vazirani. The two exacerbated an already tense situation with a number of incorrect statements.¹³⁴ The ultimate consequence of the Manzilgah agitation was that Allah Buksh's government fell and was replaced by a League coalition with independent Hindus.

¹³¹ *Report on Sukkur Riots* (Karachi, 1940), p.48.

¹³² IOR, L/P&J/7/2892 (Manzilgah Occupation), Note by R.M. Maxwell, Aug. 1940.

¹³³ IOR, L/P&J/7/2892 (Manzilgah Occupation), Summary of Events, nd.

¹³⁴ IOR, L/P&J/7/2892 (Manzilgah Occupation), Synopsis, nd.

An additional gain for the League was dissensions that developed in the influential Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Sind which had remained loyal to Allah Buksh. A number of *maulvis* rejected the pro-Congress line of Mohammad Siddique and Fateh Mohammad on the Manzilgah affair and resigned from the Jamiat.¹³⁵ The continuous use of communal tension by the League made Allah Buksh's attempt to widen his support, by popularising the Sind branch of the All-India Azad Muslim Conference, difficult. It was directly responsible for delaying the individual *satyagraha* campaign¹³⁶ and for the desultory pace of the Quit India movement.

It was realized by the Sind Muslim League that communal tension was latent in the Sukkur district and they could harass the Chief Minister for refusing to join the Muslim League. The League had wanted to embarrass Allah Buksh, not ferment a riot and Haroon and other League leaders deserted the cause when violence broke out.¹³⁷ The violence which overtook the Manzilgah agitation increased the influence of the Sind Muslim League on several levels. When combined with the Pakistan Day celebrations and Jinnah's visits it extended the boundary of the Sind League's and AIML's influence from the élites to the urban masses. Not only did the popularity of the League spread to the lower middle class, it also politicized women who played a supportive role in the agitation.¹³⁸ Finally, for Jinnah it was a break through: he had demonstrated that he could bring down the government and was a force that could not be treated lightly. His prestige was further enhanced in the province when only with his permission could a negotiated settlement be reached.¹³⁹ Within its limitation the dispute highlighted how the League could win over popular Muslim support and simultaneously create communal dissensions. The use of sectarian propaganda against joint electorates in the Shikarpur bye-election and later in the Eidgah Maidan agitation in Karachi helped rally support on communal issues, prising apart the two communities.

Abdullah Haroon and Sheikh Abdul Majid Sindhi formed the Sind Muslim League in May 1938 and were joined by Ayub Khuro and G.M. Sayed. At the Karachi conference the number of League assembly members increased to twenty-seven and Hidayatullah insisted on being the leader of the League party in the assembly, despite Jinnah's disapproval. However the optimism of the League was misplaced and

¹³⁵ NDC, CID, S 428, (Sind Police Secret Abstract), no 2 by Eates, 13 Jan. 1940, p.19.

¹³⁶ NDC, CID, S 428, (Sind Police Secret Abstract), no 47 by Eates, 30 Nov. 1940, p.19.

¹³⁷ IOR, Mss. Eur. F 125/88 (Linlithgow Collection), Craik to Linlithgow, 28 Dec. 1939.

¹³⁸ NAP, QAP, F460/1-3, G.M. Sayed to Jinnah, 1 Nov. 1939.

¹³⁹ *Report on the Sukkur Riots* (Karachi, 1940), p.61.

Hidayatullah's tergiversation and joining the Allah Buksh ministry decimated the ranks of the League in the assembly.¹⁴⁰ The next opportunity of getting into the driving seat came with Allah Buksh's dismissal. Ayub Khuro led the Muslim League Assembly Party into an alliance with the Hindu Independents to form the Nationalist Party and accepted Mir Bandeh Ali as the Premier. Khuro defied Jinnah and went ahead to form the coalition.¹⁴¹ The latter's discomfiture increased when the ministry first passed an Act introducing joint electorates in the local council and then collapsed allowing Allah Buksh to return to power.

A full-fledged Muslim League government did not come to power until October 1942 when Hidayatullah became the Premier. The League was anxious to join him but insisted that he should join the party and accept its programme.¹⁴² The ministry was obliged to work under 'general supervision and control' of the Muslim League Assembly Party and the Sind Provincial Muslim League Working Committee and implement a programme of agrarian reform including Land Alienation Bill, Debt Redemption Bill, Tenancy Bill and increase the ratio of Muslims in government service. However as soon as Hidayatullah was installed in office the reforms such as the Tenancy Bill were put on ice. He even considered modifying the *jagirdari* legislation which had been passed by Allah Buksh in order to win support of the *jagirdars* in the assembly. Much worse for the Sind Muslim League, the various malpractices of the ministry affected the popularity of the party. There were scandals concerning the war-time control of essential goods. Syndicates for cloth, wheat etc were distributed by ministers among sycophants and favourites.¹⁴³ Finally the League government was rocked with the scandal implicating one of its ministers, Khuro, with the murder of Allah Buksh.

Outside the assembly the Sind Muslim League made even less headway in Sindi politics. Even by 1941 Ghulam Mohammad Sayed admitted there was no credible organization and that support was limited to the towns and a handful of villages.¹⁴⁴ But two years later many rural branches were established and members enrolled but the impact on the rural masses was limited. Only by incorporating the rural élite were the League able to increase its influence. Motivated by power politics, the major interest of the new members

¹⁴⁰ QAA, AIML 248/15, Political Situation in Sind by Muhammad H. Rashidi, nd.

¹⁴¹ IOR, Mss. Eur. E 372 (Dow Collection), Dow to Linlithgow, 22 Oct. 1942.

¹⁴² NAP, QAP, F854/33-42, A Note by G.M. Sayed, nd.

¹⁴³ QAA, SHC, Sind ii/38 Note by S.F. Kachhi, nd.

¹⁴⁴ NAP, QAP, F460/27, G.M. Sayed to Abdullah Haroon, 17 Jan. 1941.

was to control the various local bodies or the assembly through the League organization.¹⁴⁵ The rivalry between the contending groups led to a massive leap in membership and the number of primary branches but most of the increases were fraudulent. G.M. Sayed attempted to turn the Muslim League into a popular party and increasingly became involved with the Sind Hari Committee, the provincial branch of the All-India Kisan Sabha, whose Muslim members were sympathetic to the Pakistan slogan.¹⁴⁶ This led him to champion the interests of the *haris* which in its turn led to conflict with the Muslim League ministry. The League was restricted to élite politics, and neither Jinnah nor Pakistan had any significance in the region except for their communal association and the dominant concern for power at the provincial level led to intense rivalry in the assembly and the party.

The success of the Congress in the 1937 elections had deep and manifold ramifications among Muslims and initiated a major political shift. It shattered the bucolic pastoralism of the Muslim regional parties and caused great unease among the urban groupings. The politicians involved in the local power game feared that the Congress Party's operation of provincial ministries under the control of a centralized organization, its rejection of the federal basis of the 1935 Act, would mean that they would be roped into a unitary state. Such fears, paradoxically, forced the Muslim-majority provinces into the arms of the AIML and Jinnah whose aspirations towards central control were as strong as those of the Indian National Congress. From 1938 onwards the Congress Party and the British became two major influence in Muslim politics. The Raj encouraged the emergence of Jinnah as an all-India leader and Indian nationalism did its bit by going to jail thus creating the space for the Muslim League to expand into. Under these twin influences the two mutually opposed tendencies in Muslim politics,- the centripetal and centrifugal forces converged at least temporarily and provided the basis for a short-lived unity.

However this process implied an uphill struggle. Initially Jinnah was only able to win over the élites of the Muslim-minority provinces, by playing the Islamic card. Among the urban masses Jinnah was forced to play second fiddle to Mashriqi until the mid-1940s when the Khaksar star waned. By 1944 the Muslim League was influential among large strata of the urban population throughout India, particularly in the Muslim-minority provinces. The League used community consciousness as a battering ram to breakdown the resistance of the regional parties. The economic resources of the élites of the Muslim-minority provinces funded the pro-Pakistan publicity which was generated by intellectuals. The hegemony of the Pakistan idea,

¹⁴⁵ QAA, AIML 200/37-47, Annual Report of the Sind Provincial Muslim League, 1943-44, by G.M. Sayed.

¹⁴⁶ QAA, AIML 200/49, Quarterly Report on the Progress of the Muslim League in Sind, nd.

despite its ambiguities was thus established. The Pakistan slogan spread from the urban areas into the rural areas of the Muslim-majority provinces. The expansion was due to the role of students and *maulvis* in consolidating and spreading the ideological hegemony of Muslim nationalism.

Ideology was the Achilles heel of the regionalist parties. The Pakistan slogan in its different manifestations was capturing the imagination of intellectuals and polarizing communal relations. Its opponents had no war cry to rally their supporters. Combined with Jinnah's rising all-India status, the Pakistan slogan was able to make Muslim nationalism more influential in the provinces. But still he had little influence in the running of the provincial parties and his role was mainly negative in that he was only able to make, expel or threaten to expel provincial leaders. The regional parties were strong. Reinforced by the constitutional structure they were long able to resist the advance of the Muslim League. In the case of Bengal where the League had become a mass organization, this end result owed more to the take-over of the party by regionalism rather than to a clear victory for muslim ethnicity. In the Punjab, the Pakistan slogan was gaining popularity but the continued resistance from Khizr, backed by the British, prevented Muslim nationalism from making deep inroads into the rural areas. But in Sind and Sarhad, Jinnah and Pakistan had very little influence. In the case of NWFP the party was extremely weak and the province dominated by the Congress; while in Sind the Muslim League was a party restricted to the élites. Consequently if the entire Muslim population is considered, Muslim nationalism at this juncture had not won even a bare majority to its side and was essentially a phenomenon restricted to the urban areas and Muslim-minority provinces.

A BRIEF MOMENT OF POLITICAL UNITY:
MASS NATIONALISM AND COMMUNAL RIOTS, 1945-1947.

Jinnah throughout the early 1940s was trying to mobilize all Muslim opinion around a central focus, the League. But the regional parties proved to be powerful centrifugal manifestations which defied the attempts of the AIML to make inroads into the rural areas. Despite the increasing authority of the Muslim League at the centre, it could not win over the provincial parties. The constitutional arrangements gave them many powers. As long as the 1935 Act remained the bedrock of Indian politics, the regional parties flourished. They had a vested interest in avoiding the control of any centralizing political authority. However when the war ended, in May 1946, the basic assumptions of Indian politics, the edifice which sustained the regional groupings, were questioned by the parleys concerning the future of India. It was in this context that Muslim nationalism was able to achieve political unity.

The tortuous constitutional negotiations also tested Jinnah's centralizing strategy. The key to understanding his approach lies in his emphasis on treating parity and sovereignty as synonymous and hence interchangeable. The elusive goal that either demand could achieve via different pathways was that of equal status with the Congress. What was striking was that Jinnah's search for equality with the Congress led him to make several dramatic revisions of his understanding of Pakistan. Prior to discussions with the Cabinet Mission the AIML declared that Pakistan would have to be a sovereign independent state but Jinnah settled for the confederal arrangement outlined in the Cabinet Mission Plan with parity in the constitution making body. When the Mission Plan fell through he returned to his position of demanding a sovereign state but still backed Bengal's attempt to become independent and only after its failure did he ultimately accept a 'moth eaten Pakistan'.

However, his negotiating posture had also to cope with internal opposition and he was forced to follow a narrow path which would not aggravate dissensions in the ranks or surrender his ambition of concretizing his search for equality with the Congress on the constitutional level. Jinnah's difficulty was that he had to square the different interpretations of Pakistan which were held by his adherents with what was being offered by the Raj and the Congress. He tried to draw the various centrifugal forces into a tighter orbit but his hold remained tenuous right down to partition. Pressures from the ranks of the League forced Jinnah

to perform a delicate minuet in which he attempted to harmonize the conflicting aspirations of his supporters with the imperatives of his negotiations at the centre.

Lord Wavell announced, in June 1945, the convening of a new Executive Council which was more representative of the political parties than its predecessors and equally divided between caste Hindus and Muslims.¹ Gandhi and Azad challenged Wavell on the principle of parity but he remained resolute only conceding that the Congress could nominate Muslims and Scheduled Castes. The Governor of Punjab, Glancy, and Khizr were also against the Congress-League parity as it forced the Unionist to seek representation on the Council through the Muslim League. Khizr, knowing that his ministry could only survive if represented at the centre, wanted a non-Muslim League representation on the reconstituted Executive Council.²

When the conference was convened the principle of parity was accepted by all sides but the question as to who would nominate the Muslims remained unsettled. Wavell made it clear that the provinces particularly the Punjab, would be represented and the Congress demanded the right to nominate two Muslims to the Council. All these demands undermined Jinnah's claim to be the 'sole spokesman' of the Muslims and it proved to be the main stumbling block to an agreement. Jinnah countered by proposing the idea of a Muslim veto. When this was rejected out of hand by the Viceroy, Jinnah then claimed the right to nominate all Muslims to the Executive Council. The conference broke down on Jinnah's obdurate insistence that the League represented all Muslims and his demand of parity with all the other parties combined.³

Wavell wondered why Jinnah had bothered to come to Simla at all but the latter's dilemma was that he was under pressure from his supporters who wanted the conference to succeed. Nazimuddin and Assadullah were dependent on the Congress' support and Liaquat was keen to participate in the interim government.⁴ But if Jinnah had accepted terms outlined by Wavell, the Muslim League would have been drowned in the babel of tongues claiming to represent the Muslims. In such a scenario the League would have found itself outflanked by the Congress Muslims such as Azad and Ghaffar Khan on one side and Khizr Hayat, representing the Unionists, on the other. This would have encouraged Jinnah's nominal supporters in Bengal and Sind to go their own way. He first tried to wriggle out of this quandary by

¹ Except for the Viceroy and the Commander-in-Chief of the army it was intended to be an entirely Indian Council with the important portfolios of the interior, finance and foreign affairs in Indian hands. P. Moon, ed., *Wavell. The Viceroy's Journal*, (London, 1973), p.120.

² Khizr felt that the Punjab which had remained steadfastly loyal was being betrayed and passed over in favour of the Congress and the League. 'He said I was handing power over to the enemy, that my veto was "dead mutton", and prophesied chaos and disaster all round.' *Ibid*, p.144.

³ *Ibid*, pp. 120, 141-150.

⁴ Wavell to Amery, 1 July 1946, *TP v*, p.1182.

approaching the Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Hind and other nationalist Muslim organizations, hoping to persuade them to join him. In return he was willing to nominate a nationalist Muslim to the interim government, provided he selected them.⁵ On the failure of this behind the scene manoeuvre, Jinnah upped the stakes by demanding all or nothing. Wavell hesitated to call Jinnah's bluff and finally agreed with Glancy and Casey that it would be unwise to go ahead with the plans for an interim government without the League.⁶

Jinnah's derailment of the Simla Conference had multiple ramifications among Muslims. His ability to resist pressure from the British and not to modify his demands was seen as a sign of strength. As a result, his personal standing soared but this success masked the mixed reaction within the League. The inherent contradictions between the vested interest of different groups which were subsumed within the League were aggravated by the failure of the conference. The Muslim-majority provinces were disappointed, particularly in Sind and Punjab, by the collapse of the conference.⁷ In sharp contrast, Khaliqzaman eulogized Jinnah for the tactics he adopted at Simla, claiming that his 'grim determination and overpowering sagacity alone saved the situation.'⁸ The various responses highlighted Jinnah's difficulty of maintaining a strategy acceptable to most of his supporters.

Wavell's inability to force Jinnah to climb down from his demand to be the 'sole spokesman' of the Muslims, meant that India's future was either with the League or the Congress and that the loyalist parties were effectively excluded from playing a role in future developments. The deadlock in the negotiations had destabilized the centrifugal forces and made them susceptible to Muslim nationalism. The bitter recrimination between the League and the Congress, after the collapse of the Simla Conference, aggravated communal sentiment and made the Unionist's position as champions of cross-communal alliance increasingly untenable. The call for fresh elections meant to test the conflicting claims of the various parties, acted as a signal to many opponents of the League who felt that the time had come for the change in loyalties. It confirmed the worst fears of Glancy and Khizr about the Simla Conference that without a Unionist on the Executive Council

⁵ NDC, CID, S 426, (Secret Punjab Fortnightly Report), second half of July 1945, p.63.

⁶ Wavell to all Provincial Governors, 30 June 1945, *TP v*, p.1175. Casey to Wavell, 2 July 1945, *TP v*, pp. 1177-80. Glancy to Wavell, 3 July 1945, *TP v*, pp. 1195-96.

⁷ A.I. Singh, *The Origins of the Partition of India*, p.125, fn 134.

⁸ SHC, UP iv, Khaliqzaman to Jinnah, 23 July 1945. cited in A. Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman*, p.36 fn 46. Some more extreme views even criticized Jinnah for being too soft and felt that he should have boycotted the conference. QAA, SHC, Bengal iv/42, Raghob Ahsan to Jinnah, 29 June 1945.

the Unionist Government would not last.⁹ There were some spectacular defections to the League, just before the elections, especially in the Punjab. Firoz Khan Noon, Sayed Amjad Ali and Khizr's own brother forsook old loyalties and in the Frontier, Khan Abdul Qaiyum Khan turned his back on the Khudai Khidmatgars pledging his allegiance to Jinnah.¹⁰

Jinnah claimed that a positive election result would be considered by the League as a mandate for Pakistan. His audacity combined with the dithering of his adversaries to grasp the nettle on the Pakistan issue contributed to the rising tide of Muslim public opinion in his favour. The British failed to expose the implications of partition for the Punjab and Bengal and the Congress failed to budge from its stance on a unitary centre. Mass Muslim nationalism assisted the League and resulted in the party winning nearly eighty seven per cent of the Muslim vote in the Central Legislature elections and seventy five per cent of the vote in the provincial elections.¹¹

Jinnah in preparation for negotiations with the Cabinet Mission convened, in April 1946, the Legislators Convention. Suhrawardy moved the main resolution, 'that the zones comprising Bengal and Assam in the north-east and the Punjab, North West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan in the north-west of India, namely Pakistan zones.... be constituted into a sovereign independent State.'¹² Its novelty lay in the fact that it dropped all reference to two independent Muslim states which the League and Jinnah had persistently advocated since the Lahore Resolution of 1940. It was designed to pull together his provincial supporters, particularly those from Bengal, who were the strongest advocates of two sovereign states. Hashim's protests were a mere irritant to Jinnah. His authority had reached a new zenith which made Hashim or Suhrawardy reluctant to clash with him when unity, or more importantly cosmetic unanimity, was crucial at a moment perceived to be a historic juncture.¹³ The Convention provided an explicit definition of Pakistan and demanded its implementation without delay, by the creation of a Pakistan Constituent Assembly. This was

⁹ P. Moon, ed., *Wavell. The Viceroy's Journal*, (London, 1973), p.144.

¹⁰ NDC, CID, S 413, Punjab Police Secret Abstract of Intelligence), no 32 Rich, 1 Sep. 1945, p.291. Ibid, no 47 Bridgeman, 15 Dec. 1945, p.447. In the true Punjab tradition, many Unionist families had a foot in both camps. Ibid, no 43 Dean, 17 Nov. 1945, p.401,

¹¹ *Return Showing the Results of Elections to the Central Legislative Assembly and the Provincial Legislatures in 1945-46* (New Delhi, 1948) pp. 8, 55.

¹² QAA, AIML 280/56, Resolution placed before the AIML Legislator's convention, 9 April 1946.

¹³ The only opposition came in the Subjects Committee from Abul Hashim who protested that the Convention could not modify the Lahore Resolution. Jinnah's initial defence was that the reference to state was a typographical error but when Hashim proved this to be incorrect by referring to the original minutes, Jinnah said, 'I do not want one Pakistan state but I want one Constituent Assembly for the Muslims of India'. When the resolution was presented to the Convention Hashim absented himself so avoiding the humiliation of being forced to propose the resolution in the open session. Abul Hashim, *In Retrospection*, pp. 109-110.

Jinnah's opening gambit in the negotiations with the Cabinet Mission. However his inability to sustain his claim to represent all Muslims weakened his hand in the ensuing negotiations. Even the facade of a consensus in the League was quickly demolished when the Cabinet Mission interviewed the chief ministers and it became apparent that the League's foundation was based on the shifting sands of regional interests. Suhrawardy demolished the two nation theory by arguing that religion was not the only determining factor and attached great importance to linguistic ties.¹⁴ Hidayatullah's only interest was that the centre should keep out of Sindi affairs and Mamdot declared that he wanted the whole of Punjab and was prepared to come to terms with the Sikhs but had no idea what Sikhistan meant.¹⁵ The point was rammed home even harder when non-League Muslim opinion was contacted. Dr Khan declared that Sarhad only wanted autonomy and restricted powers for the centre and refused to concede that there was any political differences between Hindus and Muslims.¹⁶ While Khizr foresaw difference between Sindis, Pakhtuns, Baluchis and Punjabis emerging once they were brought together into one state.¹⁷

The Cabinet Mission offered a truncated Pakistan, an independent sovereign state consisting of only the Muslim majority areas. It was rejected by Jinnah because it was totally unacceptable to his supporters in the Muslim-majority provinces. He was more interested in the confederal alternative, Plan A, consisting of two groups, Pakistan and Hindustan, with a weak centre. However the Congress was unwilling to go beyond offering a federal arrangement where the residuary powers were vested in autonomous provinces. Cripps prepared a compromise solution where by a three tier structure, an all-India Union which was composed of two sub-federations of Pakistan and Hindustan based on the existing provinces. The arrangement appealed to Jinnah even though it would replace a sovereign Pakistan by federating groups, because it allowed for a sub-federation legislature which gave the League a structure to impose control over the Muslim-majority provinces and parity in the interim government. But the proposal was unacceptable to the Congress as it wanted a unitary structure and found the proposed groups unacceptable. The proposals were watered down during the negotiations and what finally emerged was again a three-tier edifice with the centre exercising power over defence, foreign affairs, communications and revenue. There was no parity between the Congress and the

¹⁴ Note of Meeting between the Cabinet Delegation, Wavell and Suhrawardy, 8 April 1946, *TP vii*, p.163.

¹⁵ Note of Meeting between the Cabinet Delegation, Wavell and Hidayatullah, 4 April 1946, *TP vii*, p.126.

¹⁶ Note of Meeting between the Cabinet Delegation, Wavell and Dr Khan Sahib, 1 April 1946, *TP vii*, p.75.

¹⁷ Note of Meeting between the Cabinet Delegation, Wavell and Khizer Hyat [sic], 5 April 1946, *TP vii*, p.147.

Muslim League, the two Muslim groupings were not binding on the constituent provinces, residuary powers and not sovereign rights were invested in the provinces and there was no right of secession. Even worse for Jinnah was the fact that the preamble to the plan explicitly rejected Pakistan which angered many Muslim Leaguers.¹⁸

Why did he accept the Mission Plan despite this rejection? For one thing, it induced an almost audible sigh of relief from the Muslim-majority provinces¹⁹ and the Muslims from the minority provinces also endorsed it.²⁰ Jinnah was himself in favour of accepting²¹ and had received assurances from Wavell that there would be parity in the interim government between the League and the Congress.²² However, he was nervous of facing his Working Committee as the preamble which rejected explicitly a sovereign Pakistan had incensed his supporters.²³ Jinnah persuaded the AIML, in June 1946, to reject the preamble and to accept the body of the statement as consistent with the principle of Pakistan. He argued that the plan conceded the essence of Pakistan and the decennial review of the constitution would allow them to leave the Union if they wanted to. This nimble footwork was needed to prevent a split in the League between the politicians and the religious leaders but still thirteen Leaguers such as Hasrat Mohani and Abdus Sattar Niazi, hardline separatists, voted against Jinnah.²⁴

However, Nehru's press statement which was interpreted as evidence of the Congress' *male fide* induced Jinnah to redefine Pakistan. The Muslim League retaliated by instigating a non-violent civil disobedience campaign in August. But the constitutional negotiations at the centre, the communal rift created by the election campaign and the Direct Action campaign, produced a volatile cocktail. All the pent up communal hatred exploded in the Great Calcutta Killing which sent shock waves throughout India. As the

¹⁸ A. Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman*, pp. 186-202.

¹⁹ The Muslim League ministers were not keen 'Pakistanis' and were relieved that Bengal was not going to be partitioned. Record of Cabinet Delegation, Wavell and Burrows, 24 May 1946, *TP vii*, p.675. There was general relief with the Muslim League statement in NWFP and Sind as well. *Ibid*, pp. 852,872.

²⁰ NAP, QAP, F469/40, Nawab Yusaf to Jinnah, 7 May 1946.

²¹ Jalal, *op. cit.*, p.202, fn 81.

²² Jinnah to Wavell, 8 June 1946, *TP vii*, p.841.

²³ Note by Major Watt, *TP vii*, p.684.

²⁴ Jalal, *op. cit.*, p.202,fn 84.

carnage spread to Bihar and the United Provinces, the League supporters there became advocates of partition and were prepared to migrate.²⁵

Jinnah returned to his previous position of demanding a sovereign and independent state, comprising six full provinces and made this clear to Attlee and later to Mountbatten. The League now had become psychologically allergic to the Mission Plan but were not prepared to accept partition of the provinces²⁶ which was unacceptable to the Punjab and Bengal, despite pressure building up in Bihar. Consequently, any plan which would keep these provinces undivided Jinnah had to consider seriously, even if it meant modifying again his interpretation of Pakistan. Suhrawardy told Mountbatten that he preferred the Cabinet Plan option but if that was not possible he was ready to have a united independent Bengal outside of Pakistan.²⁷ Mountbatten despite his sympathy for the idea could not wait long and gave him only two months to pull it off. Jinnah was delighted by the proposition of a united independent Bengal, even though it would be outside of Pakistan,²⁸ and responded positively to Suhrawardy's plea that if the discussion on 'sovereign Bengal' was to have any chance Jinnah must fight off the demand for partition.²⁹ Jinnah obliged by robustly rejecting partition and argued for the entire provinces of Punjab and Bengal to be included in Pakistan. In order to give Suhrawardy the necessary breathing space he argued that the issue of partition of the two provinces had to be settled by a plebiscite and upped the stakes by raising the demand for a corridor.³⁰

By supporting Suhrawardy's initiative he also raised the possibility of an undivided Punjab joining Pakistan. But Jinnah had no control over events in the province which was burning. The Punjab League was anxious to overthrow Khizr's ministry and to form a government. But the leadership, instead of trying to enter into negotiations with the Sikhs and Hindus were adamant that the Muslims were entitled to rule the province

²⁵ NAP, QAP, F565/101, Mazhar Inam, Chairman of The Provisional Migration Committee to Jinnah, 12 Nov. 1946. The decision to leave their ancestral homes and migrate was not an easy one. Even the most ardent Leaguers found that sentimental and emotional reasons to be very influential in determining whether they would depart for Pakistan or not. Many luminaries of the League such as the Nawab of Mahmudabad and Hasrat Mohani stayed behind. The ultimate irony was that the staunchest and most committed members of Muslim nationalism found that Pakistan was a bitter-sweet pill which in the end could not protect their interests.

²⁶ Liaquat said that if the Cabinet Mission Plan was renamed the Mountbatten Plan, 'psychologically he was sure that on both sides it would stand an incomparable better chance of being accepted than anything with the name "Cabinet Mission" attached to it.' Record of Interview between Mountbatten and Liaquat, 10 April 1947, *TP x*, pp. 331-332

²⁷ Record of Interview between Mountbatten and Suhrawardy, 26 April 1947, *TP x*, pp.448.

²⁸ Minutes by Ismay and Mountbatten, 26 April 1947, *TP x*, p.450.

²⁹ NAP, QAP F458/75-79, Suhrawardy to Liaquat, 21 May 1947.

³⁰ Statement made by Jinnah, 11 May 1947, *TP x*, p.777. India and Burma committee, 26th meeting, 21 May 1947, *TP x*, p.921.

on their own and inciting their supporters to maintain the agitation.³¹ The complacency of the Muslim League was eventually exposed by the Sikhs becoming committed to partition. When partition of the province was announced by Delhi it came as a great shock and the Punjab League had to put considerable efforts into sustaining morale among its members.³²

Failure of the plan for a Pakistan including the whole of Bengal and Punjab had its silver lining for Jinnah. His relationship with Suhrawardy was strained at best, he had little control over the affairs of the Bengal League and the partition of the province led to his supporters the Khwaja group taking over which made it easier to keep east Bengal within the orbit of the League's centralizing strategy. However, if the troublesome Suhrawardy had succeeded with his plan, Jinnah felt secure that any discomfiture would be greater for Nehru and Patel than for him. It would have been a major blow to their attempt to establish a centralized state causing them great problems in retaining control over their non-Muslim supporters. Once the proposal for a sovereign united Bengal proved to be still born, due to the Congress' insistence on partition, the focus shifted to the fate of Sind and NWFP. The referendum in Sarhad and the election triumph in Sind gave the League the victories needed to bring these provinces into Pakistan. Jinnah in order to consolidate his hold over 'moth eaten Pakistan' and make sure that the deal was honoured, insisted on becoming the Governor-General of Pakistan. Otherwise he would be unable to control the centrifugal currents which were operating in the country.³³

The central thrust of Muslim nationalism, asserting a monolithic Muslim identity, created irrevocable problems at the central and provincial levels. In order to win seats sectarian propaganda was successfully used and it heightened communal tensions making it difficult for pro-Congress Muslims to maintain co-operation with non-Muslims. However to avoid partition of the two provinces the League needed non-Muslim co-operation which was now not forthcoming. Consequently the short term success rebounded in the longer term forcing the League to accept the division of the Punjab and Bengal.

The transformation of Muslim nationalism into a mass movement was crucial to Jinnah's strategy. Without popular following both the British and the Congress would have ignored him and come to a mutually satisfactory arrangement. Economic nationalism of the Muslim élite groups and the masses was in the

³¹ Daultana when he toured the Attock district 'told the people in at least one village that if they could stick it out for a fortnight or three weeks, all proceedings against them would be withdrawn and the officials who have suppressed the disturbances would be given a hot time. Jenkins to Mounbatten, 30 April 1947, *TP* x, p.506.

³² NDC, CID, S 415, (Punjab Police Secret Abstract of Intelligence), no 24 Sutton, 14 June 1947, p.307

³³ A. Jalal, 'Inheriting the Raj: Jinnah and the Governor-Generalship Issue', *Modern Asian Studies*, 19,1 (1985), pp. 43-49.

background during the early 1940s but became increasingly significant during and after the elections. Its effect was to draw in the masses previously untouched by Muslim nationalism and unite them with the élites in a common cause. The intellectuals provided the publicity and ideas which were disseminated during the run up to the elections. The campaign was funded by the mercantile communities and the *pirs* provided the means to reach the rural population. Pakistan was successfully projected as an Islamic panacea which would solve all problems of the Muslims. At a later stage government officials and military personnel were to increasingly support the League and place their expertise at the service of Muslim nationalism.³⁴

To the urban professionals Pakistan appeared to be a land of opportunity free from Hindu and Sikh competition for education and jobs. The League, in December 1943, established a Committee for Education in order to review and foster all forms of instruction and training. Its purpose was not simply to insist on separate Muslim institutions, a demand which at the time coincided with the defence of the Urdu language, a key issue in the competition for jobs with non-Muslims. But in the long term, Muslim League claimed that Pakistan promised to usher in vast schemes for social, economic, industrial, and educational development which would require substantial numbers of educated personnel and the Committee for Education had to consider the provision of trained professionals.³⁵ The significance of economic nationalism among the urban middle class partly explains the strong association of students and the intelligentsia with Muslim nationalism. Jinnah called 'Aligarh the arsenal of Pakistan' and this was no idle boast. Its students provided dedicated peripatetic bands touring the far off corners of Muslim India and the staff joined the Committee of Writers, led by Jamiluddin Ahmad, which produced the literature used by the students.

Equally, expectations among the Muslim trading communities, the Memons, Bohras, Khojas, and Chiniotis, had increased due to the activities of the League. They perceived Pakistan to be free from non-muslim competition, presenting greater opportunity for them and consequently threw their weight behind the League. The Haroons and Ispahanis occupied important positions in the party hierarchy both on the provincial and all-India level, and also provided financial support. The Ispahanis along with the Raja of Mahmudabad were the main benefactors responsible for launching the *Dawn*.³⁶ The Adamjees rallied the

³⁴ Chaudhri Mohammad Ali, *The Emergence of Pakistan* (New York, 1967), p.84. General Mohammad Musa, *Jawan to General: Recollections of a Pakistani Soldier* (Karachi, 1984), pp. 65-68.

³⁵ QAA, SHC, UP v/94, Mohammad Afzal Husain Qadri presenting draft Terms of Reference of the Education Committee of the AIML to Jinnah, 5 december 1943. Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan, *Muslim Educational Problems* (1st 1945, 2ed., Lahore, 1952) pp. 25, 31-32.

³⁶ Jinnah to Ispahani, 3 Oct. 1942, in Z.H. Zaidi, ed., *M.A. Jinnah: Ispahani Correspondence, 1936-48*, (Karachi, 1976), p.305-6.

Calcutta Memons to support the movement and Habibs, Shaikhs and Wazir Alis contributed financially to Jinnah's war chest³⁷ which by 1945 had amassed nineteen lakhs of Rupees.³⁸

Jinnah through Hassan Ispahani's efforts was able to bring the various magnates together under the auspices of a single body to represent Muslim businessmen. The Federation of Muslim Chambers of Commerce and Industry was formed in 1943 out of the various regional chambers of commerce and the All-India Muslim Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Bombay.³⁹ Jinnah also encouraged entry into industry and finance which was slow. The first Muslim bank was established only in the 1940s by the Habib family and they later entered into shipping, insurance and industry as well. These efforts were consistent with the views of the AIML Planning Committee convened with the object of evolving a development plan for Muslims, particularly in the Pakistan areas, for post-war reconstruction.⁴⁰ The mercantile community was considered to be the economic nucleus around which this project could take shape, helped by the fact of the League holding the portfolios of finance, or planning and development plus agriculture in the interim government.⁴¹ However the ideological ambiguity as to whether Pakistan was to be separatist in character or an unit within some all-India framework was to cause serious friction within the Planning Committee.⁴²

Later when the League joined the interim government Muslim bureaucrats began to openly support them. Chaudhri Mohammad Ali, Financial Adviser to the Military Finance Department, at this crucial juncture threw his weight behind Jinnah and strongly advised him to take the finance portfolio in the interim government which was being offered by the Congress. When Liaquat became Finance minister he became his unofficial adviser⁴³. Similarly the Muslim officers of the armed forces, most of whom were abroad fighting the war, backed the Muslim League at the last moment. There was one indication that the League had some support among the Muslim officers when the entire Muslim staff of Dehra Dun Academy declared their

³⁷ S.A. Kochanek, *Interest Groups and Development. Business and Politics in Pakistan* (Delhi, 1983), p.21.

³⁸ NAP, QAP F/56, AIML Fund, Statement for the period 27 May 1942 to 30 Nov. 1945.

³⁹ Hassan Ispahani to Jinnah, 3 Sep. 1943, Z.H. Zaidi, ed., op. cit., p.369.

⁴⁰ QAA, SHC, AIML 66, Haleem to Jinnah, 3 Aug. 1944.

⁴¹ QAA, SHC, AIML 110, Haleem to Jinnah, 8 June 1945.

⁴² NAP, QAP, F1092/310-314, Haleem to Jinnah, 28 Aug. 1945.

⁴³ Chaudhri Mohammad Ali, *The Emergence of Pakistan*, p.84.

support for Jinnah.⁴⁴ More concrete endorsement came from Mohammad Musa who advised Nawab Ismail Khan the League representative on the Nationalization Committee of the Indian Armed Forces.⁴⁵

Among some of the rural population of the Muslim-majority provinces economic nationalism was also a potent force, Pakistan was presented as a Muslim utopia which would banish the harsh drudgeries of life. The *maulanas* and *pirs* were used extensively to spread the word, particularly in the run up to the provincial elections of 1945-46. The Chisti *sajjada nashins* of Punjab,⁴⁶ the Pir of Manki Sharif of Hazara and Hafiz Moinniuddin the Pir of Chittagong and Mohammad Ali Rashdi of Sind threw their lot in with the League on the promise that the *sharia* would be applied in Pakistan. Consequently they emphasized the new millennium which would be ushered in by the establishment of the *sharia*. This line of propaganda proved very influential in winning grassroots support for the League in the rural areas.

However both in Punjab and Bengal the provincial Leagues manifesto was injected with socialist rhetoric made credible by the various radical elements joining the party. Quite often the two different ideologies were so intertwined that it was difficult to differentiate between them. The conflation of the secular and the spiritual was epitomized by Abul Hashim, the secretary of the Bengal Muslim League. He denied that he was a communist or a capitalist but called himself a *Rabani*, a Muslim who believed in an egalitarian Islamic state. Hashim's radical blend of Islam transformed the Bengal Muslim League into what Raghbir Ahsan described proudly to Jinnah as a revolutionary mass movement, committed to the abolition of the *zemindari* system and the Permanent Settlement.⁴⁷ His radical interpretation allowed him to accept the offer from the General Secretary of the Communist Party of India, P.C. Joshi, to help organize the Bengal Muslim League as a democratic and progressive organization.⁴⁸

In the case of the Punjab, Mumtaz Daultana, the Secretary, an ex-card carrying member of the Communist Party brought in top communists into the party such as Abdullah Malik, Danial Latifi and

⁴⁴ QAA, SHC, UP ii, The Muslim Staff, Indian Military Academy, Dehra Dun to Jinnah, 29 Oct. 1946.

⁴⁵ General Mohammad Musa, *Jawan to General: Recollections of a Pakistani Soldier*, pp. 65-68.

⁴⁶ The *pirs* of Taunsa in Dera Ghazi Khan District, Sial Sharif in Shahpur District, Jalapur in Jhelum District and Golra in Rawalpindi backed the League. David Gilmartin, 'Religious Leadership and the Pakistan Movement in the Punjab', *Modern Asian Studies*, 13,3 (1979), p.512.

⁴⁷ QAA, SHC, Bengal iv/18, Raghbir Ahsan to Jinnah, 15 Nov. 1944.

⁴⁸ Abul Hashim, *In Retrospection*, pp. 39-40.

Jahanian.⁴⁹ They were mainly involved in organizational work and Danial Latifi wrote the party manifesto which had a socialistic bias. It promised nationalization of key industries and banks, land reforms, relief from the Hindu *bania* and the rent collector and offered various alternatives for the demobbed soldiers who were returning home.⁵⁰ The utopian rhetoric had a seductive lure for the rural population of Bengal that had been victim of famine and to the peasantry of Punjab chafing under war time restrictions. Thus for the rural poor, whatever way they looked at Pakistan, either its spiritual or its temporal aspects, they saw it as a millennial resolution for their problems.

The League's advance was made easier by the Congress' declining influence over Muslims. The Congress was not keen on fighting the elections based on a limited franchise and their reluctance was aggravated by the restrictions on the party and its members which continued to be enforced.⁵¹ However, once this impediment was removed the nationalists were forced to turn their attention to the question of winning back Muslim support. Maulana Azad had reached the conclusion that a definite policy on what he called the Muslim question was required. However, first, the pro-Congress Muslims needed to organize themselves, agree on the future constitution and then persuade the Congress to accept them. He appealed to Gandhi with the plea that the Muslims should be allowed to reach a consensus. He suggested that a federal structure composed of autonomous units with the right to secession, combined with joint electorates and reserved seats, parity in the central executive and the central legislature and the provision that the head of the federation should alternately be a Muslim and a Hindu would make Muslims drop the idea of partition.⁵² Gandhi was unenthusiastic and Jamshed Mehta urged the All-India Congress Committee to resist granting self-determination to the provinces.⁵³ Despite this response the principle of autonomy was adopted by the nationalist Muslims. However it did not have the desired result and only heightened the confusion, with many Muslims unable to differentiate between their position and that of the Muslim League.

In preparation for the elections the pro-Congress Muslims were invited by Maulana Madani to New Delhi to confer. The Jamiat, All-India Momin Conference, Muslim Majlis, Khudai Khidmatgars and the

⁴⁹ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4144, 790D.00/9-1250, Candreva to the Department of State, 12 Sep. 1950.

⁵⁰ Punjab Muslim League Manifesto, *Pakistan Times*, 8 Aug. 1947

⁵¹ Colville to Wavell 25 Aug. 1945, *TP* vi, pp. 94-95.

⁵² Jenkins to Mr Abell, 28 Aug. 1945, *TP* vi, pp. 155-7.

⁵³ *Bombay Chronicle*, 12 Sep. 1945.

Krishak Proja Party agreed to form a central parliamentary board and on the basis of a common manifesto, demanding freedom now and disputing the League's claim to be the 'sole spokesman' of the Muslims. However the Congress and its allies did poorly in the Central Legislature elections receiving about ten per cent of the vote.⁵⁴ Their greatest handicap was that the League had made great advances since the 1937 election and the time the Congress had to recover after being released from jail was insufficient. Kazmi stated that in the United Provinces there was hardly three weeks and in some areas only two weeks of canvassing before the elections. Many sympathizers suffered from defeatism due to the long absence of the nationalists from the field but at the hustings the people began to respond. Madani's contribution was particularly important, for his devastating critique of the notion of Pakistan as a British ploy to delay departure began to take effect.⁵⁵ The Khudai Khidmatgar's support was also important and contingents were sent to join the campaign in the United Provinces and Bihar.⁵⁶

But the Nationalist Muslims and the Congress fared as badly in the provincial elections as they had done at the centre securing only eleven per cent of the Muslim vote.⁵⁷ However despite the success of mass Muslim nationalism the elections were not an unqualified victory for the League. Its success was restricted to the urban areas of India and to major parts of rural Punjab and Bengal. In large parts of rural Sind, N.W.F.P. and Kashmir, Jinnah and the League were of little significance. The Muslim League faced resistance in varying degrees in all the Muslim majority provinces and when the Congress failed to win Muslim votes it turned to forming ministries. In Sarhad, the Khudai Khidmatgars won handsomely and formed the government. In Sind the nationalists allied with G.M. Sayed producing a deadlock, with both the League and the Congress having equal support in the house. Significantly for the first time in the Punjab a Congress coalition came to power when the Congress-Akali-Unionist alliance was formed.

By going for ministries, it was possible for the Congress to sustain its claim through the tortuous negotiations with the League that it also represented Muslims. On this basis they refused to accept Jinnah's demand for parity in the Cabinet Mission Plan and in the interim government. Finally Nehru openly repudiated the Mission Plan, on 10 July 1946, on the basis that Sindis and Pakhtuns were against grouping

⁵⁴ *Return Showing the Results of Elections to the Central Legislative Assembly and the Provincial Legislatures in 1945-46* (New Delhi, 1948) p.8.

⁵⁵ *Bombay Chronicle*, 11 Dec. 1945.

⁵⁶ NDC, CID, S 395 (CID NWFP Peshawar), Report from Special Branch Lucknow, 28 Feb. 1946, p.30.

⁵⁷ *Return Showing the Results of Elections to the Central Legislative Assembly and the Provincial Legislatures in 1945-46* (New Delhi, 1948) p.55.

and being dominated by Punjab. There was no intention of allowing Assam to be dominated by Bengal by being aggregated in the same group. The centre would liberally interpret the common subjects, use the control over finance, taxation and foreign trade to settle inter-provincial disputes and intervene in the case of emergencies due to administrative and economic crisis.⁵⁸ The Congress intended to deploy the centre to limit the provinces' room for manoeuvre.

Only after Nehru entered the interim government did the Congress try to bring the AIML back to the negotiating table. On 6 August the Congress Working Committee, as a gesture, announced that it was willing to accept the Cabinet Mission Plan but held that each province had the right 'to form or join a group or not.' The sovereign character of the constituent assembly was emphasized as well as its right to function and promulgate a constitution without interference from any external authority.⁵⁹ How did it expect the Muslim League which had developed a phobia about the name Cabinet Mission Plan, to accept them? They believed that the Damocles sword of partition would pull the Muslim-majority provinces back into the fold. Azad was of the opinion that if partition was announced it was highly likely that there would be a revolt in the League, with Muslim Bengal seceding from the party and that there was also a slim chance of this happening in the Punjab.⁶⁰ Patel argued that if Pakistan was to consist only of Muslim Punjab and Sind 'there was a real chance that either Mr Jinnah would be forced to come to my terms, or be overthrown by the League'.⁶¹

However Jinnah turned the tables on the Congress by supporting Suhrawardy's attempt for a united independent Bengal. Gandhi supported the plan but Nehru was dead set against it, unless an independent Bengal was loosely linked to India.⁶² Instead the Congress demanded the partition of Bengal and Punjab and the transfer of power to two independent states. By making the Congress accept the onus for partition, Jinnah halted desertion from the League camp and undermined the position of pro-Congress supporters. The success of this manoeuvre left the Frontier Congress and G.M. Sayed rudderless and sealed their political fate. The Khudai Khidmatgars wanted the alternative of becoming independent but this was refused by all parties. Neither the League nor the Congress countenanced that possibility due to the impact it would have on the

⁵⁸ Nehru's press conference, Bombay, 10 July 1946, N.N. Mitra, ed., *Indian Annual Register, July-Dec. 1946, ii*, (Calcutta, 1946), pp.145-7.

⁵⁹ Congress Working Committee Resolution, 10 Aug 1946, *TP vii*, pp. 217-8.

⁶⁰ Record of Interview between Mountbatten and Sardar Patel, 12 April 1947, *TP x*, p.213.

⁶¹ Record of Interview between Mountbatten and Maulana Azad, 12 April 1947, *TP x*, p.215.

⁶² Nehru believed 'that partition now would anyhow bring East Bengal into Hindustan in a few years'. Mountbatten to Burrows, 16 May 1947, *TP x*, pp. 849-850.

other provinces. In the Sind election G.M. Sayed's support melted away. His supporters knew which way the wind was blowing and deserted him for the League. The price that the Congress was willing to pay for a centralized state was to sacrifice their Muslim supporters. The only alternative which would induce the Muslim League to remain in a united India was a weak centre but it raised problems for the Congress of controlling their non-Muslim supporters under such an arrangement.

Focusing exclusively on the politics at the centre, the inconsistencies of mass Muslim nationalism are often overlooked. By shifting the analysis to an examination of the political developments in the Muslim-majority provinces, it becomes clear that the rise of mass Muslim nationalism was not a unilinear triumph but a complex process marked by deep inner contradictions. There was no uniformity in the way the Muslim League was transformed into a mass party in the Muslim-majority provinces. The provinces witnessed a complex and difficult struggle involving the regional orientated forces, local interests, ethnicity and community consciousness. Its nature and emphasis varied from province to province and over time being determined by shifting local circumstances. The elements of consistency which emerge were that the centrifugal elements in the Muslim-majority provinces resisted the centripetal impulses of the League high command and the local pulls were present in varying strength depending on the province despite the upsurge in Muslim nationalism.

In Bengal, a mass movement had emerged asserting a Bengali-Muslim identity. It was loyal only to the leadership of the provincial Muslim League and not to the high command. The party leaders took over the Bengal parliamentary group, displaced the pro-Jinnah cohort from positions of power and conducted an election campaign which swept the combined opposition aside. However it left Jinnah in the uncomfortable situation where he had to accommodate the strong regionalist current in Bengal with his two nation theory at the centre. Consequently when he claimed the election result was a mandate for Pakistan, in reality the situation was more complex on the ground.

The feuding between the Bengal Muslim League and its parliamentary wing erupted again when elections were announced for the first quarter of 1946. The Khwaja group wanted to stem the rot and resist the increasing authority of Hashim and his supporters. Nazimuddin attempted to capture the nine man Parliamentary Board and distribute election tickets to his supporters. The rules favoured the Khwaja group, as the President of the provincial League and the Leader of the parliamentary party would be *ex-officio* members and one each from the Lower and Upper House of the Bengal Assembly would be elected. Suhrawardy who up to now had sided with the Khwaja group had expected to be elected from the Lower

House but Nazimuddin nominated Fazlur Rahman and Nurul Amin.⁶³ Suhrawardy now joined Abul Hashim in resisting Nazimuddin who was confident of winning two more seats and have a clear majority. He was warned that his supporters were misleading him and that he should compromise but he was so confident of victory that he ignored all advice. The Hashim-Suhrawardy group won all five seats⁶⁴ and Nazimuddin was so unnerved by the defeat that he seriously considered withdrawing from politics. Neither he nor Shahabuddin stood in the election and the former for a while toyed with the idea of seeking employment with the princely state of Hyderabad, before dropping it due to suggestions made by Casey and Liaquat.⁶⁵

Suhrawardy's successful bid for leadership of the party was extremely important. It meant that the Hashim-Suhrawardy group would be distributing tickets for the provincial election to their supporters, marked the subordination of the parliamentary group by the organization and was a defeat for Jinnah. Suhrawardy was too independent for Jinnah's liking and his distrust became crystallized into a cold hostility between the League high command and the Hashim-Suhrawardy group. The tension between the two was most apparent when the issue of financing the election campaign and establishing a weekly party journal were raised. Hassan Ispahani, Jinnah's most loyal supporter resigned from the Working Committee in protest and warned him that the present constitution of the Working Committee would prevent the Muslim magnates of Calcutta from funding the impending election.⁶⁶ Jinnah was perplexed by the development and was uncertain, at first, as to how to respond. However he clearly distrusted Suhrawardy and rejected his application for Rs 50,000 from the Central Fund.⁶⁷

The Bengal League launched a major fund raising campaign, the entire provincial machinery was thrown into action and the district committees were given targets between Rs 250 to Rs 500 to be raised for the Provincial Election Fund. Substantial number of students, League workers and supporters were employed in the fund raising campaign.⁶⁸ But just before the elections Jinnah had to concede that the provincial League had inadequate funds for the campaign and contributed two lakhs of Rupees. The money

⁶³ Abul Hashim, *In Retrospection*, pp. 89-90.

⁶⁴ QAA, SHC, Bengal iii/95, Hassan Ispahani to Jinnah, 1 Oct. 1945.

⁶⁵ H. Rashid, *The Foreshadowing of Bangladesh*, pp. 199, 204.

⁶⁶ QAA, SHC, Bengal iii/95, Hassan Ispahani to Jinnah, 1 Oct. 1945.

⁶⁷ QAA, SHC, Bengal iii/14, Jinnah to Suhrawardy, 30 Oct. 1945.

⁶⁸ *Star of India*, 5 Nov. 1945, cited in H. Rashid, *op. cit.*, p.224.

was not transferred to the provincial League but to a special Committee of Control, consisting of Jinnah loyalists, to administer the fund on behalf of the AIML.⁶⁹

The friction between the AIML and the Bengal League also occurred when Abul Hashim tried to establish a weekly party journal. The need for it had become far more as the *Azad* was the mouthpiece of the Khwaja group and Hashim arranged for the publication of the Bengali weekly, the *Millat*. When he approached Jinnah for his approval, he advised him not to publish in the name of the Muslim League but only in his personal capacity. Hashim went ahead anyway and, on 16 November 1945, published it as the Bengal League's official organ and its circulation reached 35,000 copies a week at its peak.⁷⁰

The AIML also actively helped the Khwaja group to remain an influential force in Bengal politics. Direct intervention along the lines of Sind, by Jinnah, were out of the question, the Hashim-Suhrawardy group had mass support and organizational backing which would have rendered any such attempt futile. Consequently when Akram Khan requested Jinnah to intervene on his behalf, he was rebuffed.⁷¹ However an opportunity arose over the appeals made to the Central Parliamentary Board regarding the distribution of tickets. Complaints were made that Suhrawardy was ignoring pro-Khwaja supporters and nominated former Proja Party assembly members such as Shamsuddin Ahmad, as candidates.⁷² The Board accepted twenty two appeals, nearly all were Nazimuddin's supporters, such as Sayed Abdus Salim, Khwaja Nooruddin and Abul Kalam Shamsudin.⁷³ When Jinnah visited Bengal he stressed the need for unity and Khwaja Nazimuddin and Shahabuddin now waited on the sidelines anticipating the moment to strike back once the polling were over.

The campaign had little input from the central leadership and was essentially a provincial affair. It was initiated with great gusto with a meeting of half a million in Calcutta.⁷⁴ League parties with Abul Hashim, Suhrawardy and Nazimuddin toured the *moufussils* and were received with great enthusiasm. Jinnah only addressed meetings in Calcutta and his message was simple: they were fighting for Pakistan and the Muslim League stood for the poor. Liaquat Ali Khan also visited the province briefly, presiding over a

⁶⁹ NAP, QAP, F52, Jinnah to BPML, 9 March 1946.

⁷⁰ Abul Hashim, *In Retrospection*, p.99.

⁷¹ QAA, SHC, Bengal iv/6, Jinnah to Akram Khan, 27 Aug. 1945.

⁷² QAA, SHC, Bengal ii/6, Hafiz Moniruddin to Jinnah, 7 Feb. 1946. SHC, Bengal ii/7, M.A. Bari to Jinnah, 7 Feb. 1946.

⁷³ H. Rashid, *op. cit.* p.206.

⁷⁴ QAA, SHC, Bengal iii/15, Suhrawardy to Jinnah, 29 Dec. 1945.

League conference in Gaffargon where they faced stiff opposition from Maulana Shamsul Huda, a local divine. Students belonging to the Bengal Muslim Students League played a prominent role and it was claimed by the League that 20,000 were involved in the campaign.⁷⁵ Abul Mansur Ahmad collected 300 and targeted them against Fazlul Huq and Nausher Ali who were contesting the elections in Barisal and Bagerhat.

Abul Hashim and his radical supporters were successful in utilizing Islamic and socialistic propaganda in winning over the rural vote and they were aided by the support they received from the Communist Party.⁷⁶ While the Khwaja group exclusively deployed the *pirs* and *maulvis* whom they patronized into the service of the League, Maulana Abdul Hai Siddiqui of Furfura at the request of the party convened a conference of the Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Islam in order to neutralize the influence of the pro-Congress *ulama*. Maulana Shabbir Usmani endorsed the League by stating that it was the Islamic duty of Muslims to ensure the victory of the League.⁷⁷

The nationalist Muslims were brushed aside by the wave of support for the Bengal League. This was despite the particular attention that the Congress paid to the province in order to invalidate Jinnah's claim that only he represented the Muslims. The Congress sponsored the Bengal Muslim Parliamentary Board which consisted of the Krishak Proja Party, the Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Hind, and nationalist Muslims. However the result of the Central Assembly Elections shook the pro-Congress forces. Muslim League swept the polls in all six Muslim constituencies and nationalists suffered a humiliating defeat. Defection from the nationalist parliamentary board took place, Shamsuddin Ahmed joined the League in December 1945 and others followed suit.⁷⁸

Fazlul Huq had realized since 1943 that major changes in Muslim politics had taken place which was why he denied being against Pakistan⁷⁹. He tried to return to the Muslim League, but Jinnah was not willing to have him at any price. Huq's transformation was based on the realization that most Bengali Muslims wanted Pakistan and considered the League to be better placed to look after their interest than any regional party. Unable to return to the fold, he fought the elections on the issue of agrarian reform. His

⁷⁵ *Star of India*, 8 Jan. 1946, cited in H. Rashid, op. cit., p.226.

⁷⁶ Abul Hashim, *In Retrospection*, pp. 101-102.

⁷⁷ H. Rashid, *The Foreshadowing of Bangladesh*, p.227.

⁷⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 213-214.

⁷⁹ Huq envisaged Bengal being autonomous but not separate from India. *Bombay Chronicle*, 4 Feb. 1943.

powerful oratorical skills and his political stature prevented him being consigned to the dustbin of history. The Jamiat held a conference which Maulana Husain Madani attended along with other *ulama* and a number of Ahrar and Khaksar volunteers from north India. But despite the generous supply of money and men by the Congress they were unable to make much headway.⁸⁰ The Bengal Muslim League won 113 seats and the Krishak Proja Party and the independents together secured only nine seats.⁸¹

The widening gap between Hindus and Muslims was an important reason for the failure of Muslim nationalists. Their position was made impossible by the Bengal Congress. It had shed its left wing and adopted a Hindu populist programme indistinguishable from the Mahasabha's agenda though the nationalist rhetoric was not abandoned.⁸² By 1944 communal relations had become highly polarized and Calcutta officials recognized that it was ready to explode on the slightest provocation. The League's election campaign made the situation worse but it became uncontrollable with the launching of the League's Direct Action Programme, on 16 August. The latter consisted of a complete *hartal*, a mass rally, public meetings and congregations in mosques, mobilization of the Muslim student population and the parading of the National Guards both men and women in different part of the city. The action was intended to demonstrate the popular support for the League but it exploded into a homicidal orgy of violence.⁸³ Suhrawardy's intemperate behaviour inflamed passion further and the stage was set for the ensuing carnage.⁸⁴

When Muslim League supporters tried to enforce the *hartal* on Hindu shops in north Calcutta, Congress and Mahasabha supporters began to interfere with the Muslim processions. It triggered off a vicious cycle of violent reprisal which left at least 4,000 dead and 10,000 thousand injured. The violence consisted of large crowds battling it out on the streets and attacks by small hit squads on isolated families and individuals belonging to the 'enemy' community. However because Calcutta was not a Bengali city but a cosmopolitan one, the violence was to send tremors not only throughout Bengal but all across north India up to the Khyber Pass. The fact that the crowds consisted of migrant workers from Bihar, United Provinces, Punjab and Frontier meant that once the news of the butchery reached their home villages the talk of revenge

⁸⁰ H. Rashid, *op. cit.*, pp. 228-229

⁸¹ N.N. Mitra, ed., *Indian Annual Register, Jan.-June 1946*, i, (Calcutta, 1946), pp. 231-232.

⁸² A notional 'Hindu identity' was constructed and politicized which promoted the assertion of Hindu superiority and rejection of Muslim-majority rule. Joya Chatterji, 'Communal Politics and the Partition of Bengal' (Cambridge Univ. Ph.D. 1990), p.257.

⁸³ Suranjan Das, 'Communal Riots in Bengal, 1905-1947' (Oxford Univ. D.Phil. thesis 1987), pp. 263-294, 298-299.

⁸⁴ Interview with Hamidul Huq Choudhry, 9 Sep. 1988.

was on every one's lips. Immediately the rioting spread to Noakhali to an area which previously had no record of communal rioting; it was an extension of the Great Calcutta Killing though the action was initiated by a single person, Ghulam Sarwar.⁸⁵

The riots brought partition inexorably closer and both the Hindu Mahasabha and the Congress called for the division of India. However a faint glimmer of hope existed and alternatives to partition were being discussed between Sarat Bose and Kiran Shankar Roy of the Congress and Suhrawardy and Hashim.⁸⁶ The consultations followed a twin track approach of negotiating for an immediate coalition government on the one hand and simultaneously thrashing out a compromise on the constitutional future of a united Bengal.⁸⁷ The following agreement was reached: the Free State of Bengal was to decide its relationship with the rest of India and elections to the legislature were to be on the basis of joint electorates with reserved seats. Once the proposals for the Free State of Bengal were accepted, Bengal was not to be partitioned and a new coalition ministry was to be formed. Excluding the Chief Minister the cabinet would consist of equal numbers of Muslims and Hindus and both communities were to have an equal share of the services.⁸⁸ However the whole scheme collapsed in the face of the Congress' opposition. Nehru and Patel vetoed the scheme on 27 May by announcing the formal rejection of the united Bengal scheme.⁸⁹

There was considerable opposition to the united Bengal plan within the League and it became another issue in the rivalry between Suhrawardy and Nazimuddin. Nazimuddin made a political comeback, he was elected to the Central Assembly by a bye-election caused by the death of Hasan Suhrawardy and was installed by Jinnah as Liaquat's deputy in the Assembly. He tried to dislodge Suhrawardy's grip on the party by encouraging Fazlul Huq who had accepted Jinnah's amnesty and returned to the party, in his bid for the presidency of the Provincial League.⁹⁰ Even though Akram Khan withdrew his resignation, the

⁸⁵ Suranjan Das, *op. cit.*, pp. 314-317, 351-361.

⁸⁶ During the discussions for a united and independent Bengal, Mountbatten raised the objection to Suhrawardy that if Bengal was to become a socialist republic then that fate would debar its entry into the Commonwealth. Instead he suggested that the description the Free State of Bengal would be adequate for the moment and later, when the constitution was formed they could call themselves what they liked. Mountbatten to Burrows, 16 May 1947, *TP x*, pp. 849-850. Burrows to Mountbatten, 19 May 1947, *TP x*, pp. 903-904.

⁸⁷ Burrows to Mountbatten, 28 May 1947, *TP x*, pp. 1023-1024.

⁸⁸ Of the legislature's thirty members, sixteen were to be Muslims and fourteen to be non-Muslim. Burrows to Mountbatten, 19 May 1947, *TP x*, pp. 905-906.

⁸⁹ Gandhi to Sarat Bose, 8 June 1947, H.H. Rahman, ed., *History of Bangladesh War of Independence, i*, (Dhaka, 1982), p.34. Sarat Bose was dropped by the Congress in 1947, alienated from his supporters, out of touch with his community and was a leader without any following. Joya Chatterji, 'Communal Politics and the Partition of Bengal' (Cambridge Univ. P.h.D. 1990), p.300.

⁹⁰ NAP, QAP F458/54-56, Suhrawardy to Jinnah, 20 Feb. 1947.

manoeuvre widened the differences between Suhrawardy and Hashim.⁹¹ The former had aligned himself with Hashim for pragmatic reasons and was not interested in the radical ideas espoused by him. The *Millat* became increasingly critical of Suhrawardy's ministry for failing to implement any of the election pledges and the tussle between party and the parliamentary group reappeared.⁹²

The Hashim-Suhrawardy group's support for a united independent Bengal was based on their understanding of the Pakistan slogan and the consideration that partition would be a disaster, reducing east Bengal into a stagnant backwater. Their interpretation was derived directly from the Lahore resolution of 1940 and they were opposed to a single Pakistan state. Hashim warned that *Akhand* Pakistan would lead to domination by western Pakistan and the Urdu language which would result in the imposition of an alien bureaucracy over the Bengali Muslims.⁹³ However some of their supporters such as Shamsuddin, the Labour Minister, were all too pleased to get rid of that white elephant, Calcutta.⁹⁴ An important calculation which had an influence was the geographic location of their social base. Suhrawardy's and Hashim's enthusiasm for unity was based on the realization that the partition would result in the loss of Calcutta and Burdwan, their old stamping grounds leaving them politically vulnerable.

The Khwaja group, mainly based in east Bengal, understood this calculation quite well and realized that partition would rid them of their major rival. Nurul Amin who aspired to the premiership, calculated that the probability of success would be in his favour only if Bengal was divided. He won over Hamidul Huq Choudhry a committed Greater Bengal supporter, with the offer of ministership in an East Bengal Government which he hoped to form.⁹⁵ However the Khwaja coterie had become confused by Jinnah's support for the united Bengal plan. Nazimuddin vacillated sometimes supporting separation and at other times stating that it would be a disaster.⁹⁶ It was probable that he approached Kiran Roy with identical constitutional proposals

⁹¹ Hashim was also a candidate for the office but Suhrawardy along with Nazimuddin threw their weight behind a Council Resolution asking Akram Khan not to resign.

⁹² H. Rashid, *The Foreshadowing of Bangladesh*, p.270.

⁹³ *Ibid*, pp. 299-300.

⁹⁴ NAP, QAP F10/24-32, Memo from Calcutta District Muslim League, The Indian National Maritime Union, The Asansol Subdivision Muslim League to Jinnah, 31 May 1947.

⁹⁵ *Ibid*.

⁹⁶ *Ibid*.

for a united Bengal only if he would talk to them and exclude Suhrawardy.⁹⁷ Akram Khan was solidly behind the idea of an *Akhand* Pakistan, argued that an independent Bengal meant surrendering their the principle of the two nation theory⁹⁸ and was hostile to the idea of the Free State of Bengal. When power was transferred Suhrawardy and Hashim entered the political wilderness: they were expelled from the party along with at least 50,000 of their supporters.⁹⁹ Nazimuddin became the Chief Minister of the East Bengal Government and the portfolios were distributed among his supporters.

Squaring Bengali regional interests with Jinnah's all-India strategy became an intractable problem for the leadership of the Bengal Muslim League. They had pursued the vision of an independent and sovereign Bengal, bent Jinnah's will to accommodate them only to find that it was torpedoed by the Mahasabha and the Congress. Partition resulted in the downfall of the Hashim-Suhrawardy group, the very people who had turned the Bengal Muslim League into a mass organization, and allowed the pro-Jinnah group to take-over the party's leadership. However Nazimuddin's legitimacy came from the AIML leadership at the centre, not from the mass base located in east Bengal, a fact which acted as a major constraint on his leadership. He was more responsive to what the high command was saying than to the mood at the grassroots level of the party.

In the Punjab, only when the regionalists were expelled from the party did organizational work and propaganda activity get started. However, on its own the success of the League would have been limited and events outside the province were to have an important influence. The turning point came after the failure of the Simla Conference which resulted in mass desertion from the Unionist Party. The other vital factor was the *pirs* joining the League after Jinnah had reached an understanding with them. These two group were to pull in local networks of *biraderi* and *pir-muridi* relations which turned the Muslim League into a mass organization. But the League was to discover that winning the Muslim votes was not going to put them into office which brought Punjabi's regional interest into conflict with Jinnah's all-India strategy.

The expulsion of Khizr Hayat from the Muslim League was followed up with the reconstruction of the party organization and the expansion of the Muslim League Parliamentary Party through defections from the Unionists. Though this work began to be taken seriously during the second half of 1944, it was

⁹⁷ Burrow to Mountbatten, 28 May 1947, *TP x*, p.1023.

⁹⁸ NAP, QAP F458/75-79, Suhrawardy to Liaquat Ali Khan, 21 May 1947.

⁹⁹ The Bengal League's membership in 1944 was estimated at 550,000 and the figure by 1947 should have increased substantially. However by 1949 the membership had dropped to 500,000. The large fall, probably greater than 50,000, was due to attempts by the leadership to keep Suhrawardy and his supporters out of the party. NAUS, Microfilm on the Internal Affairs of Pakistan, Roll 1, 845F.00/3-549, Inaugural session of the Pakistan Muslim League, 19 Feb. 1949.

only in the following year that the League could claim to be the party of the masses. The first difficulty was that most of the district Leagues existed only on paper and were dominated by Khizr's supporters. Shaukat Hayat toured the districts organizing 'the preliminary scaffolding.' This process was helped by the Communist Party which had been supporting the Muslim League's attempt to overthrow the Unionists and when Mumtaz Daultana became the League's secretary they encouraged their members to join. Danial Latifi and Abdullah Malik resigned from the Communist Party and joined the League where they put their organizational skills to good use.¹⁰⁰

By July 1945, the basic infrastructure was in place. Shaukat Hayat, Mumtaz Daultana, Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan and Sayed Mustafa Shah Gilani undertook agitational tours in the Ambala Division, Multan District, Rawalpindi and Sargoda.¹⁰¹ But the membership figures were poor and AIML Inspection Committee estimated that there were only 150,000 members.¹⁰² The Unionist grip over the countryside remained strong and they continued to win bye-elections in Hoshiarpur, Kanara and Jhajjar.

The Unionist government had become synonymous with inflation and wartime regulations and were accused by the League of favouring non-Muslims. But these negative factors were inadequate to ensure the League's success at the polls. To widen the appeal of the League its socialistic manifesto was drawn up by the former Communist Party member, Danial Latifi. The manifesto's proposals for structural reforms gave an economic underpinning to community consciousness by presenting Pakistan as a Islamic utopia where the peasantry's position would be transformed. The juxtaposition of the spiritual and temporal character of Pakistan helped to legitimize and consolidate the position of the landlord leadership of the Muslim League.

However victory in the elections was dependent on success in winning over the rural élite. This was not achieved until after the collapse of the Simla Conference. Large scale defections took place as the Noons, Daultanas, Hayats, Pirachas and Dastis bolted from the Unionist stable realizing that the days of inter-community collaboration had come to an end and that the future was with the Muslim League. Khizr's clansmen, Malik Sardar Noon, Mohammad Mumtaz Khan Tiwana and his parliamentary private secretary, Sayed Amjad Ali, joined the League. Cynically Firoz Khan Noon openly admitted to Glancy 'that he did not

¹⁰⁰ NDC, CID, S 412, (Punjab Police Abstract of Intelligence), no 12 Rich, 18 March 1944, p.164. CID, S 412, no 22 Rich, 1 July 1944, p.359

¹⁰¹ In Sheikhpura the Nawab of Mamdot and others presided over a meeting of eight thousand and in Multan fifteen thousand attended a League meeting. QAA, SHC, Punjab i/6, Report by Daultana, on the activities of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League to the AIML Committee of Action, 28 July 1944.

¹⁰² QAA, AIML 201/8, Inspection Report No 10 on the general administration of the PPML by Zakir Ali to the AIML Committee of Action, 26 Feb 1945.

believe in Pakistan' and wished 'that the term had never had been invented.'¹⁰³ Despite their motives they used their *biraderi* network, influence over their tenants and wealth to win over voters for the League. Furthermore the Congress leaders such as Mian Iftikharuddin joined the Muslim League bringing with them a large number of nationalist Muslims.

Jinnah was warned by Afzal Husain Qadri that for the success of the Punjab League in the coming elections, *maulvis* and *maulanas* were not adequate. The *pirs* had to be won over and their support was crucial for success in the rural areas. To win in the urban areas, he suggested that the students had to be better organized.¹⁰⁴ Only some *pirs* such as the Gilanis of Multan and the Sayed of Shergarh were members of the League. Most *pirs* issued *fatwas* during the election campaign and the League's propaganda began to show a marked increase in religious symbolism. The slogan 'Islam in danger' and that the Pakistan campaign was a *jihad* was evoked with greater frequency.¹⁰⁵ Pir Fazal Shah of Jalalpur threatened an audience that if they did not vote for the League they would become *kafirs* and would not be allowed funeral prayers.¹⁰⁶ The League was also supported by 5,000 student activists from Islamia College, Lahore, backed by contingents sent from Aligarh.¹⁰⁷

The combination of *pirs*, students, zemindars and political workers aroused a wave of support which was unexpected and drew in a varied cross-section of society. In Shergarh the organizer, Pir Sayed Ashaq Hussain, was responsible for a gathering consisting mainly of zemindars while at Okara and Arifwala the notable feature was the large presence of Communists and Congressmen and the meeting in Chichawanti drew mainly canal colonists.¹⁰⁸

The Unionists did not surrender, they simply used the same tactics of using Islamic rhetoric to influence the voters. But they were restrained by the knowledge that a ministry could only be formed with the co-operation of non-Muslims. Khizr, introduced Islamic idioms in his speeches, formed an alliance with

¹⁰³ I.A. Talbot, 'The Growth of the Muslim League in the Punjab, 1937-1946' (London Univ. Ph.D thesis, 1981), p.237. fn 61.

¹⁰⁴ QAA, SHC, UP v/100, Qadri to Jinnah, 9 Aug. 1945.

¹⁰⁵ NDC, CID, S 414, (Punjab Police Abstract of Intelligence), no 4 Dean, 26 Jan. 1946, p.42.

¹⁰⁶ NDC, CID, S 414, (Punjab Police Abstract of Intelligence), no 5 Dean, 2 Feb. 1946, p.54

¹⁰⁷ Jinnah gave fifty thousand Rupees to the students for their expenses. Ibid. NDC, CID, S 414,(Punjab Police Abstract of Intelligence), no 7 Dean, 16 Feb. 1946, p.84.

¹⁰⁸ QAA, SHC, Punjab i/30, The League Speakers ' Partys [sic] Tour of Montgomery District, 10 Jan. 1945.

the Ahrar Party and enlisted *maulvis* from the Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Hind to bolster his campaign.¹⁰⁹ In order to counter the influence of the reformist *ulama*, the pro-League, Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Islam held a conference in January 1946 in Lahore. Many Deobanbdi, Barelvi and Ahl-i-Hadith *ulama* attended but Jinnah failed to win them over to the League. The *khatib* of Badsahi Mosque, Maulana Ghulam Murshid and chief organizer of the pro-League *ulama* admitted that the most influential *ulama* were still loyal to the Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Hind. Consequently Jinnah's emphasis on gaining the support of the *sajjada nashins* was a decisive counter to the reformist *ulama* particularly in the rural areas where their influence was weak.¹¹⁰ Only the *pirs* could influence the combination of *biraderi* and *sufi* networks in the countryside and the Unionist only had some of the *pirs* such as the Quershi *sajjada nashins*, the Pir of Makhad, the *sajjada nashin* of Pakpattan and the Gaddi Nashin of Sultan Bahu on their side.¹¹¹

The problems of the Unionists were compounded by the lack of any organization and their dependence on the network of power and patronage in the countryside which was slipping through their fingers. Their biggest weakness was the lack of a rallying cry to counter the Pakistan slogan which put them on the defensive. The Unionist Party's manifesto stressed the economic achievement, provincial autonomy, complete independence and free education. In the face of the magnetic Pakistan slogan which offered something for everyone and economic nationalism in an Islamic package the Unionists were unable to combat the League's ideological appeal. The elections resulted in a landslide victory for the Muslim League, winning all the urban seats and leaving only twenty rural seats to the Unionist Party.¹¹²

However the formation of a ministry eluded the Muslim League as their electoral campaign, particularly the Pakistan slogan exacerbated communal tension making it difficult to include non-Muslims in the cabinet. The statements of Firoz Khan Noon, Abdul Qaiyum Khan and Ghulam Mustafa Shah Gilani that Muslims should arm themselves and be prepared to fight a civil war to achieve Pakistan,¹¹³ killed the possibility of an agreement with the Akalis. Khizr was called to form a coalition which infuriated the League and their anger boiled over when the National Guards were banned in early 1947. The League launched a

¹⁰⁹ NDC, CID, S 414, (Punjab Police Abstract of Intelligence), no 5 Dean, 2 Feb. 1946, p.55.

¹¹⁰ D. Gilmartin, *Empire and Islam* (London, 1988), p.215.

¹¹¹ NDC, CID, S 414, (Punjab Police Abstract of Intelligence), no 6 Dean, 9 Feb. 1946, p.68.

¹¹² N.N. Mitra, ed., *Indian Annual Register, Jan.-June 1946, i*, (Calcutta, 1946), pp. 231-232.

¹¹³ NDC, CID S 414, (Punjab Police Abstract of Intelligence), no 18 Dean, 4 May 1946, p.220.

civil disobedience movement, confined mainly to the urban areas, particularly Lahore, in order to overthrow Khizr. The processions and rallies which defied the government ban were spearheaded by students, party workers and women which forced Khizr to throw in the towel.

The immediate reaction to Khizr's resignation was communal strife and it marked the complete breakdown between Muslims and non-Muslims. The uncompromising position adopted by the League that Muslims had a right to form a government on their own, pitchforked Hindus and Sikhs into launching a 'war against Pakistan.'¹¹⁴ When Firoz Khan Noon did offer them five portfolios, it was too late and the Sikhs were unwilling to respond to these overtures. Their silence and the Congress' partition statement ended all discussion at the provincial level.¹¹⁵ No Muslim Leaguer favoured partition of the province and the east Punjabi members of the League protested to Jinnah over the division of the province.¹¹⁶ However Tara Singh had set his heart on Khalistan and argued that supporting partition was a bargaining counter to be used with the Congress against the Muslim League. Jinnah had already conceded a Sikh homeland in Pakistan but if pressure was sustained he would grant Khalistan where Muslims in east and central Punjab would be held hostage for the welfare of Sikhs in west Punjab.¹¹⁷ Later they realized that by demanding Khalistan they brought forward the reality of partition and undermined Sikh solidarity.¹¹⁸

For the Sikh plan to succeed, confidence between the communities had to be restored: instead what already was an electrifying situation, became even more explosive when the shock waves from the Calcutta and Bihar riots hit the province. The communal situation became volatile when Sikh refugees from Hazara, victims of revenge attacks by Black Mountain tribals, arrived in Rawalpindi.¹¹⁹ The Sikhs began to prepare for civil war. Tara Singh's war fund target of fifty lakhs of Rupees was oversubscribed,¹²⁰ he received

¹¹⁴ NDC, CID, S 415, (Punjab Police Abstract of Intelligence), no 10 Dean, 8 March 1947, p.105.

¹¹⁵ NDC, CID S 415, (Punjab Police Abstract of Intelligence), no 11 Dean, 15 March 1947, p.116. Firoz's offer was part of an intrigue to depose Mamdot from the presidentship of the party. Mamdot had failed to get elected from his estate in the Ferozepur district and if the Sikhs had accepted Firoz's offer then the parliamentary leadership would have been snatched from Mamdot as he was not an assembly member. CID, S 415, (Punjab Police Abstract of Intelligence), no 17 Sutton, 28 April 1947, p.202.

¹¹⁶ NDC, CID, S 415, (Punjab Police Abstract of Intelligence), no 24 Sutton, 14 June 1947, p.310.

¹¹⁷ NDC, CID, S 415, (Punjab Police Abstract of Intelligence), no 15 Sutton, 12 April 1947, p.172.

¹¹⁸ NDC, CID, S 415, (Punjab Police Abstract of Intelligence), no 26 Sutton, 28 June 1947, p.337.

¹¹⁹ NDC, CID, S 414, (Punjab Police Abstract of Intelligence), no 45 Dean, 23 Nov. 1946, p.542.

¹²⁰ NDC, CID, S 415, (Punjab Police Abstract of Intelligence), no 21 Sutton, 24 May 1947, p.261.

substantial amounts from Calcutta Marwaris¹²¹ and military support from the Faridkot and Patiala state.¹²² The whole province became a disturbed area with the Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh, the National Guards and the Akali Fauj becoming involved in a spiralling cycle of terrorist activity¹²³ which was complemented by incursions by trans-border Pakhtuns from NWFP and Dogras from Jammu and Kashmir state. The orgy of violence triggered off total panic in the entire Punjab forcing the mass migration of communities.

The ultimate contradiction of Muslim nationalism in the Punjab was that by exclusively mobilizing Muslims they could not form a government. It brought home the clash between regional interests which were influencing the Punjab League's leadership and the needs of the AIML at the centre. The single-minded determination to overthrow Khizr was the product of provincial ambitions and by ignoring the widening communal breach and the increasing hostility of the Sikhs it precipitated the violence which made partition, the very thing they were against, inevitable.

The NWFP Muslim League was hopelessly divided and organizationally inactive. Its ability to form a ministry depended on the Congress members of the assembly remaining in jail and once in power it discredited itself with abuses of office. The League was unable to fulfil the basic functions of a political party and its overdependence on aristocratic élites condemned it to defeat in the elections. In contradistinction the Sarhad Congress was well established at the popular levels and organized and Dr Khan's ministry had a better reputation for public welfare and administrative integrity. The AIML was forced to intervene, revamp the party, widen its popular base by excluding many of the old leadership and injecting fresh blood. But even these drastic measures on their own could not assure an endorsement for Pakistan in the referendum.

The intra-party disputes within the League only added to Aurangzeb's difficulties and like other provincial Leagues it took the form of a struggle for power between the provincial party and the ministerial group. However the personal enmity between Aurangzeb and Sadullah Khan, former President of the NWFP Muslim League created organizational havoc and retarded the possibility of expanding the organization. Attempts by Sadullah to convene a session of the AIML in Peshawar, to expose the damage that the provincial ministry had caused to the progress of the League, provoked a sharp riposte from the Chief

¹²¹ NDC, CID, S 415, (Punjab Police Abstract of Intelligence), no 14 Sutton, 5 April 1947, p.155.

¹²² NDC, CID, S 415, (Punjab Police Abstract of Intelligence), no 33 Sutton, 16 Aug. 1947, p.413. Proceedings of the meeting of the Partition Council held on 10 July 1947, M.M Sadullah, ed., *The Partition of the Punjab 1947, i*, (Lahore, 1983), p.152.

¹²³ NDC, CID, S 415, (Punjab Police Abstract of Intelligence), no 23 Sutton, 7 June 1947, p.290. CID, S 415, (Punjab Police Abstract of Intelligence), no 33 Sutton, 16 Aug. 1947, p.413.

Minister and he deployed the police to harass him.¹²⁴ The confrontation between the ministry and the party organization reached a climax, in March 1945, when Sadullah with four supporters voted with the no-confidence motion which led to the downfall of Aurangzeb's ministry.¹²⁵

The AIML responded to rising number of complaints against the League ministry by despatching the Committee of Action to tour the province and concluded that no party structure existed. Qazi Mohammad Isa, in April 1945, dissolved the League and a year later formed an Organizing Committee to reorganize it and enrol large numbers of primary members and toured the districts.¹²⁶ However Isa's coopting of the ministerial group to the central advisory board intensified faction fighting. The groups struggled first for supremacy of the Organizing Committee which was running the League so that they would be well placed to capture the parliamentary board and influence the selection of candidates prior to the impending provincial elections.

The Muslim League was internally divided and the tussle between Aurangzeb and Sadullah focused on the selections of candidates. The ministerial group dominated the Selection Board and made partisan selections, nominating the rich and powerful in preference to dedicated party workers.¹²⁷ The candidates were representative of the wealthiest and the most aristocratic families in the province and were no compensation for the lack of organization. The problem was compounded by the dissipation of their meagre resources in fighting all the 38 Muslim seats in the province. The League fought the elections on the single issue of Pakistan. To Aurangzeb its essence meant the 'safe guarding of Muslims interests at the centre' but he was exasperated by the party youth who believed the slogan to mean separation. More important, the slogan was unintelligible to most of the rural population who were unimpressed by the threat of Hindu domination.¹²⁸

However the League was strengthened by elements which up to then had been outside the party. The defections of Abdul Qaiyum Khan, deputy leader of the Congress assembly group and Samin Jan Khan brought with them organizational skills acquired by working for the Congress which were now put to work for the League. The Sarhad Students' Federation was revived, a training camp at Charssada was established

¹²⁴ QAA, SHC, NWFP i/90, Asadul to Jinnah, 20 Dec. 1945.

¹²⁵ QAA, SHC, NWFP i/60, Sadullah Khan to the Committee of Action, 8 Aug. 1945.

¹²⁶ QAA, AIML 193/13, Proceedings of the Meeting of the Committee of Action, 11 April 1946.

¹²⁷ QAA, SHC, NWFP i/90, Asadul to Jinnah, 20 Dec. 1945.

¹²⁸ Cunningham to Wavell, 27 Feb. 1946, *TP* vi, pp. 1085-6.

and reinforcements from Aligarh fortified their activities.¹²⁹ The students were complemented with *maulanas* belonging to the Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Islam who were rallied by Maulana Thanvi's visit to Peshawar. But the credit for popularizing the League went to Aminul Hasnat Ali, Pir of Manki Sharif. He only joined after Jinnah had assured him that the *sharia* would be established in Pakistan.¹³⁰ He was responsible for winning over other *sajjada nashins*, such as the Pir of Zakori, the Pir of Wana, the Pir of Ama Khel who used their *pir-muridi* network in support of the League in the elections. The Pir of Manki Sharif was also responsible for taking the fight into the Peshawar area, the bastion of Ghaffar Khan, where he had large number of followers. He also popularized Muslim nationalism in the tribal areas, where neither the League nor the Congress politicians were allowed to intervene.¹³¹

With the fall of Aurangzeb's ministry and the release of the Congress assembly members, Dr Khan's return to office became irresistible. His tenure marked a sharp departure from the dubious practises of his predecessor. The formation of syndicates for the distribution of essential commodities won him support. The more positive image of the Congress ministry combined with careful selection of only winnable seats and supporting the Ahrar's or the Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Sarhad's candidates where they stood a better chance, went in their favour. Once the differences with Ghaffar Khan were patched up the Khudai Khidmatgars and the Congress toured the districts emphasizing their Pakhtun identity and anti-*khani* position and promised economic reforms. All this was well received.¹³²

Dr Khan led the Congress Party to a clear victory, winning 30 of the 50 seats in the assembly. But a closer examination of the Muslim vote, shows that the League was slightly ahead.¹³³ This was the base that the re-vitalized League used to launch Direct Action against Dr Khan. A 40 man Organizing Committee sent by the AIML, superseded Qazi Isa's *ad hoc* committee and weeded out old party members, or demoted them. Mian Ziauddin was sacked and Aurangzeb Khan and Bakht Jamal Khan demoted and displaced by new leaders emerging from the party's rank such as Jalaluddin, ex-Congressmen such as Qaiyum Khan and by

¹²⁹ NDC, CID, S 406, (NWFP Police Abstract of Intelligence), no 1 Mc Crea, 1 Jan. 1946, p.1.

¹³⁰ Actually Jinnah was ambiguous in his assurance to the Pir of Manki Sharif: he simply assured him that an overwhelmingly Muslim country could not formulate a constitution other than one which was based on 'Islamic ideals'. Jinnah to Pir Manki Sharif, 18 Nov. 1945, in Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah Kaka Khel, 'Muslim League in the NWFP, 1936-1947' (Peshawar Univ. M Phil thesis 1986), appendix 7.

¹³¹ NDC, CID, S 406, (NWFP Police Abstract of Intelligence), no 47 Mc Crea, 19 Nov. 1946, pp.148-9.

¹³² Cunningham to Wavell, 27 Feb. 1946, *TP* vi, p.1085. NDC, CID, S 395, (CID Peshawar), no 45, 2 Jan. 1946, p.42. S. Rittenberg, 'The Independence Movement in India's North West Frontier province, 1901-1947' (Columbia Univ. Ph.D. thesis 1977), p.326.

¹³³ Cabinet Delegation to India, 13 March 1946, Election returns for Punjab, Sind, Assam and NWFP, *TP* vi, pp. 1192-1195. Ian Talbot. *Provincial Politics and the Pakistan Movement* (Karachi, 1988) p.20.

a new generation of young men from the *khani* hierarchy, represented by Mohammad Ali Khan. The irony was that the tactics developed by the Congress was effectively used by the League in the civil disobedience movement with some new variations.¹³⁴

The Muslim League's Direct Action, after a couple of false starts, took off and became inextricably linked with communal violence. A council of war went underground, consisting of Mian Mohammad Shah, Mian Abdul Shah, and Sher Bahadur Khan of Badrashi, and were assisted by the Pir of Manki Sharif and Major Khurshid Anwar the head of the AIML National Guards. In the initial stages renunciations of titles, processions, meetings and *hartals*, accompanied by a membership drive was quite effective and peaceful. Novel elements which were successfully utilized included Radio Azad Pakistan broadcasting in the vicinity of Peshawar which transmitted the time and locations of meetings and demonstrations. Also women protesters, mainly from the Punjab, played a significant role by making it very difficult for the ministry to resort to violent police action and their restrained response encouraged other women to protest.¹³⁵ But when the communal reverberations detonated by the Great Calcutta Killing struck the region the extra-parliamentary action deteriorated into savagery. Medical missions returning from Bihar showed at meetings 'skulls and blood stained pages of the *Quran*' which stoked the fires of hatred. The deteriorating law and order situation was further exacerbated by the civil war conditions in the Punjab.¹³⁶ The communal violence was sporadic in the Peshawar and Hazara area but in April 1947, Dera Ghazi Khan was sacked by rioters. The flow of non-Muslims out of the province triggered off retaliatory attacks. Dogra strikes against Muslims in Poonch and Sikh action in Punjab polarized the Sarhad which resulted in further counter raids.¹³⁷

A referendum was proposed by Lord Mountbatten and was accepted by Nehru to the dismay of the Frontier Congress. The referendum undermined the position of the Frontier Congress and left it with no alternative strategy to resist Pakistan. Ghaffar Khan's response was that they should have the option to become independent which was rejected by all concerned. The Viceroy was against Pakhtunistan because it

¹³⁴ S. Rittenberg, 'The Independence Movement in India's North West Frontier province, 1901-1947' (Columbia, Univ. Ph.D. thesis 1977), pp. 339-340.

¹³⁵ *Ibid*, p.365. NDC, CID, S 407, (NWFP Police Abstract), no 20 Mc Crea, 20 May 1947, p.75.

¹³⁶ NDC, CID, S 406, (NWFP Police Abstracts of Intelligence), no 45 Mohammad Alam Khan, 5 Nov. 1946, p.140. CID, S 406, (NWFP Police Abstracts of Intelligence), no 52 Mc Crea, 31 Dec. 1946, p.164.

¹³⁷ NDC, CID, S 407, (NWFP Police Abstract of Intelligence), no 1 Mc Crea, 7 Jan. 1947, p.1. CID, S 407, no 16 Mc Crea, 22 April 1947, p.57. CID, S 407, no 36 Mc Crea, 9 Sep. 1947, p.36. The tribal areas were vocal advocates of Pakistan and once the rioting began they became involved in raids against Hindus and Sikhs. The politicization of the tribes was the link between the partition riots and the Kashmir war. The arrival of refugees from Poonch, combined with encouragement from the League leadership led to the raid into the Kashmir valley which was treated as an extension of the fighting surrounding partition. CID, S 406, (NWFP Police Abstract of Intelligence), no 42 Aslam Khan, 15 Oct. 1946, p.129. CID, S 407, (NWFP Police Abstract of Intelligence), no 39, 15 Oct. 1947, p.133.

was not economically viable and the League and the Congress were not prepared to set a precedent which the other provinces might follow. In reality the Pakthunistan slogan was raised to regroup support and as a bargaining counter to be used against the League. As a rallying cry it made little headway in the face of the angst which had gripped the province. The communal violence had effectively depressed the significance of Pakhtun ethnicity and Muslim consciousness had become more important. Ghaffar Khan also tried to extract concessions from the Muslim League. He was prepared to join the League, accept the constitution of Pakistan if three conditions were met; the *sharia* would be introduced, no British officers would remain after independence and Punjabis and Shias would not be allowed to dominate Pakhtuns. When this failed he told his supporters to wait for six months anticipating that the Pir of Manki Sharif would leave the League when he realized that the *sharia* was not going to be implemented.¹³⁸

The sudden collapse in the support for the NWFP Congress and the concomitant rise in the popularity of the League was due to events taking place outside the province. The communal violence which swept north India polarized the Sarhad where previously communal issues had been peripheral to the regional concerns. This fed into the League's civil disobedience campaign and led Mountbatten to believe that the province was becoming ungovernable and that to pacify the area it had to be allowed to decide its future in a referendum.¹³⁹ However the Congress' fear that India was becoming ungovernable led them to accept the principle of partition which was the death knell for their supporters, particularly in Sarhad. The Red Shirts were rudderless. They raised the Pakthunistan issue as a bargaining chip but it could not prevent the eclipse of Pakhtun ethnicity by Muslim nationalism.

The Sind Muslim League was in a worse shape than the party in NWFP. As in its Sarhad counterpart regional perspectives dominated the League. The main concern was the politics of 'ins' and 'outs' which were grounded in agnatic and personal rivalries. The greatest friction was between the party organization and the parliamentary wing with the former attempting to bring League assembly members under its control. Jinnah tried several times to settle the differences but eventually was forced, just before the elections, to expel G.M. Sayed from the party. The act simply externalized the intra-party dispute and Sayed opposed Hidayatullah in the elections with the blessing of the Congress. He needed to win over *haris* if the League was to become a mass organization and for this end was keen on agrarian reforms and social welfare and accused the

¹³⁸ NDC, CID, S 396 (CID Peshawar), 26 June 1947, p.9. CID, S 396, (CID Peshawar), 25 Aug. 1947, p.51.

¹³⁹ Members of the administration were involved with the League and the Governor, Olaf Caroe, turned a blind eye to their activities because he wanted Sarhad to join Pakistan. Hence the hostile reception Nehru received while visiting the province. This was mainly due to the activities of Iskander Mirza and the Pir of Manki Sharif who were rallying the tribesmen against the Congress while the Political Agents conveniently looked the other way. Wali Khan, *Facts are Fact. The Untold Story of India's Partition* (New Delhi, 1988), pp. 116-121.

assembly party of damaging the Muslim cause.¹⁴⁰ However reforms were anathema to Hidayatullah's government which was dependent on the *mir* block and accused him of trying to establish a Sayed raj.¹⁴¹ In April 1944 he called on the ministers to resign after first taking control of the League Council and the Working Committee. The resolution was designed to test the assertion that the parliamentary activities were subject to party control. The division between Hidayatullah, Khuro and Yusuf Haroon on one side against Sayed with Mohammad Hashim Gazdar on the other coincided with the competition between the parliamentary group and the party organization and was compounded by the rivalry between sayeds and *mirs*. The AIML Working Committee tried to bang their heads together and effect a compromise to maintain the status quo.¹⁴²

However the bitterness of the dispute continued and Hidayatullah again complained to Jinnah that Sayed was trying to dominate. He had removed Yusuf Haroon from the Secretaryship of the Muslim League and was now insisting that Sayed Mohammad Ali Shah should be made minister. He was emphatic that he was not prepared 'to leave the selection of the candidate to the Assembly to Sayed's sweet will'.¹⁴³ Yusuf Haroon the Managing Director of the *Alwahid*, used it to initiate personal attacks against Sayed and Gazdar and formed a parallel League. Sayed's opportunity to counter this move came with the Shikarpur bye-election, when he was able to reject Hidayatullah son's candidature in favour of his nominee Ghulam Nabi Pathan. He was able to get the AIML to back up his decision and the League lost the seat to Moula Buksh, the brother of the murdered Allah Buksh.¹⁴⁴ The altercation continued and this time Sayed colluded with Moula Buksh, Abdul Majid and Nichaldas in order to overthrow Hidayatullah's government. But the premier, with the help of the Governor, was able to turn the tables against his adversaries and brought Moula Buksh into the government.¹⁴⁵ This led to a severe reprimand from Jinnah for contravening the principles of the League and warned that if Moula Buksh did not join the party he should be dropped.¹⁴⁶ Ghulam Husain

¹⁴⁰ QAA, SHC, Sind ii/38, Note by S.F. Kachhi, nd.

¹⁴¹ QAA, SHC, Sind ii/32, Hidayatullah to Jinnah, 24 Oct. 1944.

¹⁴² QAA, SHC, Sind iii/67, Jinnah to Gazdar, 12 Dec. 1944.

¹⁴³ QAA, SHC, Sind ii/45, Hidayatullah to Jinnah, 1 Nov. 1944.

¹⁴⁴ QAA, SHC, Sind iv/4, Hidayatullah to Jinnah, 20 Dec. 1944. SHC, Sind iv/10, G.M. Sayed to the Central Parliamentary Board, Dec 1944. SHC, Sind iv/27, Hidayatullah to Jinnah, 29 12 1944.

¹⁴⁵ QAA, SHC, Sind v/27, Report in Brief, 28 Feb. 1945. The Governor warned Moula Buksh that he would only call Hidayatullah to form a ministry. If he failed no one else would be asked and section 93 would be applied. Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ QAA, SHC, Sind v/35, Jinnah to Hidayatullah, 3 March 1945.

Hidayatullah was prepared to defy Jinnah and resign from the League but his wife pressurized him to comply. Moula Buksh was unable to form a coalition and Hidayatullah was recalled.¹⁴⁷

The quarrels between the *sayed* and the *mirs* increased as the polling approached and in August 1945, Jinnah was forced to go to Karachi and patch up the differences. The Muslim League's difficulties were temporarily mended and Jinnah handed out tickets to candidates most likely to win and not on the basis of loyalty.¹⁴⁸ But as soon as he departed, the Sind Parliamentary Board collapsed due to internecine quarrels and G.M. Sayed, by October, was in open defiance of the League high command.¹⁴⁹ Jinnah threw his weight behind Hidayatullah and Sayed was forced to resign from the Working Committee and the League.¹⁵⁰ His departure did not bring harmony. Khuro was working against Hidayatullah, the Talpurs enlisted the Khaksars against the League and this factionalism continued right down to the elections.¹⁵¹ However in Sind the League was not a mass phenomenon and the crucial factor for success was the support of the rural élites and important *pirs*, such as the Pir of Hala and Jhando. Winning over these block votes was crucial and it was notorious that the candidates's declared expenditure was a fraction of the actual cost.¹⁵² The Governor, Dow, estimated that between fifty and one hundred lakhs of Rupees would be spent on the elections.¹⁵³

The Congress was anxious to do well in the province, planned to win the majority of the Hindu seats and to reach a compromise with the Muslims. They were prepared to offer four portfolios including the premiership and four parliamentary secretaryships to Muslim member in order to establish a Congress dominated coalition government.¹⁵⁴ G.M. Sayed backed by the Congress and nationalist Muslims claimed at the time of the election that he supported Jinnah's Pakistan but opposed the Muslim League on local issues. The coalition won twenty nine seats against Muslim League's twenty eight: the balance was very fine but

¹⁴⁷ IOR, Mss. Eur. E 372, Box 2 (Dow Collection), Dow to Wavell, 17 March 1945.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid, Dow to Wavell, 20 Sep. 1945.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid, Dow to Wavell, 18 Oct.1945.

¹⁵⁰ QAA, SHC, Sind vii/28, Abdul [sic] Rashid Arshad Makhdum to Jinnah, 26 Dec. 1945.

¹⁵¹ QAA, SHC, Sind vii/36, Abdur Rashid Arshad Makhdum to Jinnah, 14 Jan. 1946. SHC, Sind vii/68 letter to Jinnah, 14 Aug. 1946.

¹⁵² IOR, Mss. Eur. E 372, Box 2 (Dow Collection), Dow to Wavell, 4 Sep.1945.

¹⁵³ Ibid, Dow to Wavell, 5 Oct. 1945.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid, Dow to Wavell, 18 Oct. 1945.

the League had won the majority of the Muslim votes.¹⁵⁵ The Governor had made it clear to the Viceroy that he was not prepared to see a coalition government led by Sayed. He was convinced that it would lead to instability and was worried that the loyalty of the predominantly Muslim Police and Services would become suspect if a Congress led coalition was installed.¹⁵⁶ Hidayatullah managed to win the support of the European assembly members and was tipped to form the ministry. But the coalition was not workable and elections were called.

The League was reorganized. In February 1946, Liaquat formed an Organizing Committee headed by Yusuf and Gazdar who deserted Sayed, enrolled new members and scrutinized the election of office bearers. Many from the opposition deserted. These included Nabi Buksh Bhutto, Pir Ali Shah and Rahim Buksh, the son of Allah Buksh Soomro and they were joined by students from Aligarh and the Punjab and the Gilani *pirs* of Multan in the election campaign.¹⁵⁷ The communal shock waves from Bombay and eastern India coincided with the election campaign and the Muslim League rhetoric shifted from being anti-Congress to unashamedly communal. A series of Bihar Day *hartals* in Karachi, Sukkur and Nawabshah and speeches emphasising the Bihar atrocities resulted in deteriorating communal relations.¹⁵⁸ The non-Muslim population was on the verge of panic during the conflict in the Punjab and two way migration began with Biharis arriving and some Hindus leaving.

With the convergence of all these factors the Sayed-Congress coalition was routed in the elections. The Sind Progressive Muslim League led by G.M. Sayed and Sheikh Abdul Majid Sindhi fell back increasingly on Sindi ethnicity and anti-Punjabi and anti-Bihari rhetoric. They wanted Sind for Sindis, were against migration from Bihar and were unwilling to be grouped together with the Punjab unless the provinces were sovereign and had the right to secede.¹⁵⁹

The League failed to become a mass organization in Sind. The fate of the elections were decided by the support of landed, tribal or spiritual leaders who were able to deploy their traditional influence in

¹⁵⁵ Cabinet Delegation to India, 13 March 1946, Election Returns for Punjab, Sind, Assam and NWFP, *TP* vi, pp.1192-1195.

¹⁵⁶ Minutes by Turnbull and Monceath, 7 Sep. 1946, *TP* viii, pp. 445-7

¹⁵⁷ Ian Talbot, *Provincial Politics and the Pakistan Movement*, p.54.

¹⁵⁸ NDC, CID, S 434, (Sind Police Secret Abstract), no 37 Ghulam Kadir, 14 Nov. 1946, p.340. CID, S 434, no 46 K.R. Eates, 16 Nov. 1946, p.431.

¹⁵⁹ NDC, CID, S 434 (Sind Police Secret Abstract), no 21 K.R. Eates, 25 May 1946, p.193. CID, S 434, no 51 Ghulam Kadir, 28 Dec 1946, p.428.

favour of a candidate. This explains how Sayed, with Congress backing, was able to deny the League victory in the provincial election. However the stalemate in the assembly required another election; but Congress' acceptance of partition, and the deterioration in communal relations sealed the fate of their supporters in the province and Sind joined Pakistan. Sayed struggling to maintain a politically viable alternative raised the issue of Sindi ethnicity as a rallying cry but to little effect.

The political equilibrium was destabilized by the constitutional deadlock at the centre which followed the Simla Conference. The realization that the future was with Indian and Muslim nationalism made regionalism vulnerable to the onslaught of parties advocating alternative focuses of central control. Muslim nationalism capitalized on the political uncertainties and won over many adherents from the provincial parties. An important factor which widened the League's arena of influence was the increased significance of economic nationalism. It opened channels of communication between the élites and the masses, drew in groups previously unaffected by Muslim nationalism and gathered them around the banner of Pakistan. Combined with the weakness of the Congress among Muslims, due partly to the fact that many Congressmen had been incarcerated during the war, it gave the League too great a head start for them to catch up. All these factors combined to induce the widespread shift in Muslim support from the regional parties and nationalist organization to the Muslim League.

Jinnah was able to achieve for a brief moment political unity and used this as the basis to extract the maximum constitutional concessions from the British and the Congress. However the centralization process was weak and its frailty was at the root of ideological confusion. Jinnah's understanding of Pakistan changed because of pressures from within the party and he had to accommodate these different interpretations in order to avoid a revolt against his leadership. The problem was compounded by the League's lack of strong party structure to control and enforce discipline over the regional supporters. Jinnah's personal authority was of limited value in the periphery. The exceptions where the organization or Jinnah intervened successfully was in NWFP and the expulsion of Khizr and Sayed. But the constructive ability of the AIML was non-existent and once the opposition had been removed it was up to provincial leaders to repair the damage and advance the cause of the party.

Furthermore the various sections of the orchestra that Jinnah conducted marched to their separate rhythms. In Bengal and the Punjab strong regional interests paraded in the clothing of Muslim nationalism and in the Sarhad and Sind the matter was complicated by the emergence of ethnicity as a counter to Pakistan. However mass nationalism, the constitutional negotiations and the civil disobedience movement mounted by the League coalesced to create the conditions for the communal fury which engulfed northern

India. The angst corralled the Muslim-majority provinces into the arms of the League and the Congress demanded partition both for the country as a whole and in two Muslim-majority provinces.

Consequently Pakistan was defined by circumstances and not by design and this fact was behind the many problems which the country faced after partition. There was no single interpretation of Pakistan held either by Jinnah or the Muslim-majority provinces, the League had no significant party structure and there were strong regional and ethnic forces located in the provinces. All these were to become source of major problems after independence.

PAKISTAN 1947-1953:
OPPOSITION TO CENTRALISM.

Pakistan had been defined territorially by the pulls and pressure of sub-continental politics during the last days of the Raj. It was in no sense a product of long-term historical facts. Consequently there were difficulties, many of them unforeseen, which confronted the Muslim League's leadership in its effort to establish its authority in the new state. There were thorny problems which had to be solved if Pakistan was to emerge as a viable sovereign nation. The League now had to settle old unsolved questions which it had evaded successfully so far. It had to resolve the ideological confusion inherent in the very concept of Pakistan and harmonize the strong centrifugal currents in the provinces with the aims of the leadership. Simultaneously it had to physically transport its organization to Karachi, set up a new government centre and stabilize the social, economic and political situation. The solution arrived at, partly through contingent circumstances and partly by design, was to adopt a centralized state structure.

There were several factors which had induced the efforts to centralize. One important determinant was the influence of partition on the nascent Pakistani state. Jinnah assumed the position of Governor-General to ensure that sovereignty of Pakistan did not go by default. The tortuous negotiations over the division of assets and the conflict over Kashmir confirmed the correctness of his decision. There was a dispute over the division of the Government of India's cash balances, debts and immovable assets like the communication network, railway, defence and industrial installations. Unable to settle the differences Pakistan entered into a number of standstill agreements on customs and tariffs, import controls and inland trade which remained intact until March 1948. The continuing economic integration with India undermined Pakistan's claim to sovereignty. The differences were reinforced by the dispute over the division of the army. Pakistan received 36 per cent share of the Indian army but was denied an equitable share of the equipment. The question of having viable armed forces acquired new significance as the dispute over the princely states, particularly Kashmir, unfolded and Afghanistan refused to recognize the Durand Line. The dispute over assets and territory reinforced the perception that the establishment of a strong centre was crucial to Pakistan's survival as an independent state.¹

¹ A. Jalal, *The State of Martial Law* (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 26-31.

However the anxiety for centralization pre-dates partition. It reflected the weakness of the political leadership especially in the areas encompassed by the new state. The establishment of a strong centre was their lifeline for survival. The ramifications of partition did not generate but merely enhanced this concern. The Pakistan movement was a congeries of forces galvanized by the League's rivalry with the Congress. Their built-in contradictions and incompatibility inevitably resurfaced after partition. The problem was compounded by the fact the majority of the leadership was *Muhajirs* and had no or little electoral support in the country. Liaquat, himself fell into this category: he was from the United Provinces but nominated to represent a constituency from East Bengal in the Constituent Assembly.

The All-India Muslim League, acutely aware of such handicaps, abandoned its position on a loose centre declared in the Lahore Resolution and pushed for the formation of a unitary structure before independence. In July 1947 Liaquat Ali Khan, at Jinnah's behest, prepared the blueprint for the establishment of a highly integrated state along the recommendations of the Rowlands Report on the Bengal Administration. The proposals followed the pattern of Whitehall and the rejected the federal features formally adopted by the Indian Government.²

The administrative chaos caused by the lack of infrastructure and basic equipment needed even to house the government in Karachi and enable it to function only served to reinforce the push for a strong centre.³ This was another reason why Jinnah assumed the governor-generalship because he provided in his person a nucleus around which a central authority could be built to control the provinces and act as a focus for Muslim nationalism.

Liaquat argued that the best way to unify the civil service was through the appointment of the Secretary General as Head of the Pakistan Administrative Service who would oversee all the government departments, be responsible to the Prime Minister and advise him on senior appointments in all the departments. In this way cabinet policy could be implemented quickly and efficiently by a cohesive administration.⁴ This suggestion when implemented transformed the hitherto segmented civil service by unifying it under the Secretary General and making it independent of ministers. Chaudhri Mohammed Ali was nominated Secretary General, given independent and direct access to the departmental files. He

² NAP, QAP, F10/51-54, The Organization of the Pakistan Government by Liaquat Ali Khan, 6 July 1947.

³ The Pakistan authorities were housed in 'tin shacks', lacked skilled technical and experienced administrative personnel and operated without pens, papers, typewriters and telephones. A. Jalal, *The State of Martial Law*, pp. 30-31

⁴ NAP, QAP, F10/51-54, The Organization of the Pakistan Government by Liaquat Ali Khan, 6 July 1947.

consolidated his authority by setting up under his chairmanship the Planning Committee composed of the secretaries of all the ministries. In fact the Committee was a parallel cabinet composed of and headed by bureaucrats. It first reached important decisions and then presented them to the Cabinet for token approval.⁵

The other component of the state which the Jinnah group wanted to strengthen was the army. The immediate task was the reconstruction and re-equipment of the armed forces. However with the conflict over Kashmir, these tasks were accompanied by the expansion of the army which resulted in the allocation of up to 70 per cent of the national budget to defence in the years 1947-1950.⁶ Jinnah envisaged that Pakistan required an army of 100,000 troops complemented by an air force and navy of equivalent strength to defend the country's territory.⁷ But more importantly it would be the ultimate lever for enforcing the authority of the central government.

However the centralizing process suffered a major setback at this early stage when Jinnah died in September 1948. The one person who could have guided the Muslim League through the political minefield and consolidate the leadership's position was gone. Undoubtedly the chances of even his success in establishing a unitary structure were slim. An important reason why the centralizing process met with so much resistance was the ethnic composition of the military-bureaucratic oligarchy. It did not reflect proportionately the ethnic diversities of Pakistan and the process of centralization alienated those not represented adequately in its ranks. The two dominant groups were Punjabis and *Muhajirs* who were also the ethnically dominant element in Liaquat's cabinet. The top layer of the bureaucracy at the time of partition consisted of 133 Muslim Indian Civil Service/ Indian Political Service officials who opted for Pakistan. Of this number only one was from Bengal⁸ and the rest were mainly *Muhajirs* and Punjabis. Moreover most of the powerful bureaucrats such as the Secretary General, Chaudhri Mohammed Ali and the Chief Secretary to the East Bengal Government, Aziz Ahmad were Punjabis. The Defence for Secretary, Iskander Mirza, was the one exception. Similarly the army was mainly recruited from the Punjab and NWFP with hardly any recruitment from Bengal, Sind and Baluchistan. In fact British recruiting policy was so narrow that 75 per cent of the

⁵ H. Alavi, *Authoritarianism and Legitimation of State Power in Pakistan*, in S.K. Mitra ed., *The Post-Colonial State in Asia* (London, 1990), pp. 41-42.

⁶ *Pakistan Economic Survey 1972-73* (Islamabad, 1973), statistical section, p.114.

⁷ 'Pakistan's request for US material and assistance to the Department of State, Oct.-Nov. 1947', in K. Arif, ed., *America-Pakistan Relations: Documents, i*, (Lahore, 1984), p.7.

⁸ R. Braibanti, *Research on the Bureaucracy of Pakistan*, (Durham, 1966), p.49.

Pakistan Army came from three districts of the Punjab,- Rawalpindi, Jhelum and Campbellpur and from two districts of Sarhad, Mardan and Kohat.⁹

For the ruling group centralization became an urgent necessity as challengers to the Muslim League had mushroomed at the all-Pakistan level. They threatened to steal the mantle of legitimacy by propagating populist alternatives. The knee-jerk response was to reject political plurality and drift towards an one-party state. The first manifestation of this process came with Jinnah's declaration of March 1948.

"At this critical juncture it is the duty of all Muslims to gather under the Muslim League flag because the Muslim League is the guardian of Pakistan. Later we will consider whether we need any other political party"¹⁰

The main target of Jinnah's wrath was the People's Organization which within three months of its formation had been summarily dealt with. It seems paradoxical that the state felt so threatened by the fledgling party and was constrained to react with such vehemence. However Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Dr Khan together commanded substantial support and popular following in the NWFP. In recognition of this fact both carrots and sticks were used in attempts to win them over. Both were asked privately and publicly to join the Muslim League by the League high command and Mohammed Ali Jinnah even offered Dr Khan the governorship of the province, if he joined.¹¹

Instead Ghaffar Khan formed the All-Pakistan People's Party, later renamed the People's Organization, on 6 March 1948. It was dominated by prominent pre-partition opponents of the League and included G.M. Sayed and Abdul Majid Sindhi from Sind, Abdul Samad Khan Achakzai from Baluchistan and Sheikh Husamuddin of the Ahrars from the Punjab. Significantly, at its first convention in May, five Congress members of the Constituent Assembly from East Bengal attended. Clearly the party had the potential of becoming a national opposition to the ruling party with a presence in the assembly and enough cadre to make an impact on the streets as well. However the People's Organizations support for provincial autonomy, linguistic and cultural freedoms, better relations with India and a mildly socialistic programme, was too much for the League to stomach.¹²

⁹ S.P. Cohen, *The Pakistan Army* (Berkeley, 1984), pp. 44, 57.

¹⁰ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4145, 790D.00/10-1050, American Embassy Karachi to the Department of State, 10 Oct. 1950.

¹¹ NAUS, Microfilm on Internal Affairs of Pakistan, Roll 1, 845F.00/4-3048, Alling to the Secretary of State, 30 April 1948. [Hereafter Microfilm.]

¹² NAUS, Microfilm, Roll 1, 845F.00/3-1648, Alling to the Secretary of State, 16 March 1948.

Many in power were inclined to equate loyal political opposition with anti-Pakistani activity. The *Dawn*, the demi-official paper of the government, contemptuously described the People's Organization as an attempt to reactivate the 'Indian Congress' fifth column'¹³ and the Frontier government arrested Ghaffar Khan on charges of sedition. It was claimed that he, with the assistance of the Faqir of Ipi were intending to synchronize the destabilization of the Sarhad province with the expected advance of the Indian Army towards the region. This view was rejected by Z.A. Bokhari, Controller of Broadcasting, who said that there was no convincing evidence to indict Ghaffar Khan on treason charges and that 'many small men' in the cabinet had acted for political and not security reasons.¹⁴ The government was aware that the 'home front was cracking' and the emergence of an all-Pakistan opposition was only going to accelerate the process. This is why they selectively targeted the Red Shirts, the backbone of the fledgling party.¹⁵

The military-bureaucratic oligarchy's sensitivity to any opposition was so acute that they reacted fiercely even against the small left opposition. There was great trepidation in government circles that the newly formed Socialist Party and Communist Party of Pakistan¹⁶ would link up with the anti-centre opposition.¹⁷ Consequently when police action was taken against the agrarian agitation in the Frontier Province, in the spring of 1948, the socialist and communists were rounded up along with the Khudai Khidmatgars. However, what brought down the full wrath of the government on the Communist Party was the establishment of a number of front organizations which attracted prominent intellectuals. The CPP became so buoyed up by its success that it tried to convert its popularity into electoral success.

However, not only did it fail to win a single seat in the Punjab provincial elections, six months later its star was on the wane due to its complicity in the Rawalpindi Conspiracy Case. The Communist

¹³ *Dawn*, 13 May 1948.

¹⁴ NAUS, Microfilm, Roll 1, 845F.00/7-2648, Lewis to the Secretary of State, 26 July 1948. This view was given greater credence by the fact that G.M. Sayed, was only confined to his home village of Sann and the Congress members remained free.

¹⁵ NAUS, Microfilm, Roll 1, 845F.00/6-2148, Cootes to the Secretary of State, 21 June 1948.

¹⁶ Two new left parties emerged shortly after partition: one was the Socialist Party, founded in 1947, led by Mohammed Yusuf and Mubarak Saghar and the other was the Communist Party of Pakistan. Sajjad Zaheer, a member of the Communist Party of India's Central Committee from the United Provinces, was sent in 1948 to form the party which by 1950 had approximately 300 members and sympathizers. PRO, DO35/2591, Appendix A, Report on Communist Activities in West Pakistan, January to June 1951. Ibid, Appendix A1, Chief Events in Past History of the CPP.

¹⁷ NAUS, Microfilm, Roll 1, 845F.00/7-2648, Lewis to the Secretary of State, 26 July 1948.

leadership had been approached by major general Akbar Khan but they had postponed taking any action.¹⁸ But their complicity gave Liaquat the pretext to initiate a witch hunt and pre-empt the emergence of a Communist led opposition. The Communist network was smashed, the entire Central Committee and the leadership of the Pakistan Trade Union Federation, Progressive Writers Association, Hari Committee, Kisan Sabha were rounded up.¹⁹

In East Pakistan the Communist Party was run from Calcutta and dominated by Hindus. It was mainly influential among the tribals on the Assam borders, the scheduled castes of Khulna and among organized labour and students in Dacca and Chittagong. However the Communist Party had greater success when they decided to co-operate with the Awami Muslim League on the language issue. This manoeuvre was responsible for the proliferation of front organizations, such as the Democratic Youth League, the Progressive Writers' Association, the East Pakistan Students Federation and the Peace Committee. Of these organizations the Youth League, led by Mahmud Ali and Oli Ahad, was most active among the students and lecturers of Dacca University who were in the vanguard of the language and anti-BPC movement. Later in 1952 another organization, the Ganatantri Dal, led by Mohammed Danesh and Mahmud Ali, was formed which gave the non-Muslim cadre a vehicle to support the opposition to the centre.²⁰

The League leadership's most serious challenge came from Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy who attempted to weld dissident Muslim Leaguers into an all-Pakistan opposition. It was patent that Liaquat and the Khwajas of Dacca recognized Suhrawardy's political acumen and sagacity and considered him a serious threat. On 3 June 1948 the Premier of East Bengal, Khwaja Nazimuddin, barred Suhrawardy's entry into the province. Next his membership of the Constituent Assembly was cancelled in March 1949 and in May he was expelled from the Muslim League. Suhrawardy was forced to settle in Karachi and almost immediately began to work for the formation of an All-Pakistan opposition. The Civil Liberties Union and the Pakistan Democratic Party, both established in 1949, were dummy organizations floated to test the political waters.²¹

¹⁸ The plot was essentially an attempted coup d'état led principally by major general Akbar Khan, Brigadier M.A. Latif and other officers who were dissatisfied with the government's policy on Kashmir. Akbar's wife, Nasim Akbar, an active member of the Peace Committee, persuaded him to widen the support for the coup d'état by including the CPP. Faiz Ahmad Faiz, Sajjad Zaheer and Mohammed Hussain Atta were the only members of the central committee who knew of the plot and they had postponed taking any action. This interpretation of events is reinforced by the fact that most of the army officers and the East Pakistan Communist Party had no idea of the involvement of the CPP. PRO, DO35/2591, Communist in Pakistan, 14 July 1951. Ibid, Appendix A, Report on Communist Activities in West Pakistan, January to June 1951.

¹⁹ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4145, 790D.00/5-1251, Metcalf to the Department of State, 12 May 1951.

²⁰ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4144, 790D.00/9-150, Withers to the Department of State, 1 Sep. 1950.

²¹ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4144, 790D.00/4-2150, Preston to the Department of State, 21 April 1950.

The first serious political opportunity that came Suhrawardy's way was the intra-party dispute in the NWFP Muslim League which led to the formation of the Awami League. The party was led by Aminul Hasanat, the Pir of Manki Sharif and Khan Ghulam Mohammed the Khan of Lundkhar and it was later joined by Pir Ilahi Buksh the ex-premier of Sind. Suhrawardy's political association with the Awami League began when he joined in their press attacks against the Frontier Revenue Minister, Mian Jaffar Shah. However Suhrawardy did not join the organization, instead he called his old Muslim League workers and colleagues in East Bengal to form the East Pakistan Awami Muslim League under the leadership of Maulana Bhashani. In order to coordinate the provincial opposition Suhrawardy formed the Pakistan Awami Muslim League in March 1950. Liaquat Ali Khan recognized the gravity of the situation and 'declared war' in October on the Awami League, derided the concept of multi-party democracy and sought to legitimize his stance by claiming that Jinnah's statement of March 1948 was still pertinent.²² The declaration was a tacit admission that the monopoly of the Muslim League was breaking up and that the strong-arm methods used to suppress the opposition were counterproductive.

Suhrawardy made Punjab his stamping ground, where he was joined by Abdul Sattar Niazi, member of the Punjab assembly, and Mahmuda Begum; the latter headed the women's section along with the wife of Pir Ilahi Buksh of Sind. The greatest support came from the refugee population of northern Punjab and Montgomery district, areas which Suhrawardy extensively toured. Despite the thorough and methodical organizational work, observers were sceptical about his chances of making any serious headway in Punjab politics.²³

However Suhrawardy's ambitions were given a boost when in November 1950 Khan Iftikhar Hussain Khan, the Nawab of Mamdot announced his resignation from the Muslim League and established the Jinnah Muslim League. The two parties merged on 25 January 1951 to form the Jinnah Awami Muslim League with an organizing committee composed of H.S. Suhrawardy, the Convenor, the Nawab of Mamdot, Abdul Bari, Pir of Manki Sharif and Pir Ilahi Buksh. With this coalition cobbled together the JAML prepared for the provincial elections. It fought in the Punjab winning thirty-two seats but the success went mostly to Mamdot's supporters. In NWFP in the same year the JAML won only four seats.²⁴

²² NAUS, RG 59, Box 4145, 790D.00/10-1050, American Embassy Karachi to the Department of State, 10 Oct. 1950.

²³ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4144, 790D.00/4-2150, Preston to the Department of State, 21 April 1950.

²⁴ *Dawn*, 30 March-3 April 1951.

Suhrawardy then concentrated on East Bengal and toured the province with Pir of Manki Sharif and the Khan of Lundkhwar. Nurul Amin attempted to disrupt the tour with Muslim League demonstrations and through the implementation of Section 144, curbing the right of assembly. The attempts to subvert the opposition was followed up by a propaganda barrage with Nazimuddin, Ghulam Mohammed and Fatima Jinnah in the lead emphasizing the unity in Islam and the menace of 'provincialism'.²⁵ None of these attempts succeeded in dampening the popularity for Suhrawardy and in March 1952 three independent members of the East Bengal Legislative Assembly formed the parliamentary wing of the Jinnah Awami Muslim League. In December that year the East Pakistan Awami Muslim League affiliated with JAML to become its most important section. The increased influence of East Bengal in the JAML was reinforced with the departure of Mamdot in 1953 leaving it with support in only NWFP and Sind in West Pakistan. With the announcement of provincial election for the following year, Suhrawardy increasingly became preoccupied with the politics of East Bengal.

The inadequacy of finance and the basic infrastructure needed for the construction of a new centre in Karachi produced close links between the efforts at centralization and foreign policy. The alignment of Pakistan with the western alliance was seen as a way of procuring the investment needed to establish a strong centre. However Pakistan's difficulties in developing a credible foreign policy became an impediment. Jinnah from the outset was keen on establishing strong ties with the west, particularly the United States of America. His appeal to the United States for a \$2,000,000,000 loan package was however turned down.²⁶ The Truman administration was not prepared to assume direct responsibilities for security in the sub-continent's and wanted to work through collaborators. It saw the Commonwealth as a suitable vehicle to further USA's interests and encouraged Britain to maintain an active presence in the region.²⁷

However the Kashmir issue bedeviled Pakistan's relations with Britain. The Pakistani establishment had been antagonized by the unwillingness of General Gracey, the C-in-C, to execute Jinnah's orders and send troops into Kashmir. Gracey finally agreed to take limited action when Indian troops advanced beyond Baramula but ordered all British officers out of the combat zone and informed his opposite number General

²⁵ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4145, 790D.002-2752, Withers to the Department of State, 27 Feb. 1952.

²⁶ 'Memorandum of the Government of Pakistan to the US State Department on the requirement of financial and military assistance, Oct. 1947', in K. Arif, ed., *America-Pakistan Relations: Documents, i*, (Lahore, 1984), p.5.

²⁷ H.W. Brands, 'India and Pakistan in American Strategic Planning, 1947-54.: Commonwealth as Collaborators', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, xv, Oct. (1986) 1, 42-43.

Bucher of the counter move.²⁸ The result was that many in the army, particularly among the junior ranks, began to question the reliability of British officers and argued that they could do without them.²⁹

Consequently Clement Attlee's repeated offers of an alliance to Liaquat, were rejected because they did not include Kashmir. By 1951 Pakistan's opposition had softened slightly and Liaquat was willing to discuss defence without Kashmir on the agenda but he refused to commit any troops towards a regional alliance as long as the Kashmir problem was outstanding.³⁰ These obstacles to closer relations were compounded by Britain's refusal to sell weapons to Pakistan, out of fear that such sales would jeopardize much larger defence contracts with India. There was also some irritation over the question of Pakistan's membership of the Commonwealth. She was in fact prepared to leave the Commonwealth when constitutional adjustments were made allowing India to remain a member, despite her becoming a republic. The only thing which held her back was the realization that the step would enhance India's power to influence Britain.³¹

The coolness in Anglo-Pakistan relations made Britain reluctant to include Pakistan in the Middle East Defence Organization, despite, USA's eagerness. Pakistan could not see the value of such an alliance if it did not enhance its security, especially *vis-à-vis* India. Britain's dilemma was that it could not simultaneously accommodate the conflicting interests and priorities of both India and Pakistan. The Commonwealth Relations Office correctly perceived that Karachi's hesitance concerning the pact was a negotiating ploy. If membership of the MEDO included military re-equipment it would have changed Liaquat's tune but at the unacceptable price of alienating Delhi.³²

Liaquat in reaction to being orphaned by the west turned to a neutral, pan-Islamic and anti-colonial foreign policy hoping to gain the support of the Arab States for Kashmir.³³ Despite the Foreign Minister, Zafrullah Khan's, insistence that alignment with Muslim countries was the corner stone of Pakistan policy,³⁴ Liaquat made no genuine attempt to establish Pakistan's credentials as a neutral power. The pan-Islamic

²⁸ PRO, DO134/3, Brigadier Walker to Major General Ward, 30 July 1948. Ibid, telegram from Delhi to CRO, 28 July 1948.

²⁹ Ibid, Mc Cullagh to Stevens, 18 July 1948.

³⁰ PRO, F0371/101198, Olver to Burrows, 20 March 1952.

³¹ I. Stephens, *Pakistan*, (London, 1967), p.217.

³² PRO, F0371/101198, Norris to Bromley, 5 April 1952.

³³ Ibid, Reeve to Scott, 27 Dec. 1951.

³⁴ Ibid, Note on Pakistan's Foreign Policy, 3 June 1952.

posture was a ruse to mollify internal opposition and lead Pakistan out of a tight corner. The pan-Islamic policy was enthusiastically sustained by Nazimuddin when he became Prime Minister but nothing substantive emerged from this shift.

Significantly for the ruling group public opinion, particularly in the Punjab, was building up in favour of Pakistan's withdrawal from the Commonwealth. Maulana Shabbir Usmani, the Sheikh-ul-Islam and President of the Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Islam, initiated a vociferous anti-Liaquat and anti-British campaign. Arguing that Pakistan had to leave the Commonwealth because a Muslim state could only invest sovereignty in *Allah* and not the King.³⁵ The press viewed Liaquat Ali as a 'tool' of the Anglo-American block and the fact undermined his position in the Punjab at a critical time, in the run up to the provincial election in 1951.³⁶ The opposition was fanned by Mian Iftikharuddin, Faiz Ahmad Faiz and Anis Hashmi who were vocal and persistent critics of government policy, particularly in foreign affairs. The build up of anti-western perceptions, fostered by the religious as well as the left opposition, was a major internal impediment and had to be neutralized before the government could make any move in the direction of a western alliance.

The Punjabi group backed Liaquat Ali's political solution for the formation of a centralized state. This option was accepted because neither the bureaucrats nor the army top brass felt secure enough to pursue any other alternative. The central plank of his strategy was the establishment of a constitution to replace the Independence Act of 1947. Fortunately for those in favour of centralization, the cabinet as a whole was in agreement. They felt that some of the major problems, e.g., widening the support for the Muslim League's leadership, the refugee problem and increasing opposition to the government, could be tackled only if the centre assume some of the powers vested in the provinces.

However the government's attempt to resolve the impasse brought it under fire from all quarters and fractured Pakistan nationalism. Pakistan as a territorial entity had been defined by partition but two important questions remained unresolved,- the position of Islam and regionalism. The proposed constitution attracted hostility from the *ulama* who objected to the secular character of the state and the regional elements who opposed the unitary features.³⁷

³⁵ PRO, FO371/7601, Minutes, 15 May 1949. *Sind Observer*, 6 May 1949.

³⁶ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4145, 790D.00/1-451, Preston to Secretary of State, 4 Jan. 1951.

³⁷ NAUS, Microfilm, Roll 1, 845F.00/7-2648, Lewis to the Secretary of State, 26 July 1948.

Liaquat's solution was to use Islam to widen the support base of the ruling group. He tried to do this by propounding that the Pakistan state would be built on Islamic principles.³⁸ This was not in contradiction to Jinnah's commitment to secularism and rejection of a state based on confessional faith.³⁹ Liaquat agreed on the secular approach but used the term Islam, and Islamic Socialism rhetorically to describe a society based on social justice and equality.⁴⁰ However his strategy of using Islamic rhetoric won him only a small measure of support among the plebeian populace. This was offset by the rising expectations of the religious groups.

Partition forced the religious parties to reconsider their old goals and project a new agenda. The religious groups, particularly those who had supported the AIML, had expected that Pakistan would lead to the establishment of the *sharia*. The Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Islam, Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Pakistan, Majlis-i-Ahrar-i-Pakistan, the Khaksars now renamed the Islam League and the Jamat-i-Islami championed the ideal of an Islamic State. The divines were led by the Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani the most important *alim* in the ruling hierarchy.

Liaquat's reaction was to try and hoodwink the religious opposition, and concede their demands in appearance but not in substance. The Premier called the Objective Resolution the embodiment of Islamic principle as it invested all authority in *Allah* and it was accepted by Maulana Shabbir Usmani as a statement of good intent. In fact it was 'nothing but a hoax and....its provisions....particularly those relating to fundamental right, are directly opposed to the principles of an Islamic State.'⁴¹ However, Liaquat had misjudged the mood and depth of the opposition and the publication of the Interim Report provoked a furious response from the *ulama* and Bengal. Khwaja Shahabuddin backed the *ulama's* criticism that the constitution should conform to the Koran and *Sunna*.⁴² The Khwajas of *Ahsan Manzil* patronized extensively *maulvis*, *pirs* and *maulanas* for political purposes and could not afford to antagonize them. The centre's nerve and determination

³⁸ *Pakistan News*, i, no 30, 17 Dec. 1948.

³⁹ 'Inaugural Speech of Quaid-i-Azam in the Constituent Assembly', G.W. Choudhury, ed., *Documents and Speeches on the Constitution of Pakistan*, (Dacca, 1967), p.21.

⁴⁰ *Weekly Pakistan News*, i, no 35, 19 Feb. 1949.

⁴¹ *Report of the Court of Inquiry Constituted Under the Punjab Act II of 1954 to Enquire into the Punjab Disturbances of 1953* (Lahore, 1954), p.203.

⁴² PRO, FO371/84204, United Kingdom High Commission to CRO, 17 Nov. 1950.

remained unshaken and Liaquat attempted to defuse the issue by appealing to the critics for constructive suggestions.

However the Premier was not prepared for the arrival of Maulana Nadvi from the Nadwat-ul-Ulama of Lucknow. The latter was able to bring together the two rival groups led by Mufti Shafi and Intisham-ul-Huq into which the J-U-I had divided on Shabbir Usmani's death. Despite his leaning towards the Deobandi school he was accepted by the modernist elements such as the Ahl-i-Hadith and Jamat-i-Islami as well and consequently was able to hold a conference of the *ulama* under his presidentship in Karachi in January 1951. But the refusal by the President of the Constituent Assembly, Tamizuddin to submit a copy of the Board of Talimat's report gave Maududi the opportunity to dominate the proceedings. He had been writing copiously on the principles of an Islamic constitution and his ideas were accepted by Nadvi and others. The twenty-two principles for the establishment of an Islamic State confounded Liaquat's expectation that the *ulama* were incapable of reaching any agreement. But despite their apparent concurrence on the fundamentals of an Islamic State, the Constitution Sub-committee stubbornly resisted incorporating any of these suggestion into their proposals. In order to avoid confrontation on this issue Liaquat was forced to delay the proceedings and was assassinated before he could do anything.⁴³

His death marked a distinct change in the government's attitude to the religious opposition. Nazimuddin and his supporters in the Bengali group were much more sympathetic to the clerics demands. He tried to remove the religious hurdle to the formulation of a constitution by concessions which his more 'secular' minded predecessor were unwilling to make. The Bengali group also included Abdul Rub Nishtar and Mahmud Hussain and the common denominator which brought these elements together was their sympathy for the *ulama*. Beside their personal religiosity, Nishtar had scholarly interests in Islam and the Khwaja group were close to the *maulanas* for political reasons.⁴⁴ Their ascendancy signalled a shift in leadership from the 'secular'-minded Punjabi group to the more conservative Bengali group in the cabinet and resulted in some gains for the divines. These concessions included the provisions that only Muslims were qualified to be the Head of State and that an advisory body of the *ulama* would be established to consider whether the laws already approved were compatible with the Koran and *Sunna*. But the divines were not interested in cosmetic changes and wanted a special five man bench of the clerics attached to the

⁴³ L. Binder, *Religion and Politics in Pakistan* (Berkeley, 1961), pp. 214-218.

⁴⁴ PRO, DO35/3185, Memo on The Mullahs and their Influence in Pakistan, 14 Feb. 1951.

supreme court to vet the laws.⁴⁵ The *ulama* wanted to be the sole arbitrator of Islamic matters, such a position was unacceptable to the government who saw its implications very clearly.

This basic disagreement as to who should decide what was Islamic was behind the anti-Ahmadiyya controversy which eclipsed the differences over the Final Report. Since 1949 the Majlis-i-Ahrar had been hammering at the Ahmadiyya issue in order to make a political comeback and by 1952 the public began to respond. The *ulama* argued that the Ahmadiyyas were heretics and Zafrullah should be removed from the government. In May that year an anti-Ahmadiyya board was formed, headed by Maulana Nadvi and Sultan Ahmad of the Jamat-i-Islami. It was then followed by two conferences, one held in May and the other in July where the central issue discussed was that of getting the heterodox Ahmadiyya's declared as non-Muslims. With the Ahrar and the Jamat both vying for leadership of the movement, it forced Maududi to launch on the 26 February 1953 a direct action campaign which culminated in the declaration of martial law in Lahore.

Similarly Liaquat's constitutional proposals aroused considerable opposition from the regional forces. The Interim Report recommended a bicameral system where the provincial delegates to the upper house would be equally represented and the lower house, it was assumed, would be elected on a population basis. The Interim Report left unanswered many questions such as the size and composition of the lower house, because the recommendations of the Franchise and Judiciary Sub-committee of the BPC had not been submitted. But this did not prevent the eruption of the most vociferous anti-centre reaction in East Bengal. Two specific complaints were made in the constituent assembly: the centre was too strong, especially because the powers of the Head of State and the cabinet had been increased at the expense of the provincial chief ministers and in the upper chamber East Bengal was reduced to a minority.⁴⁶ The agitations and protests generated by the Interim Report confused Karachi. They felt unsure as to how to handle the crisis. Liaquat was forced to visit the province in order to placate the widespread opposition to the proposed constitution and when this failed he postponed discussion on the BPC Report. It was only a tactical withdrawal and by no means an indication that their demands would be accepted. Abdus Sattar Pirzada warned Bengalis in a radio broadcast that their critic's demand for a majority in both houses of the proposed assembly would be

⁴⁵ PRO, DO35/5102B, extract from Pakistan opdom 3/53, 4 Feb. 1953.

⁴⁶ PRO, FO371/84204, United Kingdom High Commission to CRO, 17 Nov. 1950.

opposed by other provinces.⁴⁷ The Premier steered around this highly contentious issue by proposing to the Constituent Assembly the principle of parity between East and West Pakistan.⁴⁸

The Final Report presented by Nazimuddin made small concessions to regional opposition. It accepted the principle of parity in both houses of parliament, the smaller provinces were given weightages at the expense of East Bengal and Punjab and both the houses had equal powers except on the budget, money bills and votes of no-confidence which were only vested in the lower house. Khwaja Nazimuddin stated that real power was vested in the lower house and the upper house had only a recommendatory role.⁴⁹ But the Final Report was a collection of compromises cobbled together by Nazimuddin which satisfied no one. It aggravated the internal tension in the Bengali group between those in the cabinet such as Nazimuddin and Fazlur Rahman and those based in East Bengal such as Nurul Amin because Nazimuddin refused to devolve the authority of the federal legislature and the executive to the provinces or accept the demand for 'maximum autonomy' or the East Bengal Muslim League's call for decentralization, particularly in regard to trade, communication and transport and industrial development.⁵⁰ The Report imbued the opposition in East Bengal with new purpose. The Dacca Bar Association appointed a sub-committee which reacted strongly to the fact that the demand for greater provincial autonomy and making of Bengali a state language had not been incorporated. They accepted the principle of parity only in the upper chamber, insisted on representation based on population in the House of the People, disagreed with institutionalization of the '*mullahs*' and wanted that principal organs of the state such as the Supreme Court and the upper house of the legislature be established in East Pakistan.⁵¹

The Final Report also provoked alternative suggestions from West Pakistan. The confederation idea was supported by Mian Iftikharuddin and Shaukat Hayat of the Azad Party. They based their suggestion closely on the Lahore Resolution of 1940 and proposed two autonomous federal states. The East Pakistan state would have a unicameral legislature while the West Pakistan legislature would be bicameral with its

⁴⁷ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4145, 790D.00/1-2651, Withers to Department of State, 26 Jan. 1951.

⁴⁸ This was not a climb down but merely the maintenance of the prevailing status quo which had emerged after partition with the nomination of at least eight non-Bengali delegates to represent East Pakistan in the Constituent Assembly. Their presence had effectively reduced the majority of the Bengali representatives and this was institutionalized with the parity proposal. M.H.R. Talukdar, ed., *Memoirs of Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy*, (Dhaka, 1987), p.79.

⁴⁹ I. Rehman, *Public Opinion and Political Development in Pakistan, 1947-58* (Karachi, 1982), p.48.

⁵⁰ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4145, 790D.00/2-2752, Withers to the Department of State, 27 Feb. 1952.

⁵¹ PRO, DO35/5107B, Extract from fortnightly report no 12 from the Deputy High Commissioner, 19 June 1952.

constituent units being autonomous. The two states would merge in confederation which would be responsible for defence, foreign affairs and inter-zonal communication. The proposal began to gain support in East Bengal as it neatly fitted the opposition demand.⁵² However the whole concept was rejected by Nazimuddin who stated that it would be the end of Pakistan.⁵³

The sharpest reaction to the constitutional proposals presented by Nazimuddin came from the Punjab. The Nawab of Mamdot and the other opposition groups in the province called for the withdrawal of the Final Report. Mumtaz Daultana also rejected the constitutional proposals, regarding federalism unsuitable and favoured a unitary structure. However this provoked a strong reaction from Qaiyum Khan who in a speech rejected the notion that Pakhtuns would surrender their provincial authority to any central authority. He argued that there should be no further delays or counter-proposals and early elections should be held under the new constitution. The principle of parity between both wings achieved at its expense with Sarhad gaining from the arrangement was the one thing most offensive to the Punjab.⁵⁴ Qaiyum's open defiance of the Punjab, had the blessing of the Governor of NWFP, Khwaja Shahabuddin, and Punjabis were horrified by the prospect of losing the political leadership of Pakistan.⁵⁵ The leaders of the Punjab Muslim League stalled any discussion on the Final Report when Nazimuddin led a delegation to Lahore in January 1953. The centre acquiesced in their demand and decided not to push the Report through the assembly thinking that the two League Working Committees of Punjab and East Bengal could iron out the matter. The breathing space allowed Daultana to tour the districts and unite the provincial League against Nazimuddin's constitution.⁵⁶

However the efforts at centralization was further hampered by the conflicts within the cabinet itself. Liaquat supported by the Finance Minister, Ghulam Mohammed, and the Foreign Minister, Zafrullah Khan, was challenged by the Bengali group. The encounter was led by the Interior Minister, Khwaja Shahabuddin, backed by the Chief Minister of Bengal, Nurul Amin, actively aided by Altaf Husain, the editor of *Dawn* and supported by dissident Punjabi politicians led by the Nawab of Mamdot. The critics also included advocates of an Islamic State and some politicians from Sarhad. The Bengali group was not antagonistic to the

⁵² I. Rehman, *Public Opinion and Political Development in Pakistan*, pp. 53-54.

⁵³ *Dawn*, 13 Jan. 1953.

⁵⁴ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4146, 790D.00/1-553, American Consulate, Lahore, to the Department of State, 5 Jan. 1953.

⁵⁵ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4146, 790D.00/1-1953, American Consulate, Lahore, to the Department of State, 19 Jan. 1953.

⁵⁶ PRO, DO35/5107B, extract from Lahore report 2/53, 30 Jan. 1953. NAUS, RG 59, Box 4146, 790D.00/1-2653, American Consulate, Lahore, to the Department of State, 26 Jan. 1953.

centralizing process initiated by Liaquat but they had realized that there was little point in being in power in East Bengal while all the important decisions concerning the province were decided by the central government. The Jute Board which controlled the East Bengal economy and the army and bureaucracy which were the biggest employers were all controlled by Karachi. The Bengalis simply wanted to take-over the cabinet and redirect the centralizing policies in East Bengal's favour and for this end were prepared to work with other dissident elements in the League.

In the first salvo, Khwaja Shahabuddin's supporters deployed Islamic and anti-Commonwealth rhetoric in their attempt to unseat the Prime Minister. The intrigue was brought into the open in May 1949 while Liaquat Ali Khan was attending the Commonwealth Prime Minister Conference in London. Originally the campaign against the Premier was restricted to a series of personal attacks against him and his wife in the Punjab's Urdu press. The opposition then stepped up its campaign by criticising the pro-Commonwealth policy of the Prime Minister and the pro-British camp in the country. The *Dawn* persistently printed hostile articles on the Anglo-American bloc and made veiled threats of seeking aid from 'other quarters'.⁵⁷

The ultimate aim of the cabal was to overthrow Liaquat Ali but to do this successfully the pro-British lobby had to be neutralized. The two immediate targets were the removal of the Governor of Punjab, Sir Francis Mudie and the closure of the *Civil and Military Gazette*. The *Gazette* owned by the Hindu magnate, Seth Dalmia, was the largest English language daily in Lahore and a solid supporter of Liaquat, the pro-Commonwealth policy of the government and Mudie. In order to silence the *Civil and Military Gazette*, Altaf Husain engineered the suspension of the paper. The matter was finally decided by the cabinet with Khwaja Shahabuddin mobilizing sufficient support to overrule the acting premier Ghulam Mohammed.⁵⁸

With the *Civil and Military Gazette* out of the way, Governor Mudie no longer had a shield to fend off his critics. The Oust Mudie Campaign was started by the Punjab Muslim League Working Committee, fanned by the *Nawa-i-Waqt* and financed by the Nawab of Mamdot.⁵⁹ Ostensibly the campaign was against the Governor's unwillingness to co-operate with the Muslim League and there were whispers

⁵⁷ NAUS, Microfilm, Roll 1, 845F.00/5-2849, Newsom to the Department of State, 28 May 1949.

⁵⁸ Altaf was able to plant an article in the paper which reported that Liaquat and Nehru had agreed in London to divide Kashmir along the existing cease-fire line and drop the idea of a plebiscite. On publication of the article, the editor of the *Dawn* filed a complaint with the government for the confiscation of the *Gazette's* property and demanded that its presses be turned over to the *Dawn* to be used for its Lahore edition. The argument that the whole thing was engineered was reinforced by the revelation that Mahmood Haroon offered to buy both the Lahore and Karachi edition of the *Civil and Military Gazette* from Seth Dalmia ten days before the suspension order, informing him that the paper was to be suspended. Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid. IOR, Mss. Eur. F164/49 (Mudie Collection) Mudie to Liaquat, 12 May 1949.

spread that he wanted the return of Khizr Hayat and his Unionist followers. In reality these accusations were a stalking horse, the actual inspiration was fear and avarice; Mudie's impartial investigation was leading to high places and many prominent persons and officials were apprehensive that they might be implicated.⁶⁰

The Prime Minister became aware of the plot when Altaf Hussain stated in the presence of Hugh Stephenson, the United Kingdom Deputy High Commissioner, A.E. Smith, United Kingdom Information Officer and Firoz Khan Noon that he would not rest until he 'got rid of Liaquat and his bunch of camp followers.' Firoz Khan Noon rushed to Karachi to meet Liaquat on his return from London and informed him of the intrigue. The London *Times* article possibly inspired by the United Kingdom High Commissioner brought the cabal further out into the open.⁶¹

When exposed, Altaf Hussain immediately capitulated and pledged loyalty to Liaquat but the Premier's lack of control over the party meant that he could not act decisively against the other ring leaders immediately. Khaliqzaman, the President of the Pakistan Muslim League was a supporter of the 'stone statue', the Nawab of Mamdot and nominated him to the Working Committee in flagrant disregard of the Prime Ministers' wishes. Consequently in order to crack down on the cabal Liaquat had to act against the President of the League as well. He engineered the resignation of Khaliqzaman and inspired a press campaign which requested him to fill the vacancy. The combination of leadership in both the government and the party greatly strengthened Liaquat's hand in dealing with the recalcitrant politicians. It allowed the Prime Minister to replace the Nawab of Mamdot as the President of the Punjab Muslim League with his protégé Mumtaz Daultana. The manoeuvre isolated Khwaja Shahabuddin but he continued to oppose Liaquat by rallying his pro-Islamic state supporters in their opposition to the interim constitution which was considered too secular. However his fate had been decided and Liaquat was preparing to send him to Cairo as ambassador, just before his death.

However before further action could be taken Liaquat Ali Khan was assassinated on October 1951⁶² and his demise resulted in a shift in the cabinet. The important portfolios such as defence, commerce and

⁶⁰ NAUS, Microfilm, Roll 1, 845F.00/5-2749, American Embassy, Karachi, to the Secretary of State, 27 May 1949. At least eighteen MLAs were considered corrupt and charges were prepared against Husain Ifkhar Khan, the ex-premier, Deputy Commissioner Hasan Akthar and Commissioner Khwaja Rahim. QAA, PC-ARN-4 (Abdur Rub Nishtar Collection), Mudie to Nishtar 1 Aug. 1949. Ibid, Mudie to Liaquat 20 April 1949.

⁶¹ NAUS, Microfilm, Roll 1, 845F.00/5-2849, Newsom to the Department of State, 28 May 1949.

⁶² There was much speculation that Liaquat's assassination was hatched in high places which continued despite an investigation by a Scotland Yard detective, who found no plot. However the assassin, Said Akbar was an employee of the NWFP government and had been used by Governor Chundrigar to spread anti-Afghan and pro-government propaganda among the tribes. He had tried to see Liaquat earlier, in Karachi, to complain that he had not been adequately rewarded for his services. The money found at his home which had been attributed by the media to Afghanistan was in fact Pakistan Government payments. PRO, FO371/101219, Inspector-General Police, Grace, his views on Liaquat's assassination, 8 Oct. 1952.

education, labour and interior were now in the hands of the Bengali group. Their domination was consolidated by Fazlur Rahman's take-over of economic affairs which was separated from the Finance Ministry and the retention of Khwaja Shahabuddin, as the Governor of NWFP.⁶³ The Bengali group's primary interest was simply that their province should be better represented at the centre and Nazimuddin felt that the best way to accomplish this goal was to ratify quickly the new constitution. With this object in view, he set about forging a unity of the smaller provinces of West Pakistan with East Bengal against Punjab.⁶⁴

Concurrent with the cabinet reshuffle which accompanied Nazimuddin's co-option as Premier there were certain ominous changes portending the events that followed. The elevation of Ghulam Mohammed, a Punjabi and ex-bureaucrat, to the post of Governor-General which was invested with wide ranging powers was to have important ramifications. His predecessor, Nazimuddin, had acted as a constitutional head of state but Ghulam Mohammed was to break with this practice and aspired to dominate the cabinet. To succeed in this task he first had to consolidate his domination over the bureaucracy and he abolished the post of Secretary General and the parallel 'cabinet' which had acted as the nerve centre of the civil service. Paradoxically the return to a segmented bureaucracy meant that it was no longer possible to by-pass the ministers. The Governor-General now had to confront the cabinet and individual ministers in order to influence policy.⁶⁵ This task was made slightly easier when Chaudhri Mohammed Ali was nominated as Finance Minister strengthening the Punjabi lobby, consisting of Zafrullah and Gurmani, in the cabinet.

The rivalry between the Bengali and the Punjabi group within the cabinet came to a head with the anti-Ahmadiyya crisis. The centre was convinced by July 1952 that Daultana was not suppressing the agitation but actually encouraging it.⁶⁶ However two diametrically opposed solutions were proposed by the two contending groups. Each option was partisan and designed to settle the crisis and deliver a knockout blow to the other side. The Bengali group led by Fazlur Rahman, the power behind the throne once Shahabuddin had left the cabinet, was quite prepared to accommodate the *ulama's* demand. Nazimuddin agreed, was sympathetic to the clerics and thought it a small price to pay for public tranquillity if he declared the

⁶³ *Manchester Guardian*, 25 Oct. 1951.

⁶⁴ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4146, 790D.00/4-1653, Withers to the Department of State, 16 March 1953.

⁶⁵ H Alavi, 'Authoritarianism and Legitimation of State Power in Pakistan', in S.K. Mitra ed., *The Post-Colonial State in Asia*, p.43.

⁶⁶ PRO, DO35/5371, Hunt to Bottomely, 7 June 1954.

Ahmadiyya a non-Muslim minority and drop Zafrullah from the cabinet.⁶⁷ But Ghulam Mohammed was not prepared to accept any of the sectarian demands of the *maulanas*, called for unity in the cabinet and blocked the Bengali group from carrying out its plan. Nazimuddin was warned that if Zafrullah was removed from the cabinet, Pakistan would not get a grain of wheat from America.⁶⁸ Ghulam Mohammed's actions were not based on principles or personal loyalty but on the knowledge that Zafrullah's departure would have been a body blow to the Punjabi group as it would tilt the balance of power in the cabinet even more in the favour of the Bengali group.

Having blocked Fazlur Rahman's attempt to resolve the crisis, Ghulam Mohammed prepared a counterattack. The first step was to exacerbate the differences that already existed between Mumtaz Daultana, the Chief Minister of Punjab and the Prime Minister. These differences with Nazimuddin were exaggerated by the machinations of the Governor-General's supporters, notably Mushtaq Gurmani and Chaudhri Mohammed Ali and they were able to turn Daultana against the Prime Minister.⁶⁹ The dispute on the question of parity only served to intensify Mumtaz Daultana's opposition. He retaliated by fanning the anti-Ahmadiyya agitation, using it as a battering ram against Karachi in order to extract further concessions and overthrow Nazimuddin.⁷⁰

Once Daultana had turned against the Prime Minister the supporters of Ghulam Mohammed attempted to discredit Fazlur Rahman the dominant power in the cabinet. Fazlur Rahman was blamed, by Ghulam Mohammed, for a student demonstration: it had led to rioting and several deaths and the army had to be called in.⁷¹ This charge was added to the accusation that he was responsible for the economic ills of the country. However Nazimuddin refused to dismiss him, instead he took away from him the education portfolio and gave it to another supporter, Dr Mahmud Hussain.

The criticism against the two ministers began to swing public opinion against Khwaja Nazimuddin's government and Ghulam Mohammed increased the pressure on the Bengali group. The latter's action

⁶⁷ PRO, DO35/5370, Keeble to Howes, 26 Feb. 1953. Nazimuddin already had unsuccessfully tried to muzzle those newspapers which were hostile to the agitation but was restrained from taking action by the persuasive and strong intervention of the bureaucracy. NAUS, RG 59, Box 4146, 790D.00/9-2752, Perkins to the Department of State, 27 Sep. 1952.

⁶⁸ PRO, DO35/3185, UK High Commission to Pericvale Liesching, CRO, 9 Aug. 1952. *Report of the Court of Inquiry Constituted Under the Punjab Act II of 1954 to Enquire into the Punjab Disturbances of 1953* (Lahore, 1954), p.296.

⁶⁹ L. Ziring, 'The Failure of Democracy in Pakistan: East Pakistan and the Central Government, 1947-1958' (Columbia Univ. Ph.D. thesis 1962), pp. 142-145.

⁷⁰ PRO, DO35/5370, The Recent Disturbances in the Punjab, report by Laithwaite, 9 March 1953.

⁷¹ L. Ziring, *op.cit.*, pp. 142-145.

was based on the knowledge that he had the full confidence of the army. The commander-in-chief, General Mohammed Ayub Khan, in December 1952 stated that the army was ready to take-over if the situation became critical⁷² and he was not prepared to see either the politicians particular Qaiyum Khan or Daultana 'or the public run the country'.⁷³ Throughout the first quarter of 1953 the Governor-General made several unsuccessful attempts to persuade the Prime Minister to reconstitute the cabinet. He wanted a surgical action which would remove Fazlur Rahman, Abdul Rub Nishtar, Dr Mahmud Hussain and Abdus Sattar Pirzada from the cabinet and leave the pliable Nazimuddin in place as the nominal leader of the government. These changes were considered necessary by the Punjabi group if they were to make important amendments to the Basic Principle Committee Report. They were opposed to the *ulama's* role in the constitution which was the immediate worry. The Punjabi group was concerned that granting them a status in the constitution together with a Prime Minister whose religious predilections were well known would create major impediments to any pro-western policy. The other bone of contention was the question of parity in the Final Report which possibly could lead to Bengali domination. Certainly this is how the Report was perceived by its opponents who dubbed the constitutional proposal the Bengal-Peshawar-Confederacy Report. The anti-Ahmadiyya agitation gave the Punjabi group a pretext openly to oppose the Final Report's concessions to the religious opposition and consequently delay the constitution.⁷⁴

Nazimuddin's inability to defend his policies or his supporters from the oligarchy's onslaught so infuriated his own supporters that Fazlur Rahman, Nurul Amin and Altaf Hussain conspired unsuccessfully to remove him from office.⁷⁵ Despite their moves being blocked they continued to castigate the Prime Minister in the *Dawn* for not reconstituting the cabinet. In this respect Fazlur Rahman's intention was similar to the Governor-General's in that he wanted to introduce fresh blood into the cabinet but at his opponents' expense.

Buffeted from all sides by opposing forces within the cabinet Nazimuddin was unable to decide what to do. However the paralysis in the decision-making process could not continue indefinitely and events were beginning to overtake Nazimuddin. The anti-Ahmadiyya agitation had entered a more violent phase, and

⁷² NAUS, RG 59, Box 4146, 790D.00/12-2352, Memo of conversation between General M. Ayub Khan, C.-in-C., Pakistan Army, and Gibson, 23 Dec. 1952.

⁷³ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4146, 790D.00/2-1353, Memo of conversation between Ayub Khan and Raleigh Gibson, 13 Feb. 1953.

⁷⁴ PRO, DO35/5107B, UK High Commission to CRO, 7 Jan. 1953. DO35/5300, Murray to Swinton (CRO), 12 Jan. 1953.

⁷⁵ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4146, 790D.00/2-1253, Withers to the Department of State, 12 Feb. 1953.

Nazimuddin called a conference consisting of the highest officials of the Pakistan Government on 26 February 1953. The Prime Minister's preferred options for defusing the agitation such as sacrificing Zafrullah or convening a world conference of the *ulama* to decide on the status of the Ahmadiyya community were strongly resisted. The army was not prepared to see Zafrullah go. His departure would scuttle the attempts to steer Pakistan into the US camp. Ghulam Ahmad, the Interior Secretary urged that the Ahrars should be arrested. When Nazimuddin refused, Gurmani suggested that as law and order was a provincial subject, the provinces should deal with the matter and this view was backed by Qaiyum Khan and Khwaja Shahabuddin. This was also resisted by the Premier who feared that such action would result in Karachi and Punjab going up in flames.⁷⁶ But the Ahrar's Direct Action led to disorder in the Punjab and threatened to become a full scale popular rebellion against the provincial and central governments. Martial law was imposed in Lahore allowing Ghulam Mohammed and his cohort to liquidate the religious opposition in Nazimuddin's name the strongest sympathizer of the *ulama* in the government.⁷⁷ It also eliminated the last stronghold of anti-western resistance in West Pakistan and gave the military-bureaucratic oligarchy a free hand in directing Pakistan's foreign policy. Nazimuddin's conscience could not accept the crack down and he offered to resign on 10 March but the cabinet rejected his offer.⁷⁸

Mirza, a month before Nazimuddin's dismissal, was freely admitting to the British High Commissioner, Sir Gilbert Laithwaite, that putting a strong man in Lahore was not enough but the cabinet itself had to be reconstituted. The Punjabi group were now no longer considering a minor reshuffle but a major purge. At a high level conference, in April 1953, the administration's anxieties over the degree of 'mullah' influence in the constitution and the recent events in Karachi and Lahore were expressed.⁷⁹ The generals and Ghulam Mohammed, supported by Mian Aminuddin, and Qaiyum Khan, led the opposition to 'institutionalizing' the *ulama*. Mirza described the manoeuvre as a 'fight to [the] finish' between the conservative and liberal elements.⁸⁰ The final assault was made by Ayub who argued immediate change of government

⁷⁶ PRO, DO35/5370, Keeble to Howes [CRO], 26 Feb. 1953. NAUS, RG 59, Box 4146, 790D.00/4-1653, Emmerson to the Secretary of State, 16 April 1953.

⁷⁷ PRO, DO35/5106, UK High Commission to CRO, 18 April 1953.

⁷⁸ PRO, DO35/5370, Laithwaite to Liesching, CRO, 11 March 1953. Note of conversation with Zafrullah Khan, 10 March 1953.

⁷⁹ PRO, DO35/5370, Laithwaite to Liesching, CRO, 12 March 1953. Note of conversation with Iskander Mirza.

⁸⁰ NAUS, RG59, Box 4146, 790D.00/4-1653, Emmerson to the Secretary of State, 16 April 1953.

if the army's confidence was to be maintained. Ghulam Mohammed obliged, by dismissing Nazimuddin's cabinet on 17 April 1953.⁸¹

Expectedly, the greatest resistance to the establishment of a unitary structure came from the chief ministers. The premiers of the provinces enjoyed a great deal of autonomy and were unwilling to surrender their power to the centre which lacked cohesion. They commanded strong personal support independent of the President of the Pakistan Muslim League and the Premier. Only they controlled the League members of the provincial assembly, nominated provincial representatives to the central legislature and the Prime Minister's majority in the Constituent Assembly was subject to their good will. Karachi's only means of direct control was through the use of PRODA regulation and the implementation of Governor's Rule. These blunt instruments, in the absence of a constitution, were regularly employed by the governors, who personified the writ of the centre in the provinces. They allowed Karachi to reformulate political combinations, exclude recalcitrant individuals and generally strengthen the hand of the pro-centre elements in the provinces. The centre's hand was further reinforced by the combination of government and party which allowed Liaquat, as President of the party, to assert greater control over the rebellious provincial Muslim Leagues. By wearing both hats, he could dissolve ministries and provincial Leagues, call for elections and distribute tickets to his supporters in the provinces. But in practice the intervention by the centre in the provinces was fraught with difficulties and did not necessarily lead to the desired result.

Even though the Punjabi group was the driving force behind the centralization process in Karachi, they were obstructed by strong centrifugal forces located in Lahore. The Nawab of Mamdot, the Premier of Punjab led the 'Punjab first' group in resisting Liaquat's cabinet. The centre's intervention over the refugee issue in the province was considered by the 'Punjab firsters' to be an attack against their provincial autonomy. By spring 1948 it was estimated that over 4,880,000 had crossed in to west Punjab from east Punjab.⁸² The Premier and the Federal Refugee Minister, Ghazanfar Ali Khan became involved due to the international dimensions of the question entailing negotiations with India. The Nawab of Mamdot refused to respond to the directives of the central executive and resisted all attempts by Karachi to intervene. Mamdot's

⁸¹ PRO, DO35/5106, UK High Commission to CRO, 19 April 1953.

⁸² IOR, Mss. Eur. F164/27 (Mudie Collection) Note on the Loss of Muslim Life due to Disturbances in East Punjab and States by Fazal-i-Ilahi, superintendent of refugee census operation.

defiance gained him a little kudos since he stood forth as the man who defied the Quaid-i-Azam in favour of Punjab's autonomy.⁸³

Why was the Nawab of Mamdot so adamant that Karachi should not involve itself on this issue? Mamdot's family, friends and supporters were cloaking venality with the demand for provincial rights; they had used the administration to obtain possession of evacuee property.⁸⁴ Mamdot's group was able to override the administration by acting as a *de facto* kitchen cabinet within the cabinet but in doing so they made enemies. Mian Iftikharuddin's position as Refugee Minister was reduced to a sham, Mumtaz Daultana complained that Mamdot's 'shadow cabinet' which included Hamid Nizami editor of *Nawa-i-Waqt* were counter-commanding his decisions⁸⁵ and Francis Mudie, despaired at the rampant corruption.⁸⁶

Liaquat had to remove Mamdot if the centralizing process was to be successful in this crucial province. But he lacked the means to intervene directly and intervened instead in the intra-party rivalry. He backed his protégé Mumtaz Daultana's attempt to capture power. By the summer of 1948, Jinnah had lost confidence in the Nawab of Mamdot and asked him to step down in favour of Daultana. Instead of complying he shrewdly refused and resigned with Shaukat from the cabinet. Daultana realized that without control of the Punjab Provincial League he would be a puppet in the hands of its President, Mamdot. He therefore challenged the Premier for the presidency of the provincial League and narrowly won the contest by eighteen votes in November 1948. From this position of strength he launched a two pronged attack. A censure motion against Mamdot was instigated as a feint while he persuaded Liaquat to promulgate Governor's Rule. The assumption being that it would be easier for him to take-over with the backing of Karachi.⁸⁷ But when news of Mumtaz's intrigue leaked out it brought public censure, forcing the centre to dispatch Choudhry Khaliqzaman, the President of the APML, to investigate. However, the latter was a

⁸³ IOR, Mss. Eur. F164/51, (Mudie Collection), Mudie to the Governor-General, Nazimuddin, nd.

⁸⁴ The stakes were high as it was estimated that the non-Muslim population had left behind between 22 to 25 lakhs acres of agricultural land and about 50,779 houses in the towns. NAP, QAP, F/804, Note on rehabilitation by the Minister for Refugee and Rehabilitation, Mian Iftikharuddin, to Jinnah, 9 Nov. 1947.

⁸⁵ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4144, 790D.00/9-1250, Candreva to the Department of State, 12 Sep. 1950.

⁸⁶ He was unable effectively to discipline officials such as Khwaja Abdur Rahim, Commissioner of Rawalpindi District and Kashmir Affairs and Hasan Akthar, District Commissioner of Montgomery District, who were hand in glove with the Chief Minister of Punjab. IOR, Mss. Eur. F164/52 (Mudie Collection), Mudie to Nazimuddin, 31 Jan. 1949.

⁸⁷ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4144, 790D.00/9-1250, Candreva to the Department of State, 12 Sep. 1950.

known supporter of the 'stone statue', Mamdot, and he forced Mumtaz Daultana to resign in Spring 1949 and accept Mian Abdul Bari as President of the Punjab Muslim League.⁸⁸

Liaquat in order to aid Daultana and regain control of the APML 'combined' the government and party. Now both the national party and the bureaucracy were deployed to make Daultana chief minister. His popularity was limited to the districts of Sargodha, Jhang and Mianwali and this was not adequate for defeating Mamdot in a straight fight for the presidency of the League. The balance was tipped in his favour by the judicious deployment of 'gifts, promises of patronage' and the application of pressure by Qurban Ali the Inspector-General of CID who was Mumtaz's 'strong man'.⁸⁹ This strategy first rewarded him with the recapture of the presidency of the League and cleared the way for him to fulfil his burning ambition of becoming the Premier of Punjab.

To ensure Daultana's victory in the 1951 provincial elections Liaquat staked his prestige and actively canvassed for the Punjab Muslim League. The party's prospects were boosted by the Pakistan-Indian Trade Agreement which resulted in the resumption of trade and payments for many small businesses in Punjab. Liaquat personally supervised the selection of candidates considering scrupulously their 'vote-getting strength' and 'amenability to party discipline'.⁹⁰ Daultana was also busy gathering support and he promised something to every one. On the one hand he promised land reforms to get the backing of the peasantry and simultaneously entered into complex alliances with the zemindars such as the Daultana-Gilani pact. The Muslim League won the Punjab elections by a handsome margin, outdistancing its nearest rival, the Jinnah Muslim League, by 112 seats.⁹¹ It was as much as a victory for the centre as it was for Daultana.

However the assassination of Liaquat and the nomination of Nazimuddin as Prime Minister left Daultana in the unenviable position of being Liaquat's man but with no longer any support at the centre. This was a serious set-back to Karachi's efforts at centralization. Daultana's troubles were compounded when in an attempt to fulfil his electoral pledges to both the landlords and the peasantry he produced a flawed piece of agrarian legislation which resulted in adverse reactions. The peasantry agitated for more radical reforms while the landlords began to use various pretexts to evict their tenants and suspend cultivation. By

⁸⁸ NAUS, Microfilm, Roll 1, 845F.00/3-1849, Doolittle to the Secretary of State, 18 March 1949.

⁸⁹ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4144, 790D.00/9-1250, Candreva to the Department of State, 12 Sep. 1950.

⁹⁰ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4145, 790D.00/3-851, Perkins to the Department of State, 8 March 1951.

⁹¹ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4145, 790D.00/4-951, American Consulate, Lahore, to the Department of State, 9 April 1951.

autumn 1952 the estimated acreage under cultivation had fallen by over 150,000 acres precipitating a famine. The government was forced to introduce rationing and they simultaneously initiated an ineffective procurement drive.⁹² The shortage spread to NWFP and Bahawalpur and in Lahore it triggered of an *atta* riot.⁹³

Daultana became desperate and tried to extricate himself from the political mess. He saw the emergence of the anti-Ahmadiyya movement as a godsend and unwisely used it to divert attention from the food shortage. Ibrahim Chisti, head of the Islamiat Department of the Punjab Government was instructed to fund surreptitiously the Majlis-i-Ahrar and Mir Nur Ahmad, Director of Public Relations of the Punjab Government placed his printing facilities at their disposal.⁹⁴ The police were restrained by Daultana from taking action and the ban against the agitation was not enforced in Multan for a month allowing it to become violent. When arrests which included 377 Muslim Leaguers were made, the Premier personally intervened to release the leaders.⁹⁵ Once the agitation gained momentum, Daultana shifted the onus of decision-making from Lahore to Karachi by asking the centre to decide on the issue. However the anti-Ahmadiyya movement proved to be too volatile and it snowballed into a full-scale rebellion forcing Daultana to take a firm stand.⁹⁶ The agitation exceeded the expectation of the Action Committee, mainly due to the discontent caused by the food shortage and to the participation of the left, who wanted to remove the pro-western Zafrullah.⁹⁷ Finally the army declared martial law and the efforts to restore law and order caused 1000 casualties, not all fatal.⁹⁸ At this point Nazimuddin discovered the degree of Daultana's involvement, forced him to resign in disgrace and replaced him with his rival Firoz Khan Noon.

In reaction to Karachi's intervention the Jinnah Muslim League was formed to resist the efforts at imposing a central authority. However the opposition was not simply centrifugal in its implication for it had

⁹² NAUS, RG 59, Box 4145, 790D.00/2-2152, American Consulate, Lahore, to the Department of State, 21 Feb. 1952. Box 4146, 790D.00/9-1552, American Consulate, Lahore, to the Department of State, 15 Sep. 1952. In Multan the short fall was 60,000 tons, but Daultana refused to take action against hoarders and profiteers who were mainly his supporters. Ibid.

⁹³ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4145, 790D.00/2-2752, American Consulate, Lahore, to the Department of State, 27 Feb. 1952.

⁹⁴ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4146, 790D.00/3-1753, Gibson to the Department of State, 17 March 1953.

⁹⁵ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4146, 790D.00/8-3052, American Consulate, Lahore, to the Department of State, 30 Aug. 1952.

⁹⁶ Maulana Abdus Sattar Niazi barricaded himself in the Wazir Khan Mosque in the heart of the labyrinthine walled city of Lahore, led the plebeian population in turning it into a no-go area an act reminiscent of the Shahidganj agitations of the 1930s.

⁹⁷ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4146, 790D.00/2-2053, American Consulate, Lahore, to the Department of State, 20 Feb. 1953.

⁹⁸ PRO, DO35/5370, Laithwaite to Liesching, CRO, 11 March 1953.

the potential of emerging as an alternative focus of centralizing authority. Mamdot along with Abdul Bari and Ghulam Nabi resigned from the Punjab Muslim League and on 1 November 1950 formed the Jinnah Muslim League. The formation of the new party was hotly debated by Mamdot's advisers. He himself was pushed by his supporters into leaving the League, once they realized that they had little chance of being elected to the Punjab provincial assembly as long as the allocation of tickets was controlled by the Daultana dominated Parliamentary Board. The Young Turks were untainted by the venality of the Mamdot ministry and contained popular elements able to win support of some of the middle and plebeian classes. Those who drove Mamdot to withdraw from the League were the same group that urged him to align with Suhrawardy and in January 1951 the two parties merged to form the Jinnah Awami Muslim League.⁹⁹

The new parties first test came with Punjab elections of 1951. To improve their chances they co-operated with the Azad Party and Jamat-i-Islami. Suhrawardy claimed that he had the support of Fatima Jinnah.¹⁰⁰ Despite their efforts the party won only thirty-two seats which mainly went to Mamdot's supporters. The result showed the weakness of the opposition which was greatly aggravated when in July 1953 Mamdot returned with nineteen followers to the Muslim League.

The other opposition party in the Punjab, the Azad Pakistan Party, was formed when Mian Iftikharuddin fell from grace. He and Shaukat Hayat were expelled from the Muslim League for their incessant criticism of the party in the Constituent Assembly. They were consistent opponents of the excessive centralization which was taking place. In November 1950, after refusing to join Suhrawardy's Awami Muslim League, they formed the Azad Party in conjunction with Mahmud Ali Kasuri, Sheikh Mohammed Rashid and Khwaja Mohammed Afzal. The party's position on all major issues were identical with that of the communists. Both were against Liaquat's foreign policy, demanded greater provincial autonomy and wanted socialist economic reforms but on Kashmir, Iftikharuddin called for a 'people's revolution'.¹⁰¹ Most of the communists and sympathizers joined the Azad Pakistan Party when the CPP was banned in 1951 and the safe haven it provided allowed the left to make a recovery. By 1952 the Peace Committee, PWA and the DSF became active again and Azad Party then tried to develop a base in East Bengal by establishing links with the Ganatantri Dal.

⁹⁹ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4145, 790D.00/11-350, Preston to the Department of State, 3 Nov. 1950.

¹⁰⁰ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4145, 790D.00/2-951, American Consulate, Lahore, to the Department of State, 9 Feb. 1951.

¹⁰¹ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4145, 790D.00/11-1650, Perkins to the Department of State, 16 Nov. 1950.

In the case of NWFP, Karachi's efforts to intervene in the province was counterproductive. The centre intervened in the internal affairs of the province almost immediately after partition by dismissing Dr Khan's cabinet and replacing it with a Muslim League government. Khan Abdul Qaiyum Khan's ministry, consisting of himself and Khan Abbas Khan, attempted to establish a stable government but were beset by three problems: the strength of the popular Khudai Khidmatgars, opposition within the party and the emergence of the Awami Muslim League. Qaiyum with the blessing of Jinnah worked away at undermining the Red Shirt opposition. He was able to pass the budget in the assembly by winning over supporters of the Khan brothers to the League benches. Mian Jaffar Shah, formerly Ghaffar Khan's principle aide, was elevated to the cabinet in return for crossing the floor with six Red Shirt delegates and joining the Muslim League.¹⁰² By February 1948, only a hard core of ten delegates, including the Khan brothers, remained on the opposition benches. However in March the repressive apparatus was deployed against Ghaffar Khan when he attempted to launch the People's Organization. Qaiyum claimed that Jinnah personally ordered the crack down against Ghaffar Khan and in connection with his arrest and the 'Hazara plot' over 200 Khudai Khidmatgars were jailed. The arrests cut down the Red Shirt ranks in the assembly to four and one of them, Khan Abdul Khan Swati, joined the Awami Muslim League. The use of the state apparatus against political opponents was so pervasive that 'Qaiyumitis' infected even petty functionaries who acted harshly against any independent political behaviour.¹⁰³

The removal of the Khan brothers had unforeseen implications for the centre. It allowed Qaiyum to establishing an independent support base outside the assembly. He introduced a slimmed down version of the Khudai Khidmatgars' reform programme, pushed ahead with the available funds and implemented projects on an *ad hoc* basis. The result was advancement in rural electrification, sugar refining, tanning and elementary education. However, the core of the Red Shirt programme was land reforms and the abolition of the *Jagirdari* system; its implementation infuriated the old guard in the League. When the bill was introduced in the House, in 1949, seven Leaguers who were *jagirdars* opposed the motion and entered into the ranks of the opposition but most of them were persuaded to return eventually.

Qaiyum's position became even stronger when in early 1950 a bill was passed that brought the *auqaf* under the control of a provincial government, regular salaries were fixed for the *maulanas*, and it was announced that in future only theological graduates would be appointed to any official post. The Premier

¹⁰² NAUS, Microfilm, Roll 1, 845F.00/4-3048, Alling to the Secretary of State, 30 April 1948.

¹⁰³ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4145, 790D.00/6-1451, Memo by Bowling on the internal political situation in the NWFP, 14 June 1951.

expected a public uproar but took the risk knowing that it would be a popular move among the masses. There was no break in the ranks of the League and he was able to incorporate religion into the state apparatus in the name of social reform. With his increased authority he was able to draft the *maulanas* and the religious endowments into the service of his political machine.¹⁰⁴ Most impartial assessments of Qaiyum's tenure agreed that his government had gained massive support among the ordinary people of the settled districts, held its own in the tribal areas, and lost ground among the landlords, the 'service families', the small group of intellectuals and the divines.¹⁰⁵ However it was a short lived success for the centrist Muslim League.

Abdul Qaiyum's personal popularity increased at the expense of Liaquat's and as his own position improved he deserted the centre. The first sign of him turning renegade came in 1948 when he tried to incorporate the tribal areas which were under the centre's control into the province. The tribesmen were at that time under his sway after he along with Iskander Mirza had rallied them and, to a lesser extent, the inhabitants of the settled areas to fight in Kashmir with the cry of *jihad*. To strengthen his claim over the tribal areas he tried to establish League branches but was thwarted by the governor. Despite Qaiyum's persistence, incorporation of these areas into the province was strongly resisted by the Frontier Governor, the central bureaucracy and the army generals. His activities were seen as meddling in a sensitive area and his only success came when he incorporated the princely state of Amb.¹⁰⁶

Centrism was further weakened by internal strife in the provincial League. Qaiyum's rise to power antagonized the old stalwarts in the League. Their displacement from influential positions in the party drove them into leading an internal opposition against him. The inclusion of ex-Red Shirt delegates to the assembly in the Muslim League shifted the balance of power away from the old guard and made the upstart Qaiyum the focus of the alliance. This was opposed by them but Qaiyum persuaded Jinnah that the reward of defeating the Khudai Khidmatgars in the assembly would justify the risks involved.

Thwarted, the conservative group, led by Khan Ibrahim Khan of Jaghra and Mohammed Yusaf Khattak, turned their attention to the provincial League, Qaiyum's blind spot. Most of the reorganization and enrolment campaign was conducted by the Khan of Jaghra who packed the party with their supporters. The Jaghra-Khattak group's position further improved when Yusaf Khattak was first nominated to the Central League Committee and later elected General Secretary of the Pakistan Muslim League. This gave Qaiyum's

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

opponents direct access to the upper echelon of the government and a chance to secure the support of the centre. This was not very difficult. Qaiyum's abrasive and irreverent style had antagonized every elder statesmen in Pakistan. He was not on friendly terms with the Governor General, Nazimuddin, nor with a single member of the Federal Cabinet, except Liaquat. He had also managed to incur the personal hostility of every provincial governor and most of the provincial politicians.¹⁰⁷

The League leadership tried to exploit the divisions in the party and oust Qaiyum when in 1951 he announced elections based on universal suffrage. The Khan of Jaghra was the figurehead of the opposition, with Yusaf Khattak the power behind the throne.¹⁰⁸ They had assembled a majority in the Provincial Muslim League Council, were ready to oust Qaiyum's nominee Badshah Gul and replace him with the Khan of Jaghra, as President of the League.¹⁰⁹ Qaiyum's reaction was to exert the entire state machinery against his opponents, cajoling, coaxing and threatening them. Jalaluddin was weaned away from the Jaghra-Khattak group by various sweeteners. The alliance tipped the scales in Qaiyum's favour and he was elected President of the League with Jalaluddin as vice-president.¹¹⁰

In the next test of strength the centrist League clashed openly with Qaiyum when he distributed tickets for the election only to his supporters. This was overruled by the Central Parliamentary Board, of which Jaghra was a member, and out of the rejected nominations six tickets were awarded to the Jaghra-Khattak group. Nine of the candidates rejected by the Board ran as independent candidates, tacitly supported by Qaiyum Khan, and seven of them including the opponents of Jaghra and Khattak were successful. The Muslim League won a landslide victory winning sixty-seven seats out of the eighty-five and thirteen of the independents were also prepared to join the League. This left Jaghra and Khattak in the embarrassing position of being office holders of the All-Pakistan Muslim League but lacking any local support.¹¹¹

By opposing the Jaghra-Khattak faction Qaiyum Khan had humiliated the League high command and got away with it. Khalilur Rahman, General Secretary of the Punjab Muslim League summed up the

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ The driving force was Abdul Rub Nishtar, Governor of Punjab, with the tacit backing of I.I. Chundrigar, Governor of N.W.F.P. and it was widely rumoured that Liaquat Ali Khan had also given his approval. Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ It was planned that once the Khan of Jaghra was installed the Pir of Manki Sharif would be invited to return to the fold and share power with the conspirators. Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4145, 790D.00/12-1951. Perkins to the Department of State, 17 Dec. 1951.

centre's feelings; the province was far too sensitive an area bordering Afghanistan and Kashmir for Karachi to take strong action against Qaiyum and risk losing control of the province.¹¹² Qaiyum, emboldened by his success, allied himself with others who wanted to control the centre. The Premier, Nazimuddin, gave Qaiyum a free hand at home in order to fashion the Peshawar-Dacca axis against the Punjabi group at the centre.¹¹³ Consequently when Ghulam Mohammed dismissed Nazimuddin, he offered Qaiyum a position in the central cabinet in order to forestall a hostile response. The latter fell for this bait and ensured his own downfall by leaving his power base which he had built up so adroitly.

The intra-party disputes linked Sarhad politics with the emergence of an all-Pakistan opposition. When Jinnah offered Qaiyum the premiership Pir of Manki Sharif was offended at being passed over.¹¹⁴ He formed a parallel League consisting of seven League members of the assembly which survived until November 1949 when Liaquat ordered the reorganization of the party in the province. The ministerial group represented by Badshah Gul dominated the Organizing Committee and prevented the Pir and his supporters from rejoining the provincial League.¹¹⁵ Thus the Pir of Manki Sharif and Khan Ghulam Mohammed, the Khan of Lundkhar together founded the Awami Muslim League and they were later joined by the Pir of Zakori Sharif and others.

Once shoved out of the party, Qaiyum Khan turned the full force of the administration against them. By June 1949 the Pir was exiled from the province, nine Awami supporters including Taj Ali Khan ex-president of the provincial Muslim League and two former members of the provincial assembly were in jail.¹¹⁶ At this stage Shaheed Suhrawardy joined the opposition but the coalition was not strong enough to challenge effectively a Chief Minister, armed to the teeth with executive powers such as the Frontier Crimes Regulation Act and the North West Province Public Safety Act. Suhrawardy, the Pir and

¹¹² NAUS, RG 59, Box 4145, 790D.00/1-1452, Perkins to the Department of State, 14 Jan. 1952.

¹¹³ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4146, 790D.00/1-553, American Embassy, Karachi, to the Department of State, 5 Jan. 1953.

¹¹⁴ NAUS, Microfilm, Roll 1, 845F.00/7-1149, Wolf to the Secretary of State, 11 July 1949. The Pir of Manki Sharif, whose crucial role in the plebiscite in 1947 was an acknowledged fact, was at the height of his success and felt that he could use his prestige to manipulate the ministry from outside. However, Qaiyum pulled the rug from under him by sending tribal *laskers* into Kashmir. The Pir of Manki Sharif in his fury attempted unsuccessfully to halt the flow of tribesmen, egged on by the vision of booty, which greatly undermined his authority. NAUS, RG 59 Box 4145, 790D.00/6-1451, Memo by Bowling on the internal political situation in the NWFP, 14 June 1951.

¹¹⁵ NAUS, Microfilm, Roll 1, 845F.00/2-1849, Lewis to the Secretary of State, 18 Feb 1949.

¹¹⁶ NAUS, Microfilm, Roll 1, 845F.00/7-1149, Wolf to the Secretary of State, 11 July, 1949.

the Khan of Lundkhwar were allowed only limited access to the province prior to the elections.¹¹⁷ However Suhrawardy's intervention began an association which culminated in the merger of their organization into the All-Pakistan Awami Muslim League.

The picture in Sind was similar. The League with its policy of centralization continually intervened in provincial affairs provoking a strong backlash. Sindi politics was always fluid but the intervention by Karachi exacerbated the situation and revived, unwittingly, the issue of regionalism and pushed it into the centre stage. Ever since independence resentment against the central government had been growing over such issues as the settlement of refugees from Punjab and inadequate representation in the legislature and government. Of the sixty-nine members of the Constituent Assembly only four were from Sind and the province went unrepresented in Liaquat Ali's cabinet. The underlying tension came to a head when the Chief Minister, Mohammed Ayub Khuro, clashed with Jinnah over the question of jurisdiction over Karachi. In the communal riots of January 1948, refugees and civil servants looted, attacked and even killed Sindi Hindus and Sikh refugees. The Sind Government initiated steps to maintain law and order and investigated into the incident. The riot highlighted the precarious condition and insecurity of the central government. It showed that they had no juridical control over the capital and was dependant on the goodwill of the Sind Government. Consequently the Federal Government objected to the exercise of police authority against its secretariat and retaliated. It amended the 1935 Act, in February, bringing the offence committed in Karachi under federal jurisdiction and Khuro was dismissed, as Premier, for his audacity in challenging Jinnah.¹¹⁸

The centre followed up these actions by separating Karachi from Sind, placed the capitol under its own control and replaced Sindi with Urdu as the language of administration in the province. These actions were strongly resented by Sindis and provoked a revolt by the Sind League. As a result, anti-centre feelings increased, fuelled by the fear that political and economic power was slipping out of local hands. This was reflected in the Sind Muslim League's resolution which demanded that at least 50 per cent of the province's import business should be in local hands and that the *waderas* should be fully protected.¹¹⁹ The Premier, Pir Ilahi Buksh, issued statements designed to soothe public concern but he himself was troubled by the centre's action. Jinnah tried to pacify the Sind League by urging them to seek financial compensation for the

¹¹⁷ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4145, 790D.00/12-1951, Perkins to the Department of State, 17 Dec. 1951. Furthermore thirty-one nomination papers, including those of the Pir of Manki Sharif and Zakori Sharif, the Khan of Lundkhwar and Fazal Huq Shaida, were rejected. Only Ahmed Gul, the brother of Aminul Hasanat, Arbab Ataullah Khan, Asaf Khan Arbab and Samin Jan Khan were elected, all from the Peshawar District constituencies. *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ L. Binder, *Religion and Politics in Pakistan* (Berkeley, 1961), pp. 131-3.

¹¹⁹ NAUS, Microfilm, Roll 1, 845F.00/7-1948, American Embassy, Karachi, to the Department of State, 19 July 1948.

separation of Karachi but this fell short of their demand that a New Karachi should be established along the lines of New Delhi.¹²⁰

The continued interference by the central government aggravated the impact of the failure to accommodate the provincial leadership. The League leadership, in June 1948, instigated PRODA proceedings against Khuro but he used the local grievances against the centre as a launching pad to make a political come back. He presented himself as the champion of Sindi nationalism and, backed by Yusaf Haroon, he captured the leadership of the Sind Provincial Muslim League before the special court of inquiry had reached a verdict. However his victory precipitated an indignant press reaction which he shrewdly deflected by stepping down from the presidentship until the outcome of the proceedings against him were announced. The centre could not hide its intense distaste and disappointment when the PRODA proceedings were declared by the Sind High Court to be *ultra vires* and they realized that they were unable to halt Khuro's return to the premiership.¹²¹

However, Khuro's premiership was marked by bitter in-fighting and it eventually provided the central government with the opportunity to remove him. The Sind Government split into two groups. Khuro's only support came from Sayed Miran Mohammed Shah and he was opposed by Kazi Fazlullah, Mir Ghulam Ali Talpur and Ghulam Nabi Pathan. Despite being in a minority in the cabinet, he was able to maintain power due to his majority in the Sind League. However a damaging cabinet dispute arose between the two groups, ostensibly over Khuro's interference in the departmental affairs of his ministers. Particular reference was made to his intervention in the murder investigation involving Sardar Khan, a member of the Sind assembly. He had overruled Kazi Fazlullah, the Home Minister, and was reported to have assisted in Sardar Khan's release on bail. Fazlullah used this as a pretext to lead a challenge against the Chief Minister. The attempt to oust Khuro produced a flurry of PRODA petitions and counter petitions by all the parties concerned.¹²² This allowed the Governor, Sheikh Din Mohammed, to demand the resignation of Khuro and Fazlullah while judicial proceedings were being initiated to examine the validity of the various PRODA petitions.

¹²⁰ NAUS, Microfilm, Roll 1, 845F.00/6-2548, Lewis to the Secretary of State, 25 June 1948.

¹²¹ NAUS, Microfilm, Roll 1, 845F.00/12-1348, Lewis to the Secretary of State, 13 Dec. 1948.

¹²² Khuro, it was claimed, was counting on the future influence that the defendant would have if he assumed the tribal leadership in place of the murdered man. NAUS, RG 59, Box 4145, 790D.00/12-1551, Perkins to the Department of State, 15 Dec. 1951.

With Khuro out of the way, the fortunes of the League and its programme for centralization were temporarily revived. The Prime Minister, Khwaja Nazimuddin, threw his support behind Ghulam Ali Talpur hoping that he would be able to lead a united Sind Provincial Muslim League into the elections. Nazimuddin backed Talpur's appointment as head of the caretaker government, in return for his support for the Final Report. The Bengali group had the support of Bengal and NWFP but lacked the support of Punjab and sought the backing of Sind as a counterweight.¹²³ However the fly in the ointment was Khuro. He opposed the centre's nominee Ghulam Ali Talpur from assuming the presidency of the Sind Muslim League and when this failed, he advocated the imposition of Governor's Rule. He patently felt that his chances of dominating the province would improve if his opponents did not control the reins of government and did his best to create a chaotic situation. The Prime Minister reluctantly recommended the imposition of Section 92A in December 1952, when all attempts at a compromise solution to end the bickering failed.¹²⁴

Later in March 1953, Khuro was also removed by Nazimuddin from the presidency of the Sind Provincial Muslim League. The former's immediate response was to challenge his removal and concurrently issue PRODA writs against Ghulam Ali Talpur, the leading candidate for the presidency of the provincial League. By doing this he prevented Karachi's man from participating in the impending elections.¹²⁵ Relations between Nazimuddin and Khuro deteriorated. Khuro, in defiance of the Premier, formed the Sind League and issued tickets for the election to be held in the spring of 1953. Nazimuddin retaliated by recommending to the All-Pakistan Muslim League Working Committee that Khuro should be expelled from the party. In reply Khuro resorted to taking out a series of restraining orders against the Prime Minister from the Sind High Court. For the ruling group this unseemly squabble could not have happened at a worse moment when they were urging unity in the run up to the elections.¹²⁶ However the issue became academic as Nazimuddin was summarily dismissed by the Governor-General, Ghulam Mohammed, and PRODA proceedings were instigated against Ayub Khuro.

The continuous interventions by the ruling group resulted in the emergence of an anti-centre opposition. The fragmented opposition attempted to exploit the internal strife of the Sind Muslim League.

¹²³ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4146, 790D.00/4-1653, American Embassy, Karachi, to the Department of State, 16 April 1953.

¹²⁴ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4145, 790D.00/1-452, Perkins to the Department of State, 4 Jan. 1952.

¹²⁵ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4146, 790D.00/2-1253, Withers to the Department of State, 12 Feb. 1953.

¹²⁶ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4146, 790D.00/4-1653, American Embassy, Karachi, to the Department of State, 16 April 1953.

The Sind Awami Mahaz was a coalition of the Sind Jinnah Awami Muslim League, the Hari Committee and the Sind Awami Jamat formed to contest the Sind election. G.M. Sayed and Abdul Majid Sindhi were ardent Sindi nationalists and the former became associated with left wing organizations such as the Pakistan-Soviet Cultural Association of which he was President, in order to further his anti-centre activities. Their main support was located in the *mofussil* areas. But lacking organization and funds and subject to government harassment, they failed to make much headway. The party won seven seats in the elections, all by the Awami Jamat but three of the winners left the party. After the elections Hyder Baksh Jatui and Khan Mohammed Leghari withdrew the Hari Committee and the Jinnah Awami Muslim League respectively from the coalition.¹²⁷

Karachi's efforts to impose central control on the province were also responsible for the emergence of Bengali nationalism. The centre's control of the economy and its position on the language and the constitutional issues became the key issues in East Pakistan. The centre's policy on these questions eroded the credibility of the provincial Muslim League and acted as a catalyst for the centrifugal forces. However, unlike his counterparts in West Pakistan the Chief Minister, Nurul Amin did not want to break with the centre. Instead, he backed the Bengali group's unsuccessful attempts to take control of the centre, so that policies more palatable to the province could be implemented.

Partition brought East Bengal's economic life to a standstill. The East Bengal government were dealt a weak hand and they played it badly. Khwaja Nazimuddin, the Chief Minister, was weak, indecisive and lacking leadership qualities. He could not induce his cabinet to provide the investments funds necessary for rejuvenating the ailing economy nor had any policy to attract foreign entrepreneurs. The provincial government's ineffectiveness was compounded by the fact that all financial and economic policy decisions were in the hands of Karachi. This was to remain a permanent headache for Dacca even when Nazimuddin had been kicked upstairs.¹²⁸ The Jute Board, headed by Ghulam Farooq, Secretary for Industry, and including non-Bengalis such as M.A. Ispahani, literally ran the provincial economy and was under the centre's direct control. It controlled transport and communications and its recommendation on the jute acreage affected indirectly the acreage of the rice crop and consequently its price. When the Premier, Nurul Amin, protested to Farooq that his ministry had not been consulted on the jute policy he was brusquely informed that 'the

¹²⁷ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3859, 790D.00/5-2155, Memo of Conversation with Sind Mahaz Leaders, 15 May 1955.

¹²⁸ NAUS, Microfilm, Roll 1, 845F.00/3-648, Derry to the Secretary of State, 6 March 1948.

Government of East Bengal had nothing to do with it'.¹²⁹ Industrial planning was another area of acrimony. It was a central subject and Karachi refused Nurul Amin's government permission to establish jute and paper mills, despite the fact that jute exports were the biggest earner of foreign exchange.¹³⁰

With this millstone around the ministry's neck it could initiate no policy to gain popularity but what increased its unpopularity was Karachi's insistence that Urdu should be the only state language. The Khwaja group's *ashraf* background made them naturally inclined to support the centre's position on the language question. However the ill-conceived move offended Bengalis and set them on the road of linguistic nationalism. The prising apart of Bengali regionalism which up to now coexisted with Muslim nationalism was to have in the long term very profound effects. But it would be simplistic to attribute this parting of ways only to the Bengalis' pride and attachment to their literary and cultural heritage. Underpinning the dispute was the competition for jobs with non-Bengalis. The overwhelming number of employees in the provincial government, particularly in the upper echelons but also in the district administration, post offices and rail roads were from Bihar, United Provinces, Punjab and Urdu speaking social groups of Calcutta.¹³¹ This fact deflated the expectation among the indigenous population that the East Bengal Government would provide them with employment. The consequent resentment was inflamed by the attempt to impose Urdu as it would have prevented the majority of aspiring Bengalis from entering the public services by introducing a linguistic handicap.

Widespread opposition began to manifest itself almost as soon as plans were drawn up to replace Bengali with Urdu in the schools of the province. The Tamaddun Majlis, formed by members of Dacca University, spearheaded the language movement. It demanded that Bengali should be the language of the provincial administration and courts, the medium of instruction in schools and one of the official state languages alongside Urdu.¹³² Nazimuddin capitulated to the opposition and, on 1 March 1948, accepted the central demands of the State Language Action Committee. But this was immediately repudiated by Jinnah who unequivocally supported Urdu as the state language of Pakistan. He reiterated this position on his visit to Dacca generating widespread protest. The Language Action Committee submitted a memorandum to him

¹²⁹ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4144, 790D.00/6-1250, A.M. Warren to the Department of State, 12 June 1950.

¹³⁰ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4145, 790D.00/11-1850, Withers to the Department of State, 18 Nov. 1950.

¹³¹ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4145, 790D.00/2-2752, Withers to the Department of State, 27 Feb. 1952.

¹³² 'Tamaddun Majlis' Claim for Bengali as a State Language', in H.H. Rahman, ed., *History of Bangladesh War of Independence, i*, (Dhaka, 1982), p.49.

demanding that Bengali should be one of the state languages.¹³³ The Muslim League turned a deaf ear to the opposition and Nazimuddin introduced a watered down resolution in the provincial assembly which made Bengali a medium of instruction but not a state language.

The publication of the Interim Report only served to stoke the fires of discontent. Divisions within the party emerged. Akram Khan, the President of the East Bengal Muslim League, issued secret instructions to his paper, the *Azad*, to fight the constitutional proposals.¹³⁴ The issue receded into the background when Liaquat postponed discussion on the Interim Report, only to be revived by Nazimuddin's tactless statement. In a public speech in January 1952 the Prime Minister categorically asserted that Urdu would be the state language. Observers commented that Nazimuddin for no practical reason not only antagonized the audience with his declaration but rubbed salt into the wound. Delivering his speech in highly persianized Urdu rather than in the 'street' language he gratuitously pointed out the progress made in desanskritizing the Bengali language. Local politicians of all persuasion were appalled by the gauche speech and it triggered off vocal protest. Nazimuddin was subject to intense criticism in all the newspapers, the student body unanimously went out on strike and Bhashani's call for all-party meetings drew support from pro-League intellectuals.¹³⁵

Nurul Amin's government, confronted with an internal revolt as well as the deteriorating law and order situation, tottered. Tafazzal Ali and other members of Amin's cabinet were in touch with Fazlul Huq and a straw poll showed that the latter's majority in the house was quickly evaporating. Nurul Amin was bitter that Karachi had 'hung him out as a punching bag on the language issue' and hence ready to resign. But Aziz Ahmad, the Chief Secretary, leading a group of officials, persuaded Amin that all would be lost if Fazlul Huq took over and that they would resign if the ministry fell. Yusaf Ali Choudhury, General Secretary of the East Bengal Muslim League, threw his weight behind Aziz Ahmad by getting the Working Committee to endorse Nurul Amin's cabinet. Thus fortified, the Premier prorogued the assembly and launched a determined crackdown. The opposition leadership, including five Members of the provincial assembly and Abul Hashim and Hamidul Huq Choudhry, was rounded up. The university was singled out for the most rigorous treatment. Students and lecturers were arrested and the offices of the Youth League and the

¹³³ Memo to Jinnah from the State language Action Committee on the Question of Language, 24 March 1948, Ibid, p.89.

¹³⁴ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4145, 790D.00/10-2050, American Consulate, Dacca, to the Department of State, 20 Oct. 1950.

¹³⁵ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4145, 790D.00/2-252, American Consulate, Dacca, to the Department of State, 2 Feb. 1952.

Communist Party were raided.¹³⁶ Once the back of the opposition was broken, the government regained its confidence and convened the assembly. However, despite the fact that most of the Muslim League assembly members who had resigned in the heat of the moment returned to the government benches, thirteen of the dissidents did not do so and formed themselves into the Awami League bloc.¹³⁷ The provincial League was now only a paper party with little grassroot support and it was further weakened by the factional rivalry between Nurul Amin and Yusaf Ali Choudhury, mainly caused by the latter's dismissal as General Secretary on charges of venality.¹³⁸

Karachi's inappropriate and insensitive attempts to incorporate East Bengal into a centralized framework triggered off violent opposition which favoured a weak centre and more regional autonomy. There were many who had been dissatisfied at the way they had been treated by the Muslim League. For along with Suhrawardy and Abul Hashim, many thousands of supporters had been purged from the party. The President of the All-Pakistan Muslim League, Choudhry Khaliquzzaman, admitted that membership could be enlarged quite easily but was deliberately restricted in order to prevent members of the Suhrawardy and Mohammed Ali group from joining.¹³⁹ The opposition in Bengal had already demonstrated their strength by defeating the League candidate in the Tangail bye-election. On 23-24 June 1949, in Dacca, Maulana Raghieb Ahsan presided over the meeting which resulted in the establishment of the East Pakistan Awami Muslim League with Maulana Bhashani as President, Aatur Rahman as Vice-President and Shamsul Huq as Secretary.

The Awami Muslim League created an array of organizations in order to maximize its influence. Many of these, such as the East Pakistan Muslim Students League, East Pakistan Peace and Rehabilitation Committee, East Pakistan Jute Trader Association, Pakistan Jute Federation, Krishak Proja Samity, Pakistan Railwaymen's League, etc. however existed only on paper. Through these organizations and its newspaper the *Insaf*, the Awami League hammered away at issues such as low jute prices, the Korean war and the government both provincial and federal.¹⁴⁰ However the Awami League only became a major threat to the

¹³⁶ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4145, 790D.00/2-2352, Wilson, American Consulate, Calcutta to the Department of State, 23 Feb. 1952. Box 4145, 790D.00/3-152, Bowling to the Department of State, 1 March 1952.

¹³⁷ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4145, 790D.00/3-2952, American Consulate, Dacca, to the Department of State, 29 March 1952.

¹³⁸ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4147, 790D.00/5-1353, American Consulate, Dacca to the Department of State, 13 May 1953.

¹³⁹ NAUS, Microfilm, Roll 1, 845F.00/3-549, American Embassy, Karachi, to the Department of State, 5 March 1949.

¹⁴⁰ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4144, 790D.00/9-150, Withers to the Department of State, 1 Sep. 1950. In its manifesto the party called for the nationalization of key industries, the abolition of the zemindari system without compensation and declared that the country should be declared a 'socialist welfare republic'. NAUS, RG 59, Box 4147, 790D.00/1-854, Bream to the Department of State, 8 Jan. 1954.

provincial government when it played a leading role in the language and anti-BPC agitation. It was the most organized party in East Bengal and through Suhrawardy it was the only one which made a serious attempt to become a national party. The Awami League also collaborated with Communist front organizations such as the Democratic Youth League, the East Pakistan Students Federation and the Peace Committee which worked mainly with students and intellectuals.¹⁴¹ The Peace Committee was backed by Ataur Rahman and the Democratic Confederation was also supported by the Awami League.¹⁴² For this reason many US embassy officials saw Suhrawardy as a 'fellow traveller'.

The other major actor in the anti-centre opposition was Fazlul Huq. He had used the agitation to refloat his political career and founded the Krishak Sramik Party, joined by a number of politicians including Yusuf Ali Choudhury. However the party in reality was a one man show. It had no internal machinery and no party officials were named until December 1953. The charismatic Fazlul Huq, despite being an octogenarian, had a formidable reputation and now stood forth in his familiar role as a man of the people. The fact that he was the most effective public speaker in East Bengal compensated for the lack of party organization and catapulted him to the head of the anti-government agitation. Unlike the Awami League the Krishak Sramik Party became associated with the religious groups.¹⁴³

The opposition groups merged to form the rickety Jukta Front in order to present a combined opposition to the Muslim League. A single candidate was nominated to represent each constituency. The relevant negotiations presented no insurmountable difficulty. The rivalry over leadership between Bhashani, Suhrawardy and Huq created more serious problems. This dispute was eventually settled in Fazlul Huq's favour. The other area of friction within the Jukta Front was the question of working with the Communist Party. Fazlul Huq, supported by the Nizam-i-Islam Party,¹⁴⁴ the Khilafat-i-Rabani¹⁴⁵ and a group of Awami

¹⁴¹ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4144, 790D.00/9-150, Withers to the Department of State, 1 Sep. 1950.

¹⁴² PRO DO35/2591, Note on Communist Activity in Pakistan, July 1951 to Jan. 1952.

¹⁴³ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4147, 790D.00/1-854, Bream to the Department of State, 8 Jan. 1954.

¹⁴⁴ Atahar Ali, the head of the Jamiat-i-Ulama-i-Islam had been flirting with the United Front. His willingness to throw in his lot with the opposition split the organization and sizable number of the ulama, led by Maulana Abdul Aziz and Maulana Din Mohammed, repudiated Atahar Ali forcing him to form the Nizam-i-Islam Party. Later, difference between Huq and Atahar Ali over the nomination of candidates emerged leading to the Nizam-i-Islam Party to withdraw and contest the elections separately. Ibid. NAUS, RG 59, Box 4147, 790D.00/3-154, Bream to the Department of State, 1 March 1954.

¹⁴⁵ Abul Hashim formed the short lived Khilafat-i-Rabani which for a while was associated with the Huq wing of the United Front. Differences with Huq led to the Khilafat-i-Rabani pulling out from the Front and fought the elections independently. It did badly in the provincial elections and Hashim drifted back into the Muslim League, accepting Mohammed Ali Bogra's invitation to all previous League members to return. NAUS, RG 59, Box 4147, 790D.00/1-854, Bream to the Department of State, 8 Jan. 1954. Box 4147, 790D.00/3-154, Bream to the Department of State, 1 March 1954.

Leaguers led by Abdus Salam Khan and Abdur Rashid Tarkabagish opposed the inclusion of communists,¹⁴⁶ while Maulana Bhashani, Suhrawardy and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman favoured working with them. Under Huq's threat of setting up his own 'joint front', Bhashani backed down.¹⁴⁷

One of the few areas on which there was an agreement, in principle, between the Punjabi and Bengali groups in the cabinet was on the question of establishing a unitary structure. The leadership, rather than trying to achieve their goals by establishing a broad consensus, concentrated on robust resistance to all potential opposition, particularly on the all-Pakistan level. It was equally harsh in quelling internal dissent within the provincial Leagues. They used administrative levers as well as instruments of sanction within the party, to subdue recalcitrant chief ministers and replace them with pliant supporters. However the frequent intervention by the state institutions in the body politic, retarded the emergence of an alternative leadership and fragmented the Muslim League into numerous opposition parties. Ultimately, this systematic destruction of the political fabric affected the balance of power between the two contending groups in the cabinet. It undermined the political base of the Bengali group and strengthened the hand of the military-bureaucratic oligarchy. Simultaneously the centre's interference in civil society prepared the ground for the Governor-General's assault against parliamentary democracy itself.

Ghulam Mohammed's dismissal of Nazimuddin's cabinet was on the ground that it had failed to deal with the serious law and order situation arising from the Punjab disturbances. However, it was only a pretext to justify the ejection of the Bengali group from power. Daultana's hand in the anti-Ahmadiyya agitation was known to the centre but the responsibility for the breakdown in law and order was pinned on the Premier and his supporters. The Punjabi group's concern was that their opponents in the cabinet would resolve the crisis with compromises which were highly prejudicial to their interests. Nazimuddin and his supporters had already disturbed the military-bureaucratic combine with the Final Report. It opened the possibility of Bengali domination by giving them an overriding influence in the all important lower house. Punjab was checkmated in both houses as Bengali representatives aligned with the minority provinces of western Pakistan.

Furthermore, Ghulam Mohammed and his cohort were made even more anxious by the probability that Nazimuddin would reach a compromise with the *ulama* and thereby prevent Pakistan from joining the western alliance. After the rounding up of the communists, the divines alone were left to offer determined

¹⁴⁶ Ganatantri Dal was excluded from participating in the elections and fought independently but supported Jukta front candidates in those constituencies where it was not contesting.

¹⁴⁷ NAUS, Box 4147, 790D.00/3-154, Bream to the Department of State, 1 March 1954.

opposition to a pro-western foreign policy. They had great influence over Nazimuddin and were determined that he should pursue the pan-Islamic, neutral foreign policy more rigorously. The ambivalence of the Bengali group towards a pro-US foreign policy was apparent in their willingness to sacrifice Zafrullah to the wolves. These demands, taken with the concessions to the divines already made in the Final Report, raised the possibility that they might acquire undue influence over government policy and stop Pakistan from aligning with the west. The military-bureaucratic oligarchy wanted to detach Nazimuddin and his supporters in the cabinet from the *ulama* by persuading them to violently suppress the anti-Ahmadiyya agitation. As a result the last impediment to alignment with the west was removed and the only people who might have rallied to Nazimuddin support when he was dismissed, were crushed in his name.

The emergence of Ghulam Mohammed's cohort as the new masters of Pakistan radically altered the political equilibrium. The strategies for creating a centralized structure were now firmly and exclusively under the control of the Punjabi dominated military-bureaucratic combine. The political careers of Nazimuddin and his supporters were now doomed. However the usurpers had only limited political support in Lahore and were surrounded by strong currents of anti-centre politics emanating from East Bengal, NWFP and Sind. The political configuration established by Muslim nationalism was now being reformulated. As in the 1930s and early 1940s Muslim politics was again marked by strong centrifugal tendencies. The Punjab a major advocate of provincial autonomy, now emerged as the staunchest champion of a strong centre. But a substantial opposition in the Punjab led by Daultana had to be won over to the view that their interests would be best protected by extra-constitutional strategies and not through parliamentary politics. Daultana wanted to capture political power but the mandarins and the praetorian guards were working to strengthen the institutional structures at the expense of the political parties in general. In their lust for power the Punjabi group destroyed the fragile unity established by Muslim nationalism and stoked the fires of discontent which generated strong centrifugal impulses in the provinces.

REGIONAL PULLS AND THE
DISINTEGRATION OF CONSTITUTIONAL
POLITICS 1954-1958

Ghulam Mohammad and his cohort were faced with an awkward question. How were they going to stabilize their open domination of Pakistan? Their victory was a hollow one, as they were confronted with a Constituent Assembly which they did not control. Without the support of the delegates from East Bengal and the minority provinces of western Pakistan, the military-bureaucratic oligarchy could not carry out the intended changes in government policies. As a sop to the Bengali opposition Mohammad Ali Bogra, was made Prime Minister but this move on its own was not going to widen the support for the regime. The crux of the problem was that Ghulam Mohammad needed to secure and ratify a constitution which would consolidate the predominance of the bureaucracy and the army and exclude any feature which would act as an impediment to Pakistan joining the western alliance.

Why then did the administration maintain the fiction of constitutional politics and reject the alternative of some form of authoritarian rule? The material weakness of the government made it incapable of resisting a combined opposition and it lacked the resources to mould a potentially hostile public opinion. Consequently the Punjabi group recognized that it had limited support and continued the fiction of constitutional rule in order to initiate changes in the balance of power. A two pronged strategy was launched. On the one hand the United States was courted to secure the funds necessary to fortify the bureaucracy and the army. On the other, there were efforts to gather support for the new Prime Minister in the Constituent Assembly in order to legitimize the regime.

The only part that went according to plan, was persuading the Eisenhower administration to become directly involved in the region. Even before Nazimuddin's unceremonious dismissal, the Pakistan Army had established direct contact with US embassy officials in the country. General Ayub Khan made it clear that he wanted to strengthen Pakistan's defence with American assistance and was prepared to enter a US-sponsored regional defence organization or 'a bilateral agreement' immediately.¹ These surreptitious contacts became unnecessary when the enthusiastically pro-american Mohammad Ali became Prime Minister. Readily

¹ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4146, 790D.00/3-1553, Memorandum of Conversation with Ayub Khan, 28 Feb. 1953.

backed by the military, he was prepared to make a sharp and sudden change in foreign policy and steer 'Pakistan into full co-operation with the United States'.² John Foster Dulles' visit to Karachi, in May 1953, resulted only in modest aid. But by winter Ayub Khan had returned from Washington, meeting Admiral Radford, confident that Pakistan would be the recipient of US military aid.³

The response to the idea that Pakistan would receive military aid from the USA was met with widespread approval. There was opposition from the left-wing organizations such as the Communist Party, the Azad Party and the Ganatantri Dal but the major opposition groups such as the United Front remained silent and did not make it an issue in the East Bengal provincial election of March 1954. In private, the opposition approved of the development and the degree of assent was even greater among the Muslim League and government officials. How was this turn around in public opinion possible when only a year earlier there was considerable resistance to such moves? One of the principal factors in the establishment of a favourable atmosphere was Nehru's strong opposition to the proposals. This reaction was based on the perception that Nehru and India never accepted an independent Pakistan and that their hostility to military aid was informed by their desire to prevent Pakistan from being able to 'stand up to' India.⁴

The other significant factor which swung public opinion to the American side was the non-military assistance which Pakistan began to receive. It was composed of the wheat grants, technical assistance and economic aid programmes. These programmes became more prolific after Pakistan entered into the various security pacts, sponsored by the US.⁵ Of these the Baghdad Pact was the most important. Once these protocols were ratified then the political health of the Government of Pakistan became the concern of the US officials in the country.⁶ These various programmes were used in a partisan manner and were not simply designed to increase the popularity of the USA with the Pakistani public. Ghulam Mohammad received crucial US support when he dissolved the Constituent Assembly.

² NAUS, RG 59, Box 4148, 790D.00/9-2554, Emmerson to the Department of State, 25 Sep. 1954

³ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4147, 790D.00/11-2153, Memorandum of Conversation with Sayed Wajid Ali, 18 Nov. 1953.

⁴ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4146, 790D.00/1-753, Bream to the Department of State,

⁵ Between 1954 and 1955 Pakistan became a signatory to the US-Pak Mutual Defence Assistance Treaty, the Mutual Defence Assistance Programme and entered the Turco-Pakistan Pact and the South East Asia Treaty Organization [SEATO].

⁶ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4148, 790D.00/7-154, Emmerson to the Secretary of State, 1 July 1954.

"Department believes wise for US Government proceed with military, economic assistance planning for Pakistan, in order maximise chance pro-US group remaining in power".⁷

Immediate assistance was used as a stop gap measure by the USA to strengthen Ghulam Mohammad's group in the short term, while the major military and economic aid programmes were in the pipeline. The various treaties with the western alliance, resulted in approximately \$500,000,000 of military and \$750,000,000 of economic aid.⁸ The input of US military and economic aid strengthened significantly the centralizing processes in the late 1950s. It provided the pro-US ruling group with the necessary wherewithal to subdue the opposition and tilt the equilibrium in the centre's favour.

Simultaneously with the tilt in foreign policy, the military-bureaucratic oligarchy launched a political initiative designed to widen its support base and undermine the remaining opposition that still backed Nazimuddin in the Constituent Assembly. To achieve this, Mohammad Ali Bogra needed the support of the Chief Ministers. His supporters now included Firoz Khan Noon, Abdus Sattar Pirzada and Abul Qaiyum Khan. However the Premier of East Bengal, Nurul Amin, could not be bought off so easily and demanded a higher price. He wanted a resolution on the language question which would be acceptable to Bengal. He also wanted the Governor-General's authority to be so curtailed that a repetition of Nazimuddin dismissal would not occur.⁹ Mohammad Ali was forced to defer to Nurul Amin in recognition of his strong influence over the Bengali bloc of the Central Parliamentary Party. Without his support he could not expect his election as President of Muslim League to be ratified.¹⁰

The immediate result of such horse trading was a complete subordination of the party to governmental authority. The only resistance to this development came from Nazimuddin who, as President of the Muslim League, appointed a Working Committee without consulting the Prime Minister. It was a belated attempt to consolidate his support and resist Mohammad Ali's intention to accept the Presidentship. But the government had isolated the President of the party by winning over the provincial premiers. In the process it had reduced the party into a supine body.¹¹

⁷ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4148, 790D.00/9-2954, Dulles to American Embassy, Karachi, 29 Sep. 1954.

⁸ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3876.26, 790D.5MSP/8-1059, 10 Aug. 1959

⁹ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4147, 790D.00/5-1353, Bream to the Department of State, 13 May 1953.

¹⁰ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4147, 790D.00/5-153, Davis to the Department of State, 1 May 1953.

¹¹ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4147, 790D.00/7-1753, Withers to the Department of State, 17 July 1953.

"The council meetings are summoned merely to elect ministers as League presidents. ...Formerly ministers regarded it a unique honour to be nominated in the League working committee. But now they pride in wooing the authority."¹²

The Prime Minister's next step was to cut the Gordian knot and ratify a constitution. Once this was done, he could go to the polls in East Bengal and attempt to secure a mandate. However the government's weakness forced them to give further ground to the Bengali camp in the assembly. In order to get the consent of the Bengali delegates, various concessions concerning the Islamic content of the constitution were made. Paragraphs which specified that the official name of the state would be the 'Islamic Republic of Pakistan', that no law repugnant to Islam would be passed and an organization would be established to propagate Islam, represented a victory for the East Bengal members who were led by Khwaja Nazimuddin, Nurul Amin and Fazlur Rahman. The compromises were felt necessary in order to improve the Bengal Muslim League's chances in the elections to be held in the spring of 1954.¹³

These carefully laid plans collapsed when the Muslim League suffered a humiliating defeat in the Bengal provincial election. The government used the rioting in Karnaphuli and Narayanganj to dissolve the Bengal Provincial Assembly and impose Governor's rule. It was hoped that by doing this and standing fast at the centre and refusing to compromise with the United Front it would be able to regain control in the projected general elections in 1955. However, to balance the arbitrary measure the Premier had to make further concessions to the Bengalis. The Mohammad Ali formula was designed to settle the language controversy and conceded the right of regional languages as well as Urdu and Bengali to be state languages. It also provided for a compromise procedure for the passing of motions of confidence and no confidence.¹⁴ But the Punjabi members of the assembly rejected the formula. They feared that unless West Pakistan was made into a unitary structure, Bengal in alliance with Sind and Frontier would dominate the central government. Firoz Khan Noon argued instead for a 'zonal federation' of West Pakistan which was opposed in the house by Abdul Qaiyum Khan, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Pirzada and Nazimuddin. In reality the zonal

¹² QAA, PC-ARN-7 (Abdur Rub Nishtar Collection), Manzar-i-Alam to Nishtar, 20 July 1953.

¹³ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4147, 790D.00/11-753, Withers to the Department of State, 7 Nov. 1953.

¹⁴ He proposed a bicameral legislature with equal powers and that no motion could be passed unless thirty per cent of the members from both Western and Eastern Pakistan supported it. Talukder Maniruzzaman, *The Politics of Development, The Case of Pakistan 1947-1958* (Dacca, 1971), pp. 47-58.

scheme was a red herring and its aim was to delay the introduction of the constitution which was being hastened through the assembly.¹⁵

However, Punjabi politicians were not the only ones unhappy with the new constitution. For some time members of military-bureaucratic combine had become anxious about the constitutional concessions made by Bogra. They decided that changes in the government were necessary to resist the resurgence of the of the Bengalis in the Constituent Assembly. They claimed to the Americans that their actions were designed to prevent Pakistan becoming a mullahocracy.

"Our Embassy has been told by two informants of a tentative plan bringing about a change of regime, possibly around the end of the year. (The informants are General Iskander Mirza and Wajid Ali, brother of the Pakistan Ambassador to the United States.) This change would involve dissolution of the Constituent Assembly by the Governor General and the institution of what appear to be a sort of constitutional dictatorship. The active cooperation of the Governor General and the present Prime Minister, Mohammad Ali, would be sought and it appears there would be relatively little change in the individuals now heading the Government."¹⁶

But by December the plan had to be watered down due to press stories predicting a 'military grab for power'. Pressure was then exerted on the Premier to remove Abdul Qaiyum Khan from the cabinet as he still had links with Nazimuddin's group.¹⁷ But Bogra had rejected the demands for a change in his cabinet and the matter was dropped till after the elections in East Bengal.¹⁸

By then, the nearly completed constitution became an even more serious challenge to Ghulam Mohammad and his supporters. It had become clear that the final document would greatly reduce the power of the Governor-General and make the executive responsible to the legislature. For the bureaucrats and the military top brass the situation was grave but they had no intention of letting power slip out of their hands. First, Firoz Khan Noon led the Punjabi delegates in the Constituent Assembly to adopt delaying tactics against the ratification of the constitution. Next, Mirza was brought into the Cabinet as Defence Minister in the role of the much needed strong man.¹⁹ Furthermore Ghulam Mohammad had declared Governor's Rule

¹⁵ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4148, 790D.00/10-2354, Memorandum of conversation with Khwaja Nazimuddin, 23 Oct. 1954.

¹⁶ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4147, 790D.00/11-253, Communication from Near Eastern and African Affairs, Mr Byroade to the Under Secretary the Department of State, Mr Murphy, 5 Nov. 1953.

¹⁷ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4147, 790D.00/12-3053, Hildreth to the Secretary of State, 30 Dec. 1953.

¹⁸ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4147, 790D.00/11-553, Hildreth to the Secretary of State, 5 Nov. 1953. Box 4147, 790D.00/12-3053, Hildreth to the Secretary of State, 30 Dec. 1953.

¹⁹ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4148, 790D.00/9-1654, Emmerson to Hildreth at the Department of State, 16 Sep. 1954.

in Bengal and prepared PRODA proceedings against leading members of the opposition in the Constituent Assembly.

However Nazimuddin got wind of the intrigue and led a group of Bengali, Pakhtun and Sindi delegates in a night raid against the group conspiring to crush all regional opposition. On 21 September 1954, the last day of the Constituent Assembly session, Khwaja Nazimuddin supported by Fazlur Rahman, Nurul Amin, Abdus Sattar Pirzada, and Qaiyum Khan, railroaded through the Constituent Assembly, - in ten minutes, an amendment that stripped the Governor-General of his authority and placed the locus of power in the legislature. Mohammad Ali Bogra was presented with an ultimatum the night before and he joined the conspirators.²⁰ However Nazimuddin's cohort made a major tactical error and the adjournment of the Constituent Assembly for five weeks gave the military-bureaucratic oligarchy time to regroup and counterattack. Ghulam Mohammad called on the Law Minister Brohi to prepare the legally dubious justification for the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly. The army and bureaucracy were solidly behind Ghulam Mohammad and Mirza made it clear that if Nazimuddin's cohort went too far 'we' the state 'will stop them'.²¹

On October 24, an emergency was declared, the cabinet dismissed and the Constituent Assembly dissolved. Mohammad Ali just managed to keep his job, only due to the pressure exerted by Mirza and Ayub on Ghulam Mohammad but he was a broken man. The cabinet was reorganized and the key positions were taken up by the Governor-General's supporters who up to now had operated behind the scenes. The Punjabi group was now openly represented by Ghulam Mohammad, Iskander Mirza, Mohammad Ayub Khan, Chaudhri Mohammad Ali, Mushtaq Ahmad Gurmani and Sayed Wajid Ali. Most of them were members of different branches of the executive except Wajid Ali who was a non-official confidant. None had any popular support. In order to widen the support for the oligarchy and simultaneously weaken potential opposition, outsiders such as Suhrawardy and Dr Khan Sahib were inducted into the cabinet. In this manner they managed to gain the support of the Awami league and split the United Front, while Dr Khan Sahib's inclusion resulted in some gains in Sarhad.

Before the end of the year the general aims of the Punjabi-dominated faction became clear. First they wanted to promulgate the long delayed constitution providing for a strong executive but with a presidential system instead of a cabinet type government.²² They intended to do this by holding a carefully

²⁰ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4148, 790D.00/9-2554, Emmerson to the Secretary of State, 25 Sep. 1954.

²¹ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4148, 790D.00/10-154, Aldrich, London, to the Secretary of State, 15 Oct. 1954.

²² NAUS, RG 59, Box 4148, 790D.00/12-2254, Hildreth to the Secretary of State, 22 Dec. 1954.

managed convention of trusted men which would rubber stamp the government proposals. The centre piece of the constitution would be the merger of West Pakistan into One Unit. It was designed to consolidate the Punjabis hold over western Pakistan and give them a stronger constitutional bulwark to counter a resurgent Bengal. On the political level the ruling group wanted to improve the centre's position in East Bengal by capitalizing on the internal dissension within the Jukta Front and retaining control of the province until a *modus vivendi* with a Bengal political group could be established.²³

However the establishment of constitutional autocracy had been a hastily executed measure and Ghulam Mohammad had not thought-out fully the implications of his actions. The Speaker of the Assembly, Tamizuddin Khan, instigated legal proceedings questioning the legality of the dissolution. The proceeding exposed how poorly thought-out the Governor-Generals' actions were and the military-bureaucratic camp became entangled in a tussle with the courts. Why didn't Ghulam Mohammad simply ignore the courts and rule by decree? This hard line was advocated by Iskander Mirza and Ayub Khan, but Chaudhri Mohammad Ali argued that they should first try all means to legitimize the government's action. If this failed, they could then resort to the Mirza-Ayub line and carry on the coup from where it had been dropped. But the Governor-General made the mistake of going to the courts without rigging them first. The Sind High Court ruled in favour of Tamizuddin, stating that the Governor-General had no power or prerogative to dissolve the Constituent Assembly and appointment of ministers who were not members of the assembly was illegal.²⁴

Immediately the Government of Pakistan appealed to the Federal Courts. During the hearing the Chief Justice, Mohammad Munir, was quick to suggest that the dispute was political and the parties should compromise. But a compromise solution was not reached due to the unwillingness of the government to settle except on its own terms. Failure to reach a settlement put the Chief Justice in a difficult situation. He was unwilling to declare the Governor-General's action as illegal because such a move would force Ghulam Mohammad to declare martial law.²⁵ Justice Munir eventually awarded the judgement in favour of the

²³ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3860, 790D.00/6-1755, Soulen to the Department of State, 17 June 1955.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid. NAUS, RG 59, Box 3859, 790D.00/3-2255, Hildreth to the Secretary of State, 22 March 1955. Munir was most concerned that the authoritarian direction should be arrested. He deplored the present situation, where those at the helm in Karachi were 'responsible to no one', since they had dissolved the legislature. NAUS, RG 59, Box 3859, 790D.00/4-1455, Memorandum of Conversation with Mohammad Munir, 14 April 1955.

Government of Pakistan by declaring that the Sind High Court had no jurisdiction to issue writs. The main issue whether Ghulam Mohammad had the power to dissolve the Constituent Assembly was never decided.²⁶

Ghulam Mohammad's supporters thought they had been given a *carte blanche* by the courts and the Governor-General issued the Emergency Power Ordinance on 28 March 1955. He intended to call a Constituent Convention and frame a constitution by ordinance. However though the government had chosen not to recognize the courts, the latter had taken seriously their implied promise that they would quickly establish a new assembly as soon as the case was out of the way. When Chief Justice Munir realized that the government had reneged on its promise to establish a validating machinery he used the Yusuf Patel case to retaliate. The court's decision debarred the Governor-General from framing a constitution and unifying the provinces of West Pakistan into One Unit. These functions, the court decided, were the exclusive preserve of the Constituent Assembly. Once again the merits of disregarding the law was debated in the cabinet and Chaudhri Mohammad Ali backed by the majority of the ministers were able to resist Mirza and Ayub.

The Governor-General approached the Federal Court for advice on how to legitimize his actions. The Chief Justice pointedly enquired why the convention's name, power and composition was different from the old Constituent Assembly. Justice Munir's deliberations forced the government to issue orders for the re-establishment of the Constituent Assembly.²⁷ Consequently the actions of the Federal Court forced the Punjabi group who had ended parliamentary democracy to return to some form of representative government. The original plans were derailed by the courts and the group was forced to present the blue print for One Unit for scrutiny, to an Assembly which was not of their choosing.

In order to bypass the various impediments to their plans the ruling group resorted to a combination of obfuscation and brute force. This was apparent from the documents prepared by Daultana for the government on the unification of West Pakistan.²⁸ He argued that if the plan for One Unit was to be successful 'We must clear the decks before we launch our political campaign'; and 'silence and render inoperative all opposition.' The fear among the smaller provinces of western Pakistan that One Unit would lead to Punjabi domination must be laid to rest. The 'Punjab must be kept quiet. At a later stage Punjab will have to take the lead. At that time I hope an effective intelligent Punjab leadership will have been put

²⁶ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3860, 790D.00/6-1755, Soulen, to the Department of State, 17 June 1955.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Khalid B. Sayeed, *The Political System of Pakistan*. (Boston, 1967), p.77.

in place both at the Centre and at Lahore.’²⁹ However, the oligarchy in their impatience, used strong arm tactics rather than persuasion in implementing One Unit. The attitude was best exemplified by Mirza who stated ‘I am against all compromises’, the ‘One Unit steam roller’ will not be stopped by ‘small pebbles’.³⁰ The provincial legislatures of Sind and NWFP were at the receiving end of the One Unit ‘steam roller’ and were bulldozed into passing resolutions supporting the unification of West Pakistan.

The Bengali members of the Constituent Assembly saw the new constitution as going some way towards meeting their twenty-one points.³¹ The Muree Pact which Suhrawardy persuaded the East Bengal delegates to accept, stipulated that in exchange for accepting the amalgamation of West Pakistan and parity between the two wings, East Bengal would be granted full regional autonomy, Bengali would be accepted as a state language on par with Urdu and the principle of joint electorates accepted.³² However when Chaudhri Mohammad Ali led the Muslim League into a coalition with the United Front, the Awami League along with others opposed the One Unit Bill. Sardar Abdur Rashid, the former Chief Minister of Sarhad, like Suhrawardy, had previously favoured unification but both opposed the plan after they realized that they had been misled by the Punjabi group. The Awami League’s opposition increased when the documents prepared by Daultana were revealed in the Constituent Assembly by Sardar Rashid and Mian Iftikharuddin. It caused great embarrassment to the coalition government of Chaudhri Mohammad Ali, who vigorously denied the accusations that it was a plan for Punjabi domination insisting that the reforms were purely administrative.³³

Despite the combined opposition to One Unit, the Muslim League-United Front coalition was able to marshal a clear majority to ratify the legislation and form a unitary West Pakistan. The Prime Minister was backed by the religious parties who played a significant role in getting the new constitution accepted, especially in East Pakistan. They backed the proposal because of the Islamic provisions such as the appointment of a ‘Commission to advise the enactment of Islamic law’ and that no law would be enacted

²⁹ ‘One Unit Document’ Section B, p.1, Section D p.6.

³⁰ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3859, 790D.00/2-2555, Hildreth, to the Secretary of State, 25 Feb. 1955.

³¹ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3860, 790D.00/7-1355, Williams to the Department of State, 13 July 1955.

³² ‘M.L. Acceptance of Regional Autonomy Reported (Muree Pact) 10 July 1955’, H.H. Rahman, ed., *History of Bangladesh War of Independence*, i, p.430.

³³ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3860, 790D.00/9-1555, Soulen to the Department of State, 15 Sep. 1955.

which was repugnant to the Koran or *Sunna*.³⁴ The controversial issue of joint versus separate electorates was left aside to be dealt with later. The All-Party Islamic Front which consisted of the East Pakistan Jamat-i-Islami, the Nizam-i-Islam, Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Islam and the Jamiat-ul-Ulama-Pakistan, was formed to campaign for the acceptance of the constitution. Maulana Maududi and Mian Tufail Mohammad toured East Pakistan extensively and successfully countered the opposition. The Awami League and the Ganatantri Dal attempted to counter the Islamic Front's activities and when they failed, they along with Mian Iftikharuddin and the Hindu members, boycotted the Assembly the day the Constitution was adopted.³⁵

Concurrent with the constitutional developments, Suhrawardy made a bid for premiership. His support for the parity principle had been obtained by Ghulam Mohammad on the promise that he would head the next coalition government.³⁶ But Bogra resisted Suhrawardy's attempt to take-over. First, he, with Mirza's consent, lifted Section 92A in East Pakistan and installed a Krishak Sramik government which paved the way for a Muslim League-Krishak Sramik coalition at the centre.³⁷ Fazlul Huq agreed, realizing that if Suhrawardy became Prime Minister, not only would he dominate the centre but also help capture power in Bengal. The other action taken by the Premier was to support the replacement of Ghulam Mohammad by Iskander Mirza, on 5 August 1955, as acting Governor-General.³⁸

In the cabinet reshuffle which followed, Chaudhri Mohammad Ali was elected as President of the Muslim League and Mohammad Ali Bogra was asked to step down, to be cast out in a political limbo. Mirza was extremely hostile to the suggestion that Suhrawardy should become Prime Minister and pressurized Chaudhri Mohammad Ali into leading the Muslim League into a coalition with Krishak Sramik Party and become Prime Minister.

However, without Ghulam Mohammad's leadership the unity of the Punjabi group broke up. There were very serious differences between the principal leaders of the ruling group, Mirza believed that Pakistan required a 'strong hand.... indefinitely'. Already with the backing of Ayub he had 'used at least tacitly threat of force to obtain own position and used it again to coerce' Chaudhri Mohammad Ali 'into accepting

³⁴ Keith Callard, *Pakistan, A Political Study* (London, 1957), Appendix 1, The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, p.339.

³⁵ M. Rafique Afzal, *Political Parties in Pakistan 1947-1958* (Islamabad, 1986), pp. 172-5.

³⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 164-5.

³⁷ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3860, 790D.00/6-455, Memorandum of Conversation with Mirza, 3 June 1955.

³⁸ M. Rafique Afzal, *Political Parties in Pakistan*, pp. 164-5.

Prime Ministership.³⁹ His rival Chaudhri Mohammad Ali also believed in a strong centre but wanted to consolidate the ruling group's position through political means and the government to be based on consent. There followed a tussle between the Prime Minister and the Governor-General over the future direction of the country. Chaudhri Mohammad Ali assured the Constituent Assembly that it would not be dissolved and firmly stated that 'no power here will be able [to] destroy democracy.' However Mirza was not a man to be impressed by moral suasion and it required something more solid to deter him. The United States exerted pressure on Mirza because they did not want to be associated with an autocracy. They cryptically told him to restrain his impatient authoritarian impulses while giving their support to the Prime Minister.⁴⁰

His plans frustrated, Mirza was forced to take the more difficult option of using political means to dominate Pakistan. The task was made easier by the fact that the President in the new constitution was not a figurehead and had the power to appoint the Prime Minister. He wielded his authority to become the ultimate arbitrator of the composition of the Cabinet. Mirza's intention was to develop an obedient Cabinet headed by a subservient Prime Minister so that he could continue as President after the general elections were held. This approach of Mirza and Ayub was ultimately responsible for the disintegration of constitutional politics.

The process was initiated when the Muslim league refused to accept Dr Khan Sahib as the Chief Minister of West Pakistan. Not being a member of the Muslim League and refusing to become one, the party led by Abdur Rub Nishtar rebelled against Mirza and caused the down fall of Chaudhri Mohammad Ali. The President struck back by splitting the League and forming the Republican Party led by Dr Khan Sahib. Despite Mirza's public denials, he was the real force behind the Republican Party.⁴¹ The manoeuvre highlighted the acute difficulty of the political option for Mirza. In attempting to use his authority to establish some kind of political base he was atomizing Pakistani politics.

The departure of Chaudhri Mohammad Ali forced Mirza into accepting a Republican-Awami League government headed by Suhrawardy. The immediate problem he had to face was the electorate issue which involved the religious parties. The Islamic rhetoric was a ruse. The introduction of separate electorates was aimed at reducing East Bengal with its relatively large number of Hindus into permanent inferiority.

³⁹ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3860, 790D.00/9-1955, Gardiner to the Secretary of State, 19 Sep. 1955.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ *Pakistan Observer*, 6 April 1956. The Republican Party's leadership was dominated by Shiah. Mirza did not favour them for religious reasons but was trying to use them as also the big landholders for political ends. His political technique was to place trusted men, only loyal to him, into key positions in the government and party. But to the Sunni majority it appeared that he was favouring the Shiah community. NAUS, RG 59, Box 3864, 790D.00/4-1658, Lewis to the Department of State, 16 March 1958.

Predictably, the West Pakistan Assembly voted for separate electorates with the Republican Party divided on the matter and the Sind Awami Mahaz opposing it. However, in order to persuade the East Pakistan Assembly to adopt separate electorates, the Muslim League and the various religious parties formed a committee of action but the manoeuvre was unsuccessful. A compromise solution with President Mirza's approval was evolved in order to break the deadlock. Separate electorates were recommended for West Pakistan and joint electorates for East Pakistan. Suhrawardy waited till the spring of 1957 when he persuaded the Republicans to change their decision and accept joint electorates for West Pakistan as well.⁴²

In the Awami League there was an expectation that Shaheed Suhrawardy, as Premier, would alter Pakistan's foreign policy, demand greater autonomy for Bengal and dismantle One Unit. However Suhrawardy was a pragmatic politician and his position differed quite substantially from that of his supporters. He had become convinced that US aid was essential to Pakistan and concluded that he could not be Prime Minister without US support.⁴³ Suhrawardy also opened and closed the debate in the National Assembly on foreign policy which was the first of its kind and justified Pakistan's pro-American policy as a deterrent against India adding that the high level of economic aid was entirely due to Pakistan's membership of the Baghdad Pact. His emphasis on the economic benefits allowed him to persuade the house to accept the government's position despite the hostility against the west generated by the Suez crisis.⁴⁴

However foreign policy was secondary to his concerns focused on building up a credible domestic track record before the general election and for this reason he was prepared to accept the constitutional status quo. His opposition to One Unit had been based on the fact that it was an engine of Punjabi domination but as Premier he was willing to support it. Similarly on the question of autonomy his Bengali constituency wanted full provincial autonomy but his object was to form a national government supported by both wings which would initiate a programme of social amelioration.⁴⁵ However relations between the two wings were at a nadir and he could not afford to make a mistake on this problem.

⁴² M. Rafique Afzal, *Political Parties in Pakistan*, pp. 186-8.

⁴³ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3860, 790D.00/9-255, Memorandum of Conversation with Suhrawardy, 2 Sep. 1955.

⁴⁴ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3862, 790D.00/2-2657, Hildreth to the Secretary of State, 26 Feb. 1957.

⁴⁵ *Op. cit.*

"It's (sic) the major issue because should the country's leaders fail to hit on the right solution, Pakistan will inevitably in course of time be something less than what it is today."⁴⁶

Suhrawardy's greatest success was in the improvement of relations between the two wings of the country, as he was the first Prime Minister to act as if East Pakistan was important. The Bengalis began to feel and wanted to be more Pakistani. The slogan of provincial autonomy was still potent in the region but intellectuals no longer considered it to be most important solution to the province's problem, even though there was still some political mileage in raising the demand. By now most leaders knew that the Premier's policies had secured the maximum level of investment in industry possible under the circumstances. Furthermore the political alliances formed in both provinces forced parliamentarians to work together and the increased presence of East Pakistanis in the Federal Cabinet gave them new insights into the central government's problems. Suhrawardy's tenure was responsible for the reduction in tension between Karachi and East Pakistan. Hostility to the centre persisted but not to the same degree as before.⁴⁷

Suhrawardy became the inter-wing bridge in Pakistani politics briefly confirming the ascendancy of the Bengali politicians over the military-bureaucratic oligarchy led by Mirza.⁴⁸ The President became extremely hostile to his Prime Minister whose growing stature was reducing the possibility of the former contesting successfully for another term of office. The political development made Mirza extremely impatient and he began to consider the option of introducing executive rule as early as the summer of 1956.⁴⁹ However Suhrawardy lost support of the Republicans and this gave Mirza the opportunity to force his resignation, in October 1957, by refusing to convene the assembly so that a vote could determine whether Suhrawardy's opponents had a majority.⁵⁰ Why did the Premier's ally desert him? The Republicans feared that they would lose control of the Government of West Pakistan to the Muslim League, if they did not form an alliance with the National Awami Party and agree to the dissolution of One Unit. The Prime Minister insisted that the dissolution of One Unit should take place after the general elections. An important reason why he was against

⁴⁶ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3860, 790D.00/1-1156, Williams to the Department of State, 11 Jan. 1956.

⁴⁷ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3864, 790D.00/4-2458, William to the Department of State, 24 March 1958.

⁴⁸ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3862, 790D.00/5-3157, USARMA Karachi to the DEPTAR Washington, 31 May 1956.

⁴⁹ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3861, 790D.00/5-2456, American Embassy, Karachi, to the Department of State, 24 May 1956.

⁵⁰ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3863, 790D.00/11-157, Langley, to the Secretary of State, 1 Nov. 1957. Box 3863, 790D.00/11-1557, Lewis to the Department of State, 15 Nov. 1957.

dissolution was that it would reopen the whole question of parity between the wings in the National Assembly.⁵¹

Mirza had nursed patiently contacts with the Muslim League for just such an emergency and now formed an alliance with the support of the Raja of Mahmudabad. Ismail Ibrahim Chundrigar was selected as the Prime Minister but was unable to hold the unstable League-Republican-Krishak Sramik-Nizam-i-Islam coalition together. The new Prime Minister was not represented in either of the two provincial governments while Suhrawardy sat on the opposition benches at the centre and controlled the ministry in East Pakistan. The development was seen by East Pakistan in an unfavourable light because the composition of the cabinet showed a clear bias in favour of West Pakistan. All the important portfolios such as the premiership, Foreign Affairs, Finance, Defence etc were allocated to West Pakistanis and in contrast Bengalis were given Commerce, Labour, Agriculture and Communication and Works.

Another issue which antagonized East Pakistan was the ideological tactic that the Muslim League was employing. The party during their tenure in opposition resorted to playing the 'Islam in danger' card in order to turn the tide in their favour. The agitation in Karachi over the book, 'Religious Leaders' which was published in India or demand for separate electorates was used to maintain political activity.⁵² The same tactic was continued by the new cabinet and the Premier, Chundrigar, Fazlur Rahman, the Minister of Commerce and other ministers made various statements urging that the nation's laws should be based on Islamic ideology. The Islamic argument revived the electorates issue which again turned into a controversy underlining east-west tensions. However on this occasion the President supported the implementation of separate electorates in order to undermine Suhrawardy's electoral chances in the expected general elections. Consequently the Chundrigar coalition contributed to the increase in tension between the centre and Bengal.⁵³

However his government lasted only two months. The withdrawal of Republican support was in defiance of Mirza and constituted a revolt against his leadership. The perception had developed within the party that the President had cast his lot with the Muslim League and intended to follow a course of action inimical to the Republican Party's existence. Mirza had been pressing them to accept separate electorates but they feared that if they agreed there would be no reason for them to remain a separate party. Suhrawardy

⁵¹ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3863, 790D.00/10-157, Lewis to the Department of State, 11 Oct. 1957.

⁵² NAUS, RG 59, Box 3862, 790D.00/9-2256, American Embassy, Karachi, to the Department of State, 22 Sep. 1956.

⁵³ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3863, 790D.00/11-1557, Lewis to the Department of State, 15 Nov. 1957. Box 3863, 790D.00/10-2457, William to the Department of State, 24 Oct. 1957.

offered to support them if they broke away from the Muslim League. Mirza commissioned Chundrigar to form another government hoping that under greater pressure the Republicans would accept the principle of separate electorates. But the recalcitrant Republicans refused and forced the President to call Malik Firoz Khan Noon, the Republican leader to form a government. His cabinet had the support of fifty of the seventy-eight members of the National Assembly but his supporters were a heterogeneous group which only survived due to the fear that if the Republicans were not supported then some form of executive rule would be imposed.⁵⁴ Suhrawardy refused to accept any cabinet position for his party in return for the support he gave Firoz Noon. Instead he was promised that elections would be held as soon as possible and the Premier had announced February 1959 as the latest date for the elections.⁵⁵

The struggle at Karachi between those seeking to implement the centre's control and centrifugal forces were paralleled by similar developments in the provinces. The Government of Pakistan asserted its authority in the regions by backing pro-centre candidates. The Punjabi group simply manipulated provincial Muslim League politics to produce loyal and winnable combinations but Karachi's increasing interference in provincial politics precipitated a reaction. This approach to regional politics was only possible as long as there was no shift in political loyalties. But the general effect of treating provincial Leagues as appendages of a distant centre, was the collapse of their credibility and viability. Thus provincial Leagues witnessed an exodus of its membership, varying in magnitude from area to area and the concomitant rise in the strength of the opposition.

In both wings of the country, the old political patterns were replaced by a new political equilibrium. In the case of Bengal, Sind, NWFP and Baluchistan the constitutional and political options being forced on them by the executive provoked a strong centrifugal backlash. The politics of the periphery went back into the melting pot and produced new political combinations which were designed to resist the centralizing processes emanating from Karachi. The polarization was not a simultaneous reaction its tempo was influenced by developments in local politics. But a clear theme became increasingly dominant,- a Punjab trying to capture and impose central authority versus Bengal, Sind, Sarhad and Baluchistan seeking ways of escape. The development resulted in a deep change in the body politic not only at the provincial but also at the All-Pakistan level.

⁵⁴ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3863, 790D.00/12-1957, Office Memorandum of US Government, Bartlett, South Asian Affairs, to Rountree, Near Eastern Affairs, 19 Dec. 1957. Mohammad H.R. Talukdar, ed., *Memoirs of Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy* (Dacca, 1987), pp. 65-66, 125.

⁵⁵ *Ibid* p.65.

The greatest problem for Ghulam Mohammad's cohort came from Bengal. Here the political continuum had been broken by events of the early 1950s and a strong centrifugal current in the form of the United Front had emerged. The Muslim League's chances in provincial elections had been weakened by the failures of the East Bengal Government and the rise of the linguistic nationalism. Nurul Amin tried to improve his position by a campaign against the Jukta Front on an Islamic agenda in the spring elections of 1954.⁵⁶ However the League leadership was perceived to be distant from the local people. The Prime Minister personally intervened in the campaign but was unable to sell his constitutional compromise as something beneficial to Bengal. To make matters worse, Mohammad Ali imported West Pakistanis to run the campaign and failed to address the source of discontent. He presented no remedy for the recurrent shortages of essential commodities, the spiralling inflation and the low prices for the agricultural products which resulted in deep dissatisfaction among the masses. His appeal for unity and patriotism and the promise of a better economic future fell on deaf ears.⁵⁷

The elections produced an overwhelming victory for the Jukta Front and decimated the Muslim League Parliamentary Party. The League's organizational structure remained intact but with only ten seats, it was no longer a political force in the province. The United Front won 223 seats, not including the seventeen seats won by candidates of the Front, Ganatantri Dal and the Communist Party contesting non-muslim constituencies.⁵⁸ Why were the anti-centre forces in East Bengal so successful? The United Front's twenty-one point programme encapsulated the feeling that the centre did not have East Pakistan's interests at heart. The demand for greater provincial autonomy was the basis for an agenda to repair the damage done to the province by the policies of the central government. The jute policy, the distribution of revenue and the lack of industrialization, were cited as the most glaring examples of central neglect of the province.

Was there any truth in the accusations made by Bengal against Karachi? The Bengalis were hardly represented in the armed forces and an even smaller number were officers. Consequently the western wing received the lion's share of the military expenditure with barely two per cent of the total given to East

⁵⁶ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4147, 790D.0011-753, Withers to the Department of State, 7 Nov. 1953.

⁵⁷ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4147, 790D.00/3-3054, Bream to the Department of State, 30 March 1954.

⁵⁸ Keith Callard, *Pakistan*, p.57.

EAST/WEST REPRESENTATION IN THE UPPER ECHELON OF
THE CIVIL SERVICE OF PAKISTAN 1955

RANK	WEST	EAST	EAST AS % OF TOTAL
SECRETARY	19	Nil	Nil
JOINT SECRETARY	38	3	7.3%
DEPUTY SECRETARY	123	10	7.5%
UNDER SECRETARY	510	38	7.0%

TABLE 1

Source: Rounaq Jahan, *Pakistan: Failure in Integration*, (New York, 1972), p.28.

EAST/WEST REPRESENTATION IN THE ARMY 1956

RANK	WEST	EAST
GENERAL	1	-
LIEUT-GENERAL	3	-
MAJOR-GENERAL	20	- [WAS ONE BUT RETIRED]
BRIGADIER	35	1
COLONEL	50	-
LIEUT-COLONEL	198	2
MAJOR	590	10

TABLE 2

Source: *Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, Debates*, i, no 51, 16 Jan, 1956, p.1844.

Bengal.⁵⁹ Similarly, the Bengalis were poorly represented in the upper echelons of the bureaucracy. They were unable to influence economic policy and their attempts to remind the centre of the importance of hard currency earned from jute exports had no effect.⁶⁰ The eastern province was allocated only Rs 50 crore for industrial development out of a budget of Rs 800 crore.⁶¹ The result of these inequitable policies was that Rs 210,000,000 per annum were transferred from East Pakistan to West Pakistan up to 1955, a major factor in the greater industrialization of West Pakistan at the expense of Bengal.⁶² Consequently the demands raised by the Jukta Front attracted the urban professionals, students and the *jotedars* who felt that the introduction of provincial autonomy and making Bengali a state language would improve their economic prospect. But the twenty-one points also included class demands such as the abolition of the permanent settlement, the nationalization of the jute trade and the industrialization of the province which mobilized workers and peasants.⁶³ However Fazlul Huq considered the twenty-one points to be just an 'election stunt' and other moderate politicians admitted the manifesto to be extravagant but under pressure from the left wing of the Jukta Front they dared not admit this in public. Even Bhashani privately said that it would take at least five years to implement the whole programme.⁶⁴

The resounding defeat of the Bengal Provincial Muslim League did not result in any changes at the centre. Mohammad Ali Bogra attempted to improve the centre's position by patching up their differences with Fazlul Huq and exploit the differences within the Jukta Front. The Premier of East Bengal expressed great satisfaction at the conciliatory attitude of the centre when he visited Karachi at the end of April 1954. He had informed the Prime Minister of his desire to co-operate and urged him not to be unduly concerned by statements made by him for political reasons. The Prime Minister's intention was to detach Huq from the leftist elements in the coalition. On the understanding that he would be given a free hand in the province, Huq would enter into a coalition with the Muslim League in the Constituent Assembly.⁶⁵

⁵⁹ *Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, Debates, i, no 51, 16 Jan. 1956, p.1844.*

⁶⁰ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3863, 790D.00/2-2858, Telegram from Langley to the Department of State, 28 Feb. 1958.

⁶¹ *Pakistan Observer, 22 May 1956.*

⁶² Safdar Mahmood. *Pakistan Divided* (Lahore, 1984), pp. 13-14.

⁶³ *Twenty One Points of the United Front, M. Rafique Afzal, Political Parties in Pakistan 1947-1958, Appendix 1, pp. 225-6.*

⁶⁴ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4147, 790D.00/3-3054, Bream to the Department of State, 30 March 1954.

⁶⁵ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4148, 790D.00/5-1554, Emmerson to the Department of State, 15 May 1954.

This was not an improbable enterprise given the ideological differences and the conflicting personal ambitions of the various leaders in the Jukta Front. The main areas of contention were the composition of the cabinet, the role of the left in the Front and relations with the central government. Fazlul Huq's original cabinet excluded members from the Awami League and this was a source of friction until they were included.⁶⁶ The other point of difference was the strident demand of Suhrawardy and Bhashani for the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly. But Huq, once he became Chief Minister, realized that he needed the co-operation of Karachi and became mute on this question. There was also friction over the relationship between the Front and the communists and Ganatantri Dal. The Krishak Sramik Party and the Nizam-i-Islam opposed their inclusion while Awami League claimed that the Ganatantri Dal was a member and was prepared to work with the communists.⁶⁷

However, Mohammad Ali's strategy foundered on opposition from within the Punjabi group who perceived the United Front to be dominated by radical elements. In order to neutralize this threat hardliners such as Ayub Khan, Mushtaq Gurmani and Wajid Ali advocated the dismissal of Huq's ministry. The pretext for intervention came with the rioting that took place at the Adamjee Jute Mills. The incident was used as a stick to beat both the communists and the Front. What was essentially an ethnic conflict between Bengalis and non-Bengalis was claimed by the Karachi to be a communist plot. Fazlul Huq was given the last chance to clear the province of communists which patently he could not do. There were leftist sympathizers in his own cabinet and Bhashani, a radical, was the third member of the United Front triumvirate.⁶⁸ Eventually, the army's view prevailed with Ghulam Mohammad. Mirza was sent as Governor of East Bengal, the Jukta Front government dismissed and Governor's rule instituted. His brief was to 'isolate known communists and certain pink civil service employees and police, replacing them with dependable personnel', mainly West Pakistanis.⁶⁹ More than a thousand persons were arrested including 30 members of the provincial legislative assembly.⁷⁰

⁶⁶ Huq expanded the original four man cabinet into one consisting of seven members from the Krishak Sramik, five from the Awami League and two from the Nizam-i-Islam Party.

⁶⁷ Op. cit.

⁶⁸ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4148, 790D.00/5-2254, Memorandum of Conversation with Ayub Khan, 22 May 1954, Memorandum of Conversation with M.A. Gurmani, 21 May 1954. Memorandum of Conversation with Wajid Ali, 21 May 1954.

⁶⁹ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4148, 790D.00/5-2154, USARMA, Karachi, to the Secretary of State, 21 May 1954.

⁷⁰ *Constituent Assembly (Legislature) of Pakistan, Debates, i, no 23, 28 June 1954, p.1376.*

Only after this action was the Governor-General prepared to establish a dialogue with the United Front. The alliance's unacceptable price for co-operation, was the restoration of parliamentary democracy, release of political prisoners and removal of the ban on Bhashani. However the antagonism between the Awami League and the Krishak Sramik Party reached such proportions that they parted company undermining the opposition to the centre. The Awami League's *de facto* departure from the United Front occurred when Suhrawardy joined the 'cabinet of talent' as the Law Minister. Fazlul Huq was not consulted by Suhrawardy on the question of joining the government and consequently when the centre wanted to counterbalance Suhrawardy's influence, Huq allowed his nominee Abu Husain Sarkar to be included in the cabinet. This step eventually paved the way for an alliance with the Muslim League.

The League coalition with the Krishak Sramik Party at the centre was accompanied by the abrogation of Governor's Rule and the formation of a provincial ministry headed by Abu Husain Sarkar. However once in power the Front began to slowly disintegrate. First it simply lacked organizational cohesion. The selection of Sarkar as Chief Minister was not acceptable to many and the fact that Fazlul Huq was not trusted by his colleagues compounded the instability of the party.⁷¹ The cabinet's aim of playing down the significance of the food crisis was countered by the Awami League's campaign on the issue which successfully embarrassed the government. But in the end, the controversy over the Islamic provisions in the constitution proved to be the major factor which undermined the government. The United Front's support for the constitution resulted in the departure of the non-Muslims groups. Many members of the National Congress, the United Progressive Parliamentary Party, some members of the Scheduled Castes Federation and the Ganatantri Dal deserted the United Front and joined the campaign against Islamic provisions. Led by the Awami League and Democratic Party.

The Jukta Front government was considerably weakened by the departures and consequently was unwilling to have its strength tested in the provincial assembly. When Sarkar finally did convene the house, it was adjourned by the speaker on a point of order raised by the opposition. Later, in order to give the Chief Minister a breathing space, the Governor, Fazlul Huq prorogued the assembly and instituted Governor's Rule. Later Sarkar was reinstated, frustrating the Awami League's plan to replace him. Suhrawardy then launched an extensive campaign, focusing popular discontent against the provincial ministry which culminated in hunger marches and police firings. Sarkar had great difficulty in keeping his coalition together and it eventually fell apart forcing him to resign in favour of Aaur Rahman, on 30 August 1956.

⁷¹ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3859, 790D.00/3-2455, American Consulate Dacca to the Department of State, 24 March 1955.

The United Front by 1958 had ceased to exist and the Krishak Sramik Party, an amorphous collection of personalities, was deeply divided. The latter's major asset had been Fazlul Huq, whose personal popularity more than compensated for the lack of organization and discipline. It was speculated for a while that he might step down as Governor to revive the party's fortunes but the octogenarian could no longer actively participate in politics.⁷² Once in opposition the divisive forces in the Krishak Sramik Party took their toll and it began to disintegrate. A splinter group led by Kafiluddin Ahmad had joined the Awami League. The main body was divided into the Sayed Azizul Huq's and Hamidul Huq Choudhry's factions. The latter seriously considered establishing itself as a separate party but the two groups unified once again under the leadership of Abu Husain Sarkar in the spring of 1958.

Similarly the Awami League suffered from intra-party disputes once it was no longer in opposition but it was better equipped to deal with the difficulties. Suhrawardy's assumption of office as Prime Minister created tension with the Awami League's left wing. Maulana Bhashani called for abrogation of Pakistan's military agreements and the adoption of a 'neutral' foreign policy. These views were reinforced by statements made by Oli Ahad, Organizing Secretary and Abdul Hai, Publicity Secretary. Even Aaur Rahman bluntly stated, 'we want to get out of the Baghdad Pact'. Its allies, the National Congress, the Ganatantri Dal and communist sympathizers were also against the pro-American foreign policy. However Suhrawardy was able to use the party machinery to come to grips with the revolt. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman issued a press statement calling for a halt to public discussions of foreign policy. The internal differences were put aside during the bye-elections of December 1956 and the Awami league focused all their energies on the hustings.⁷³

Later at Kagmari on 2 February 1957 a temporary truce was reached between Shaheed Suhrawardy and Maulana Bhashani. The Prime Minister was endorsed as leader and no resolution condemning foreign policy was moved but Bhashani was left free to criticize Pakistan's foreign policy. Suhrawardy was displeased that he was unable to get a positive endorsement, but prevented from taking a stronger stand against Bhashani because he considered his support essential for the impending general election. Maulana Bhashani was also dissatisfied with the compromise and began to raise the issue of provincial autonomy to snipe at the Premier. He warned that if East Pakistan's genuine grievances were not rectified then the province would be forced to say '*assalam alaikum*' to West Pakistan. He did not believe that the Awami League, hamstrung by the

⁷² NAUS, RG 59, Box 3864, 790D.00/8-2858, American Consulate, Dacca, to the Department of State, 28 Aug. 1958.

⁷³ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3862, 790D.00/12-1456, William to the Department of State, 14 Dec. 1956.

Republican Party at the centre, could introduce the necessary changes.⁷⁴ However only after Suhrawardy had successfully completed the National Assembly debate on foreign policy did Bhashani and his supporters switch their full attack on the Premier to issues of provincial autonomy from those of foreign policy. In March that year, he raised the demand for full provincial autonomy with only defence, currency and foreign affairs to be under central control and called for members of all parties to support the provincial autonomy resolution in the assembly.⁷⁵

The showdown between Shaheed Suhrawardy and the Maulana Bhashani for the control of the party took place at the Awami League Council meeting at Dacca on 13-14 June 1957. The Premier received an overwhelming endorsement from the council on the federal government's international policy and his supporters such as Aatur Rahman and Mujibur Rahman consolidated their position in the party. Oli Ahad was expelled and nine of Bhashani's supporters on the Working Committee were forced to resign, leaving only Bhashani on the Committee. Resolutions were passed preventing members of the Awami League from being members of the pro-Bhashani Youth League but Bhashani himself was requested by the council to withdraw his resignation. Suhrawardy wanted him to remain as a figurehead.⁷⁶

Bhashani was anticipating the worst and as soon as the crucial council meeting ended he was in touch with the his West Pakistani counterparts. He suggested that the National Party, Democratic Party, Youth League and the Bhashani group of the Awami League should combine to form a new all-Pakistan opposition party to contest the next general elections. From West Pakistan, a hundred delegates including Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Ghulam Mohammad Sayed, Mian Iftikharuddin, Mahmudul Huq Usmani, Abdul Majid Sindhi, Abdus Samad Achakzai attended the Democratic Workers Convention on 25 July 1957, where the National Awami Party was founded. It proposed the break up of One Unit for West Pakistan, full provincial autonomy for the eastern wing and an independent foreign policy.⁷⁷

The National Awami Party's position on provincial autonomy was influential among the peasantry and sections of the middle class. However it lost its initial gains in East Pakistan due to its policy of supporting the Awami League government of Aatur Rahman. The price for supporting the Awami League

⁷⁴ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3862, 790D.00/2-2857, Williams to the Department of State, 28 Feb. 1957.

⁷⁵ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3862, 790D.00/3-1257, Williams to the Secretary of State, 12 March 1957.

⁷⁶ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3862, 790D.00/6-2757, Painter to the Department of State, 27 June 1957.

⁷⁷ *Dainik Sangbad* 26 July 1957, in H.H. Rahman, ed., *History of Bangladesh War Of Independence*, (Dacca, 1982), pp. 611-612. Maulana Bhashani's Address at the All-Pakistan Democratic Worker's Conference, at Dacca, 25-26 July 1957, *ibid*, pp. 765-766.

was the five point programme,- the break up of One Unit, a neutral foreign policy, regional autonomy for the provinces, early elections based on joint electorates and implementation of the fourteen unfulfilled items of the twenty-one point programme. But the agreement broke down over two issues,- foreign policy and the breaking up of One Unit. The National Awami Party's reaction was to remain neutral during a vote on 18 June, causing the defeat of Aaur Rahman's ministry. By holding the balance of power it persuaded Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to reach an accommodation with Mahmood Ali based on the five point programme. The understanding between the National Awami Party and the Awami League brought down Sarkar's government within two days. The Governor then advised the centre that no stable cabinet could be formed and President's Rule was implemented in the province.⁷⁸

Suhrawardy and other leaders of the Awami League were embarrassed by their association with the National Awami Party and argued that the party did not accept the five point programme. There does appear to be some justification for this position. Haji Danesh, President of the Parliamentary Group of the National Awami Party said that the 'mutual understanding of the two general secretaries is yet an unpublished document' and asked for restraint in the criticism of the agreement so as to prevent a Muslim League-Krishak Sramik-Nizam-i-Islam coalition taking over.⁷⁹ Maulana Bhashani was against supporting the Awami League but forced to accept the decision, in order to preserve the integrity and solidarity of the organization in East Pakistan.⁸⁰

The alliance resulted in great strains in the National Awami Party and a concomitant loss in popularity. The West Pakistani section of the National Awami Party was hostile to Suhrawardy because he refused to repudiate One Unit, a burning issue in Sind and Sarhad. In East Pakistan the party's members in the assembly were divided on the issue. But the dominant group, the 'Danesh-Samad faction' maintained control and threw its weight behind the Awami League, allowing it to form a government on 25 August. The National Awami Party were invited to enter the cabinet and three seats were offered.⁸¹ However, fearing a split in the party, Bhashani rejected the offer but continued to support the Awami League government.

⁷⁸ M. Rafique Afzal, *Political Parties in Pakistan 1947-1958*, pp. 209-210.

⁷⁹ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3864, 790D.00/7-258, Caprie to the Department of State, 25 July 1958.

⁸⁰ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3864, 790D.00/7-1458, Caprie to the Department of State, 14 July 1958.

⁸¹ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3864, 790D.00/9-258, Caprie to the Department of State, 2 Sep. 1958.

Despite the tensions which the relations with the Awami League caused within the National Awami Party it became apparent that an election alliance was in the offing.⁸²

Politics in Sind unlike Bengal moved in the opposite direction, from a semblance of unity to disunity. Highly volatile initially, it only began to solidify in reaction to the imposition of One Unit. The centre's interventions in Sind politics were successful at the beginning in promoting centralization. The Governor-General succeeded in getting Abdus Sattar Pirzada elected as the president of the party and to lead the Sind Government. This was in spite of the fact that Pirzada was not a member of the Sind Legislative Assembly and only elected to that body nine months later. But once in power, three factors worked in his favour. The first was that he was the choice of Ghulam Mohammad, and not of the Premier, Mohammad Ali Bogra. The strong backing from the military-bureaucratic oligarchy made him less susceptible to the vicissitudes associated with the premiership. Next, Khuro's supporters deserted him for the 'in' group and were joined by ten Hindu members and eight independent delegates. Finally, the Premier was able to form a working alliance with Ghulam Mohammad Sayed's Sind Awami Mahaz. Although Sayed reserved the right to criticize the cabinet, he agreed to support the government in view of the joint agreement reached between the two over the minister's programme for Sind. Pirzada assured Sayed that the League ministry would abolish *jagirdari* and that the illegal ejection of *haris* would be prevented by the efficient administration of the Sind Tenancy Act.⁸³

At first the Chief Minister stoutly defended the centre against the trenchant criticisms levelled at it by the Sind Awami Mahaz. G.M. Sayed's thesis that Pakistan was a multi-national state in which Sind was a distinct nationality and that the central government's powers should be limited to certain reserved subjects, such as defence, foreign affairs and communications, struck a deep cord among Sindis. There were other powerful grievances, the central governments' excessive interference in the provincial ministry's 'internal affairs', inadequate representation in the Constituent Assembly, absence of compensation for the loss of Karachi and insufficient financial assistance for refugee settlement in Sind. The charges were refuted by Pirzada. He admitted that some of the problems were due to poor administration but blamed the Sindis themselves for failing to avail of past opportunities due to 'factionalism' in the province. He was appalled

⁸² NAUS, RG 59, Box 3864, 790D.00/9-3058, American Consulate, Dacca, to the Department of State, 30 Sep. 1958.

⁸³ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4147, 790D.009/9-2853, Withers to the Department of State, 28 Sep. 1953.

by the concept of Sindi nationality, arguing that it threatened to undermine national unity and personally favoured Urdu as the state language.⁸⁴

The Punjabi group reciprocated by backing Abdus Sattar Pirzada when Ayub Khuro threatened to overthrow the cabinet. Khuro had managed to win over a significant number of delegates to the Sind Legislature, including three cabinet ministers. A showdown between the two took place during March and June 1954 and the opposition threatened to overturn the Pirzada's ministry by passing a no confidence motion but the centre intervened by proroguing the assembly.⁸⁵ Separate negotiations with the Talpurs and Khuro followed but were unsuccessful. Fifty-nine Muslim Leaguers resigned. The Sind Premier overcame the opposition when the central government sanctioned the enlargement of the cabinet. The judicious distribution of portfolios was a significant factor in winning over most of the opposition, and allowed him to survive the no confidence motion when the assembly was reconvened.⁸⁶

However the political equilibrium was disturbed by Karachi's push for centralization. The new equilibrium in Sindi politics which gradually emerged was focused on regional nationalism. The various political groups subordinated their personal and ideological differences and took a common stand against the central government. The strongest opposition came from the Sind Awami Mahaz. G.M. Sayed's resolution for the reunification of Karachi with Sind in March 1954 generated popular support in the assembly. It was supported not only by other opposition leaders such as Pir Mohammad Ali Rashidi but also by the Chief Minister.⁸⁷ Pirzada increasingly became responsive to this development and later in the same month promised that he would secure the proper place for the Sindi language in education and the administration.⁸⁸ In the same month the Muslim League, Sind League, Sind Awami Mahaz and the Sind Hari Committee formed a common front called 'Security of Sind' to resist unification.⁸⁹ The hostility to One Unit reached such a pitch that nearly three quarters of the Sind Assembly led by Pirzada stated their opposition to it in writing.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4147, 790D.00/3-2754, American Embassy, Karachi, to the Department of State, 27 March 1954.

⁸⁶ M. Rafique Afzal, *Political Parties in Pakistan*, p.72. Imdad Husain, 'The Failure of Parliamentary Politics in Pakistan 1953-58'. (Oxford Univ. D.Phil thesis 1966), pp. 95-97.

⁸⁷ *Dawn*, 7 March 1954.

⁸⁸ *Dawn*, 17 March 1954.

⁸⁹ M. Rafique Afzal, *Political Parties in Pakistan*, p.145. *Dawn*, 26 Aug. 1954.

Ghulam Mohammad, Iskander Mirza and the Governor of Sind, Mamdot conferred on 8 November 1954 and dismissed Pirzada and his cabinet supposedly for maladministration. In order to get the Sind Assembly to support the resolution on One Unit, Ayub Khuro, Kazi Fazlullah and others were freed from PRODA disqualifications by Ghulam Mohammad. Ayub Khuro who was neither a member of the League nor of the Sind Assembly, was appointed Chief Minister and he nominated Pir Ali Mohammad Rashdi and Moula Baksh Soomro to his cabinet. But the opposition to unification was so strong that many refused to cooperate. Ghulam Mohammad Talpur stated that no one from his group would join. Fazlullah deserted the supporters of unification and declared that his cohort would oppose any merger plan. The Sind Awami Mahaz's executive committee passed a resolution on 5 November rejecting any Federal Constitution which did not grant maximum autonomy to the provinces. It becomes plain that there was genuine hostility to One Unit and that Pirzada was depending on the legislators opposed to the proposal as well as his own supporters to prevent any resolution on merger being passed by the assembly.⁹⁰

However, Khuro, the Premier bulldozed the same intransigent assembly into passing the One Unit resolution on 11 December 1954 with an overwhelming majority. The delay in the implementation of the new constitution and its centre piece, One Unit, due to the Tamizuddin case necessitated another session of the legislature to ratify the provincial budget. The result was that anti-centre forces in Sind regrouped to overthrow the Khuro-Rashdi group. Ghulam Ali Talpur resigned as Minister from the Central Cabinet and resumed his old position as Speaker of the Sind Assembly in order to re-enter Sind politics. The Chief Minister attempted to block this move but was restrained by a court injunction. However Khuro and Rashdi acted promptly and they struck at the leadership of the opposition a day before the legislature was to meet to consider the budget. Rashdi, declared the discovery of a plot 'which had for its objective assassination of Sind Ministers and the creation of wide spread disorders between Sindis and Punjabis'. Ghulam Ali Talpur and Pir Ilahi Baksh were charged with the conspiracy and arrested.⁹¹ The budget was brought forward to be considered before the *habeas corpus* was heard and Sind Assembly building surrounded by police in order to intimidate the delegates into passing the budget.⁹²

When elections for the Constituent Assembly took place, in June 1955, there were many irregularities committed by Khuro's group. Only Ayub Khuro, Pir Ali Mohammad Rashdi, Moula Baksh Soomro, Ghulam

⁹⁰ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4148, 790D.00/11-1354, Soulen to the Department of State, 13 Sep. 1954.

⁹¹ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3859, 790D.00/3-2555, Soulen to the Department of State, 4 April 1955.

⁹² NAUS, RG 59, Box 3859, 790D.00/4-455, Soulen to the Department of State, 30 June 1955.

Mohammad Talpur and Sirumal Kirpaldas were elected. Sheikh Abdul Majid Sindhi, President of the Sind Awami Mahaz, complained to the Governor of the province that G.M. Sayed was threatened with dire consequences if he did not withdraw his candidature and that the police had been ordered to escort Members of the Sind Legislature to Hyderabad to vote. Kazi Fazlullah accused the Premier of instigating a reign of terror in Sind and alleged that his arrest on charges of involvement in the bomb plot to blow up the Sind Assembly was designed to prevent him from participating in the election. These methods described as Khuroism only aggravated the deep hostility to merger which assumed a new form in the context of the unified province of West Pakistan.⁹³

Why were Sindis so antagonistic to One Unit? Even before this innovation was proposed, Sind politics had strong centrifugal currents which emphasized the regions distinctiveness. The politics of regionalism now fed into the opposition to One Unit. The antipathy to amalgamation was stated in ethnic terms underlining the Sindi fear that they would be swallowed up by Punjab. Tension between the provinces was compounded by age-old friction over Punjabi settlers in Sind and the question of sharing the Indus waters. The completion of Kotri and Guddu barrages would result in the opening up of irrigated land. It was feared that unification would lead to an influx of Punjabi settlers into these areas at the expense of the indigenous population.⁹⁴ The other old rivalry was over the question of allocation of Indus water between the two provinces. Sind would lose the right to veto the allotment of Indus water based on pre-independence agreements. Thus the centralization process brought together two strands, one based on Sindi identity and the other based on the hostility to the Punjab. These were now combined into a powerful centrifugal force opposed to attempts at centralization.⁹⁵

Developments in Frontier were similar to those in Sind, except that the pace of the opposition to One Unit was slower. In Sarhad, Karachi first consolidated its hold over the province when Qaiyum Khan's nominee Sardar Abdur Rashid, the Inspector-General of Police, replaced him as Chief Minister. But Qaiyum retained the Presidency of the Muslim League, hoping to control the party from Karachi. However Abdur Rashid asserted his independence and Qaiyum was forced to resign from the presidentship in October 1954. The former continued his predecessor's policy of maintaining a tight grip over the Muslim League and the

⁹³ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3860, 790D.00/6-3055, Soulen to the Department of State, 30 June 1955.

⁹⁴ This had already occurred under the British where newly irrigated land was distributed among retired soldiers from the Punjab.

⁹⁵ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4148, 790D.00/7-3154, American Embassy, Karachi, to the Department of State, 31 July 1954. Box 3859, 790D.00/5-2155, Memorandum of Conversation with G.M. Sayed, Sheikh Abdul Majid Sindhi and Ghulam Mustafa Bhurgiri, 15 May 1955.

province. The Pir of Manki Sharif became so exasperated with the way freedom of political action was strangled in the province that he felt that the Awami Muslim League should resign from the NWFP Legislative Assembly. The pro-centrist group wooed Rashid seeking his support for One Unit. His support, so vital in Sarhad was received on the understanding that the capital of West Pakistan would be situated in the province.⁹⁶

The opposition's ambiguous response to unification facilitated the centralizing process. The ambivalence was due to the centre's co-option of Dr Khan into the central cabinet. He was a popular figure in the Frontier and genuinely believed that the formation of One Unit would be beneficial. He was the only political figure who actively campaigned for amalgamation. His support was considered essential by Karachi if the Pakhtuns were to be brought into line with the Punjabis and others who favoured unification.⁹⁷ Ghaffar Khan's opposition was muted. He argued that he was not against unification in principle but urged that national elections should be held first and immediately. Similarly, the leadership of the NWFP Awami Muslim League wanted to fudge the issue. The Pir of Manki Sharif took up a similar position when faced with the strong opposition to One Unit in the party.

With time the opposition's mild criticism became more vocal and strident. This was partly due to Pakhtun nationalism and the realization that many of the power holders would lose out to Punjab, once West Pakistan was promulgated.⁹⁸ The opposition boycotted the assembly and were joined by Leaguers such as Saifullah Khan. The Prime Minister, Sardar Abdur Rashid, supported by his ministers Sardar Mohammad Ayub Khan, M.R. Kayani and Khan Mohammad Farid Khan steered the One Unit resolution through the Frontier Assembly.⁹⁹ The Chief Minister's hold over the provincial assembly was so solid that only he himself and his colleagues, Mian Jaffar Shah, M.R. Kayani and Jalaluddin Khan were elected to the Constituent Assembly.¹⁰⁰ But when Lahore was announced as the capital of West Pakistan, Abdur Rashid realized that the Punjabi group was finalizing a scheme which was quite different from that which was canvassed earlier.

⁹⁶ Imdad Husain, 'The Failure of Parliamentary Politics in Pakistan 1953-58'. (Oxford Univ. D.Phil thesis 1966), pp. 97-98, 101, 245-246. *Dawn*, 6 Jan. 1954, *Dawn*, 17 Jan. 1954, *Dawn*, 6 Nov. 1954.

⁹⁷ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3860, 790D.00/7-155, American Embassy, Karachi, to the Department of State, 1 July 1955. Box 3862, 790D.00/1-1057, Fisk to the Department of State, 10 Jan. 1955.

⁹⁸ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4148, 790D.00/11-2254, Fisk to the Department of State, 22 Nov. 1954.

⁹⁹ *Dawn*, 26 Nov. 1954.

¹⁰⁰ Qaiyum Khan who could not get elected accused the NWFP government of terrorist tactics. He disclosed that great pressure was brought to bear on the delegates by the authorities and that he himself was followed by the CID who threatened his supporters. NAUS, RG 59, Box 3860, 790D.00/6-3055, Soulen to the Department of State, 30 June 1955.

He resigned from the One Unit Committee headed by Gurmani and began to oppose it. But the centre dismissed him as Chief Minister on 18 July 1955 and replaced him with Sardar Bahadur Khan.¹⁰¹ Rashid retaliated by revealing the contents of the Daultana document but despite the stir the revelation caused in the Constituent assembly he could not prevent the introduction of One Unit.¹⁰²

In the case of the Punjab, unification plans were implemented without much difficulty. In contrast to the other provinces, the divisions in the province were not along the line of support for or opposition to unification but along party and factional lines. The first concern of Karachi was to consolidate their position in the province by backing Firoz Khan Noon. The Punjab Muslim League led by Mumtaz Daultana did not support Ghulam Mohammad's dismissal of Nazimuddin. The Governor-General retaliated by appointing his confidant Aminuddin as Governor of Punjab and supported Firoz Khan Noon, the Chief Minister, in his dispute with Daultana.¹⁰³ Noon's pro-zemindar cabinet wanted to dismantle the land reforms which had been introduced by the previous cabinet. Daultana had the support of the district committees of the League and formed a secret alliance with Mian Iftikharuddin. The Azad Party, Pakistan National Party and the communists backed the liberal wing of the Muslim League in their defence of agrarian legislation.¹⁰⁴ Mumtaz Daultana then unsuccessfully challenged Noon in the party.

However Ghulam Mohammad needed to widen his support base after he had dissolved the Constituent Assembly in October 1954. For this reason he released Mumtaz Daultana from PRODA proceedings. Daultana, threw his weight behind the plans for unification and stated that he was in full accord with any plan which would 'fortify the unity and solidarity of Pakistan'.¹⁰⁵ His star was again in ascendancy, for he was the architect of One Unit plan used by the military-bureaucratic oligarchy.¹⁰⁶ Even though by this action Ghulam Mohammad had increased the quantum of support for One Unit in the Punjab Muslim League, it lined up two antagonistic groups which became locked in a struggle for the spoils of unification.

¹⁰¹ Imdad Husain, 'The Failure of Parliamentary Politics in Pakistan 1953-58'. (Oxford Univ. D.Phil, thesis 1966), p.246.

¹⁰² NAUS, RG 59, Box 3860, 790D.00/9-1555, Soulen to the Department of State, 15 Sep. 1955.

¹⁰³ Op. cit., p.85.

¹⁰⁴ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4147, 790D.00/5-2853, American Consulate, Lahore, to the Department of State, 28 May 1953. Box 4147, 790D.00/5-2153, American Consulate, Lahore, to the Department of State, 21 May 1953.

¹⁰⁵ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4148, 790D.00/11-2254, Fisk to the Department of State, 22 Nov. 1954.

¹⁰⁶ Khalid B. Sayeed, *The Political System of Pakistan*, p.77.

The dispute became intertwined with Noon's rivalry with Daultana. The two were involved in a bitter conflict over a question of patronage,- how members of the Punjab Muslim League Parliamentary Party should be nominated to the Constituent Assembly. The Premier of Punjab was willing to set aside six seats to be filled by nominees of the central leadership as demanded by the centre but wanted a free hand in the selection of the remaining party candidates. Daultana, with nothing to lose, was willing to give the centre a free hand. No compromise could be worked to resolve the resulting deadlock. The Governor Gurmani decided to cut the Gordian knot, dismissed Noon's cabinet and asked Sardar Abdul Hamid Khan Dasti, a Daultana supporter, to form a new cabinet. They nominated themselves and their sympathizers to the Constituent Assembly and the Noon group were denied any Muslim League nominations. Later, in August 1955, the whole group resigned when Firoz Noon, Muzaffar Ali Qizilbash, Choudhry Ali Akbar and Raja Ahmad Ali were expelled from the Muslim League.¹⁰⁷

The rump of the Jinnah Awami Muslim League led by Mian Abdul Bari also approved of One Unit. They urged that national elections should be held within a year but unlike their counterpart in the Frontier they did not link this issue with One Unit. Khwaja Abdur Rahim, a leading figure in the Punjab Awami Muslim League said that the Punjab branch encouraged Suhrawardy to accept any offer of inclusion in the federal cabinet. He added that here was an opportunity to demonstrate their loyalty to Pakistan by giving full support to the government's efforts to establish a strong administration.¹⁰⁸

The only opposition to One Unit in Punjab came from the Azad Party, led by Mian Iftikharuddin. He supported the United Front's demand for the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly and argued for a confederal Pakistan where the centre retained only minimal powers. The organization's ability to act as an effective opposition to the process of amalgamation was greatly hindered when two of its leading members, Shaukat Hayat and Sardar Asadullah Jan rejoined the Muslim League and its Karachi offices were raided and sealed following the ban on the Communist Party of Pakistan in July 1954. Only Iftikharuddin was elected to the Constituent Assembly and he supported Sardar Rashid's description of One Unit as an instrument of Punjabi domination.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ Craig Baxter, ed., *From Martial Law to Martial Law. Politics in the Punjab 1919-1958* by Nur Ahmad. (Boulder, 1985), p.348. Rafique Afzal, op. cit., pp. 162-3.

¹⁰⁸ NAUS, RG 59, Box 4148, 790D.00/11-2254, Fisk to the Department of State, 22 Nov. 1954.

¹⁰⁹ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3860, 790D.00/9-1555, Soulen to the Department of State, 15 Sep 1955.

The establishment of West Pakistan was an inherently flawed legislative act which juxtaposed antagonistic forces within a single legislature, not by consent but by a combination of subterfuge and force. Rather than enhancing the stability of the provincial government it created greater political disequilibrium and the diverse regional political groups formed a common platform against One Unit. The centrifugal elements within and without the assembly exploited the disharmonious politics of the Muslim League and later of the Republican Party, prepared only to support those who were ready to accept the dissolution of West Pakistan. As central executive pressure brought about the establishment of West Pakistan it remained the only bonding factor and the structure only continued to survive due to external pressure rather than any internal cohesion.

In party terms there were three groups in the newly formed legislature. Initially the West Pakistan Legislature was dominated by the Muslim League. But this dominance was brought to an end when Dr Khan's credentials for being Chief Minister was challenged by the President of the All-Pakistan Muslim League, Sardar Abdur Rub Nishtar. Dr Khan eventually convened the Republican Party which originally attracted opponents of Daultana and Khuro. Its position was also bolstered up by the backing it received from President Mirza and Governor Gurmani. Failing to secure a clear majority, the Chief Minister offered seats in the cabinet as incentive to ensure adequate support. Ghulam Ali Talpur, Sardar Rashid, Nur Muhammad Khan and Firoz Noon joined the Republican Party in return for or in anticipation of ministerial positions.¹¹⁰

Despite these measures, the party's majority was not assured and it was forced to turn to the Pakistan National Party for support. The latter exploited the rift between the Muslim League and Republican Party and the dissensions within each party to press for the dissolution of One Unit. The organization had emerged from the Anti-One Unit Front formed to oppose unification. It consisted of Ghaffar Khan of the Red Shirts, the NWFP Awami League led by the Pir of Manki Sharif, the Vror Pakhtun of Abdul Samad Achakzai, the Ustaman Gal led by Prince Abdul Karim and G.M. Sayed's Sind Awami Mahaz. The Azad Party of Mian Iftikharuddin also joined later after its attempt to merge with the Awami League collapsed. The Pakistan National Party's strongest influence was outside the assembly. It was assessed by its convenor, Mahmud Ali Kasuri, as strong in the big cities and weak in the small towns. Iftikharuddin was more popular in East Pakistan than in the western wing.¹¹¹ In the West Pakistan Assembly the National Party had only twelve seats, eleven of them belonging to the Sind Awami Mahaz and one to the Azad Party. However the influence of

¹¹⁰ M. Rafique Afzal, *op. cit.*, pp. 178-179.

¹¹¹ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3861, 790D.00/3-156, American Consulate, Lahore, to the Department of State, Box 3862, 790D.00/6-1757, American Embassy Karachi to the Department of State Memorandum of Conversation with Mahmud Ali Kasuri, 17 June 1957.

the anti-One Unit lobby was further increased when it merged with the Bhashani wing of the Awami League in July 1957 to form the National Awami Party.

The Republican party faced dissension in its ranks mainly from the Sindi and tribal members and was concerned that this would be exploited by the Muslim League. The Sindi delegates were for a while reassured by Dr Khan's statement that their grievances would receive sympathetic consideration. But his position was eroded by activities of the National Party which on previous occasions co-operated with Republicans in return for support on joint electorates.¹¹² The National Party's inflexible posture in the face of Muslim League's blandishments was a part of the political bargaining between the two over the question of co-operation in overthrowing the West Pakistan Government. On 19 March 1957 the Muslim League forged its long expected alliance with the National Party with a pledge to oppose One Unit. The unpopularity of the measures had increased steadily. Some groups such as the Sind Awami Mahaz had always opposed One Unit but disenchantment among the Republican ranks and the independents over the issue had increased. The unholy alliance tried to submit the Republicans to a test of strength on 20 March but when Dr Khan realized that all was lost he advised the Governor to invoke his emergency powers and suspend the West Pakistan Legislature and cabinet.¹¹³ With the dissolution of the assembly the National Awami Party-Muslim League co-operation also ended.

The Governor, Gurmani, accepted Dr Khan's resignation on 16 July and appointed Sardar Rashid as Chief Minister of West Pakistan. Beside the change in premier there was no major change in the cabinet and the Republican strategists pursued the previous policy of parcelling out ministership to anyone who had a significant following. However they feared losing control of West Pakistan and allied themselves with the National Awami Party accepting their terms. On 18 September, the Republican and National Awami Party alliance passed a resolution recommending the re-constitution of West Pakistan as a sub-federation of four or more fully autonomous provinces. The leaders of the National Awami Party, Maulana Bhashani, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, and G.M. Sayed applauded the resolution. It was also endorsed by the Pakistan Socialist Party, the Sind Hari Committee and by leaders of the Republican Party such as Ghulam Ali Talpur, and Firoz Khan Noon.¹¹⁴ Sardar Rashid was also in favour of dissolution even though he was more guarded in his public

¹¹² NAUS, RG 59, Box 3862, 790D.00/2-1557, Spengler to the Department of State, 15 Feb. 1957.

¹¹³ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3863, 790D.00/10-157, Lewis to the Department of State, 1 Oct. 1957.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

ETHNIC REPRESENTATION IN THE CIVIL SERVICE OF PAKISTAN
AND THE GOVERNMENT OF WEST PAKISTAN

MOTHER TONGUE	% IN PAKISTAN	% IN CSP	% IN WEST PAKISTAN	% IN WESTPAKISTAN GOVERNMENT
BENGALI	55.48%	32.00%	0.12%	-
PUNJABI	29.02%	35.00%	66.39%	51.00%
SINDI	5.51%	5.00%	12.59%	8.63%
PASHTO	3.70%	} 7.00%	8.47%	9.40%
BALUCHI	1.09%		2.49%	0.50%
URDU	3.65%	21.00%	7.57%	26.80%
OTHER	1.55%	-	2.37%	6.67%

TABLE 3

Source: *Census of Pakistan 1961*, i, Statement 5.1, p.iv-31. R. Braibanti, *Asian Bureaucratic Traditions Emergent From the British Imperial Tradition*, (Durham, 1966), p.269. *Census of West Pakistan Government Employees 1962*, pp. 28-29, table no 9.

DISTRIBUTION OF MUSLIM INDUSTRIAL INVESTMENT
AND POPULATION BY 'COMMUNITY' 1959

COMMUNITY	INDUSTRIAL INVESTMENT	POPULATION*
HALALI MEMON	26.5%	0.16%
CHINIOTI	9.0%	0.03%
DAWOODI BOHRA	5.0%	0.02%
KHOJA ISMAILI	5.0%	0.06%
KHOJA ISNASHARI	5.5%	0.02%
OTHER MUSLIM TRADING COMMUNITIES	5.5%	0.08
SAYED AND SHAIKH	18.0%	-
PAKHTUN	8.0%	7.0%
BENGALI MUSLIM	3.5%	43.0%
OTHER MUSLIMS	14.0%	37.5%

TABLE 4

* Rough estimates of community size.

Source: Gustav F. Papanek, *Pakistan's Development: Social Goals and Private Incentives*, (Cambridge, Mass., 1967), p.42.

statements.¹¹⁵ There was a parallel roar of support from the former princely states of Kalat, Swat and Bahawalpur and from Baluchistan demanding the restitution of their autonomy. However the Awami League, the Republican party's coalition partner at the centre, continued to defend One Unit along with thirty-two Punjabi members.¹¹⁶

The agreement between the National Awami Party and the Republican Party had been approved by the Iskander Mirza. But, almost immediately Mirza made a public pronouncement in support of One Unit. The leadership of the National Awami Party concluded after discussions with the Premier that under pressure from Mirza Noon had repudiated their understanding to dissolve One Unit. Ghaffar Khan, the President of the National Awami Party, then took the party into an alliance with the Muslim League. Despite their ideological differences an agreement was reached with the Muslim League on a sixteen point socio-economic programme and the decision to press for early general elections. G.M. Sayed stated that there was a secret section of the agreement which bound the Muslim League to accept joint electorates and the dissolution of West Pakistan. However the Republican high command was able to stave off defeat by replacing the Chief Minister, Sardar Rashid, with Muzaffar Ali Qizilbash.¹¹⁷ The Muslim League's failure to capture power and the election of Qaiyum Khan as president of the party made the understanding with the National Awami Party redundant.

However the issue of dismemberment of One Unit was to create a cleavage within the National Awami Party itself. The West Pakistan section of the party was opposed to the pro-Awami League policy of the East Pakistan section because Suhrawardy refused to support the break up of West Pakistan into its original provinces. The east-west split in the National Awami Party was approximately in line with its division between a left wing and a right wing. Sayed claimed that he had presented an ultimatum to Bhashani that if he did not distance himself from the pro-communist elements who favoured co-operation with the Awami League the party would split. G.M. Sayed had already fired Sobo Gianchandani, the editor of *Naeen Sind* and other communist sympathizers from the staff of the paper. Ghaffar Khan had taken similar action and both were urging Bhashani to follow suit.¹¹⁸ Maulana Bhashani was able to placate Ghaffar Khan and

¹¹⁵ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3863, 790D.00/12-557, American Consulate, Lahore, to the Department of State, 5 Dec. 1957.

¹¹⁶ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3863, 790D.00/10-157, Lewis to the Department of State, 1 Oct. 1957.

¹¹⁷ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3864, 790D.00/5-658, Memorandum of Conversation with G.M. Sayed, 28 April 1958.

¹¹⁸ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3864, 790D.00/9-1758, Mallory-Browne to the Department of State, 17 Sep. 1958.

avert a split in the National Awami Party by pointing out that the eastern section of the party had passed a resolution stating that the condition for supporting the Awami League was the dismemberment of One Unit.¹¹⁹

What little support for unification originally was to be found in Sarhad, Sind and Baluchistan, quickly evaporated when it became clear that One Unit had become a vehicle for Punjabi domination. The office holders and politicians from the former provinces became unhappy at the loss of patronage and power which accompanied merger. The sense of injustice was aggravated by the fact that the disparity in education between Punjabis, Sindis and Pakhtuns, partly owing to the fact that Urdu was the language of culture and education of the former province, gave Punjabis a clear advantage in the competition for government jobs in West Pakistan. Pakhtun resentment was not expressed in the same manner as that of the Sindis but they were deeply concerned that on the question of water and power they would lose out to the Punjab.¹²⁰ Despite the prominent role of Pakhtuns in the West Pakistan government there was growing bitterness between them and Punjabis.¹²¹ However, since Sindis had lost more than any other minority they were the most hostile to the process of centralization. The province was dominated by Punjabis and *Muhajirs*, most business were in non-Sindhi hands, the indigenous population were neglected in the distribution of import permits, government projects were concentrated in Punjab and Sind treasury surpluses were used outside the region.¹²²

On 7 October, President Mirza and General Ayub Khan abrogated the constitution, dismissed the central and provincial governments, dissolved the Constituent and provincial assemblies, banned all political parties and proclaimed Martial Law. The two leaders concurrently announced that they intended to re-establish constitutional government once the situation had been stabilized.¹²³ But the alternative which Mirza was considering, was a 'controlled democracy' with a strong executive and administration, limited franchise and restricted political activity.¹²⁴ The ostensible reason given for the take-over was the collapse of law and order, the disgraceful scenes of violence in the East Pakistan Assembly resulting in the death of the Deputy Speaker,

¹¹⁹ *Dawn*, 21 Sep. 1958.

¹²⁰ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3860, 790D.00/7-855, American Embassy, Karachi, to the Department of State, 8 July 1955. Box 3864, 790D.00/6-2058, American Embassy, Karachi, to the Department of State, 20 June 1958.

¹²¹ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3864, 790D.00/6-458, American Embassy, Karachi, to the Department of State, 4 June 1958.

¹²² NAUS, RG 59, Box 3863, 790D.00/10-457, Memorandum of Conversation with Pir Pagro, 4 Oct. 1957.

¹²³ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3864, 790D.00/10-2858, Knight to the Department of State, 28 Oct. 1958.

¹²⁴ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3864, 790D.00/102958, Langley to the Secretary of State, 29 Oct. 1958.

the inflammatory statements of Abdul Qaiyum Khan and the attempted secession by the Khan of Kalat. These were not the real reasons but became the justification for the military coup. It seems likely that the plan to seize power was decided about 15 September before the incident in the East Pakistan Assembly and the rebellion by the Khan of Kalat.¹²⁵ Mirza was motivated by the realization that there was no way he could be re-elected President as he was increasingly becoming the main target of popular resentment.¹²⁶ His popularity among West Pakistanis had fallen after the autumn crisis of 1957 and he was actively resented by the leaders of East Pakistan.

On the other hand his chief enemy, Suhrawardy, in preparation for the general election in March 1959, had established a base in East Pakistan and was confident that the Awami League would emerge as the largest single party there. It was probable that he would have had to reach some accommodation with the National Awami Party in order to consolidate his provincial and national position.¹²⁷ However, for Mirza a scenario in which National Awami Party would hold the balance of power was unacceptable.¹²⁸ But the political alternatives were exhausted. The other major contender, the Krishak Sramik Party, was disintegrating, a fact publicly admitted by its leaders.¹²⁹ The Muslim League was still in disgrace and had little chance in the coming elections.

In West Pakistan the situation was quite different and the Awami League's attempted revival was not successful, despite Suhrawardy's efforts. But the National Awami Party had established itself in the Frontier and made major inroads in Sind as well. Like its counterpart in East Pakistan it would play a pivotal role in the coming general elections.¹³⁰ The Muslim League under the presidentship of Qaiyum Khan had conducted a successful mass contact campaign in the Punjab. However in Sind its position was weak as Khuro's Sind League had detached itself from the Muslim League and formed the anti-One Unit Front which reduced the League's strength to mainly the *Muhajir* population of the urban areas. In these areas it had to

¹²⁵ Op. cit.

¹²⁶ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3864, 790D.00/6-2058, American Embassy, Karachi, to the Department of State, 20 June 1958.

¹²⁷ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3864, 790D.00/9-3058, American Consulate, Dacca, to the Department of State, 30 Sep 1958.

¹²⁸ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3864, 790D.00/7-158, American Embassy, Karachi, to the Department of State, 1 July 1958.

¹²⁹ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3864, 790D.00/9-958, American Embassy, Karachi, to the Department of State, 9 Sep. 1958.

¹³⁰ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3862, 790D.00/2-2857, American Embassy, Karachi, to the Department of State, 28 Feb. 1957.

compete with the alliance formed between Jamat-i-Islami and the Nizam-i-Islam for the urban vote.¹³¹ However despite these set backs there was a possibility that the Muslim League might win a small majority in the provincial assembly and among the West Pakistani delegates to the National Assembly, if election went according to schedule and was fair. It was patent that the Republicans were not keen on early elections. They were organizationally weak and their only activity went into moving loyal officials into vital places in the administration so that they could rig the elections. Politically motivated transfers of police and civil servants were taking place and their 'men' were packing the 'advisory committees' formed to appoint local bodies.¹³²

The strength of the anti-One Unit lobby rather than the likelihood of Muslim League's failure in the coming election undermined the pro-centrist position in West Pakistan. The anti-One Unit platform, composed of sections of the Republican Party, Muslim League and National Awami Party were becoming stronger as the general elections approached. The Republican Party was hopelessly divided between those for and those against One Unit. The Sindi delegates of the Republican Party formed a Parliamentary Board in conjunction with G.M. Sayed and Khuro's Sind League. To overcome these difficulties the Republican party arrived at a formula by which members from Sind were allowed to be anti-One Unit and those from Punjab could only be pro-unification. The equivocal stance taken by the Republican leadership headed off a major rebellion by Sindi delegates.¹³³ The other anti-One Unit element was the National Awami Party which, with the exception of the rank and file from Punjab, was solidly for the break up of West Pakistan. It had extracted a commitment from the Republicans that dissolution would take place if the majority of the delegates from the smaller units voted against One Unit. However the Awami League's position was that a clear majority of the West Pakistan Legislature must vote for dismemberment.¹³⁴

It now seemed almost certain that the general elections in West Pakistan would bring to power a political combination committed to the break up of One Unit. Suhrawardy would perhaps be successful from East Pakistan and come to terms with the new political reality and form a coalition with the anti-One Unit forces if he wanted to become Prime Minister. The Punjabi group's hostility to Suhrawardy was garbed in ethnic terms but the issue was one of power and domination. It was not simply a Bengali-Punjabi clash but

¹³¹ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3864, 790D.00/8-29-58, American Embassy, Karachi, to the Department of State, 29 Aug. 1958.

¹³² NAUS, RG 59, Box 3864, 790D.00/9-1858, Mallory-Browne, to the Department of State, 18 Sep. 1958. Box 3864, 790D.00/7-258, American Embassy, Karachi, to the Department of State, 2 July 1958.

¹³³ *Dawn*, 27 Sep. 1958. *Dawn*, 29 Sep. 1958. *Dawn*, 30 Sep. 1958.

¹³⁴ *Dawn*, 27 Sep. 1958.

part of a wider conflict between the Punjab and the rest of the country. The Bengalis concurred with the non-Punjabi population of West Pakistan that the centralizing process had established Punjabi domination of Pakistan and were prepared to dismantle it.¹³⁵ Consequently the declaration of Martial Law was designed to perpetuate the policies of the previous ruling group.¹³⁶ It was feared that a viable political alternative would emerge which would be inimical to their interests. Thus constitutional politics had to be terminated.

However President Mirza himself within a short while was removed by Ayub. What were the reasons for Ayub distancing himself from Mirza? First, there was his intimate involvement in the disintegration of Pakistani politics; 'Mirza, for about five years had been up to [his] elbows in political manoeuvres' [sic] and an inveterate....intriguer'.¹³⁷ No doubt the army group felt that he was a liability, too closely linked with 'corruption and maladministration' associated with the politicians. Another reason for the army wanting to get rid of Iskander Mirza was the controversial promotion of Lt. General Musa, an Afghan Shiah from Hazara, to the post of Chief of Staff over the heads of several more senior officers. This promotion caused extensive discontent among the senior officers against Mirza and his supporters.¹³⁸ Finally, President Mirza, had become aware that Ayub's loyalty was uncertain and tried to involve Air Commodore Rabb, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force in a plot against him. This backfired as Ayub was notified of this conspiracy and he removed Mirza and took over directly.¹³⁹

What was the United States response to the introduction of military rule? The State Department was acutely aware that a coup d'état was in the offing. President Mirza, as early as 1956 and on several occasions in May and June 1958 told the US embassy officials that he was prepared and ready to take-over.¹⁴⁰ Ambassador Hildreth frustrated with dealing with a succession of ministers, felt that dictatorship was the only way out. However the State Department's officials in Washington disagreed with this view. They

¹³⁵ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3863, 790D.00/9-2457, American Consulate, Dacca, to the Department of State, 24 Sep. 1957.

¹³⁶ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3864, 790D.00/10-2858, Knight to the Department of State, 28 Oct. 1958.

¹³⁷ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3864, 790D.00/10-2958, Langley, Karachi, to the Secretary of State, 29 Oct. 1958.

¹³⁸ The Deputy Chief of Staff, Major General Sher Ali, resigned in opposition. He argued that the President promoted Shiahs to key position in order to ensure the loyalty of the Army to himself in an emergency. NAUS, RG 59, Box 3864, 790D.00/4-1658, Lewis to the Department of State, 16 April 1958.

¹³⁹ Rabb had over a thousand troops stationed under his command in Karachi and was ordered by Mirza to arrest four army generals, including Major General Yayha Khan and Major General Sher Bahadur, who were in the city. NAUS, RG 59, Box 3866, 790D.00/4-159, Carle to the Department of State, 1 April 1959.

¹⁴⁰ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3861, 790D.00/5-2456, American Embassy, Karachi, to the Department of State, 24 May 1956. Box 3864, 790D.00/5-2058, Langley to the Secretary of State, 20 May 1958. Box 3864, 790D.00/6-1258, Langley to the Secretary of State, 12 June 1958.

saw no Mustafa Kemal Ataturk on the horizon. Neither Mirza nor Ayub had the character and vision to lead Pakistan into the future. On the contrary, they argued, dictatorship would continue the diversion of the country's limited resources into the military at the expense of social and economic development probably resulting in the economic deterioration and an increased pressure for aid on the US. It was also considered possible that under such economic pressures the military might go to war with India to regain Kashmir, as the only way out.¹⁴¹

Another question considered by US officials was the viability of Pakistan in view of the hostility which the coup would generate in East Pakistan. It was incorrectly assumed that the implementation of military rule would be violently opposed in East Pakistan.¹⁴² Despite the lack of resistance, there was evidence to suggest that separatist feelings were developing in East Pakistan. What was remarkable was that Suhrawardy predicted a scenario where local discontent would combine with Indian involvement in the future and result in the separation of East Pakistan, as actually happened in 1971.¹⁴³ Ayub Khan's regime suppressed the centrifugal forces and refused to recognize the legitimacy and depth of hostility to his policies. Thus he sowed the dragon's teeth which ripened into the Bangladesh war of liberation. The USA realized that military rule in Pakistan would lead to internal and external confrontation. Consequently the preferred option was that elections should be held and that Suhrawardy who was closely associated with them should be allowed to come to power.¹⁴⁴ It is difficult to estimate the involvement of the intelligence wing of the US Government in the coup. But there were links between the intelligence agencies of the two countries, and Sardar Bahadur Khan, Ayub's brother did claim that the Central Intelligence Agency was involved in the take-over.¹⁴⁵ However the official position of the United States was summed up by an Embassy memorandum.

¹⁴¹ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3876.26, 790D.5 MSP/4-1557, Evaluation of Pakistan Program by Office of the Assistant to the Director of Evaluation, 1 Feb. 1957; p 36-37.

¹⁴² NAUS, RG 59, Box 3864, 790D.00/5-2958, Williams to the Department of State, 29 May 1958.

¹⁴³ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3864, 790D.00/12-658, Memorandum of Conversation with H.S. Suhrawardy, 21 Nov. 1958.

¹⁴⁴ Op. cit. Box 3864, 790D.00/4-758, Office Memorandum, from Bartlett, South Asian Affairs to Rountree, Near Eastern & African Affairs, 7 April 1958.

¹⁴⁵ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3875, 790D.05/12-1357, American Embassy, Karachi, to the Department of State, 13 Dec. 1957. Tariq Ali, *Pakistan, Military Rule or People Power* (London, 1970), p.88.

"No American should be led to believe that the United States, officially or unofficially, had anything whatever to do with the establishment of dictatorship in Pakistan. The United States did not."¹⁴⁶

What was the reason for the collapse of constitutional politics? The polarization between centrifugal and centripetal forces was the framework within which inter-party and intra-party disputes took place. Poor leadership, weak party organization and the lack of programme only aggravated the political volatility caused by the military-bureaucratic oligarchy's determination to dominate Pakistan. Karachi was unwilling to concede ground to the opposition and reach a political solution. The compromise formula of Mohammad Ali Bogra was a dead letter even before it had been finalized. Khwaja Nazimuddin's legislative coup was a counteraction based on the realization that Ghulam Mohammad and his cohort had no intention of accepting a constitution which would weaken their authority. However Ghulam Mohammad's cohort was surprised by Nazimuddin's ambush and the counter-coup became entangled in a legal thicket. The consensus in Ghulam Mohammad's camp was to go along with the courts but if crucial verdicts were given against them, they would then resort to the mailed fist. Time was on the side of the centre. John Foster Dulles had decided to support the pro-US camp, a fact of paramount importance. The backing was in recognition of the Ghulam Mohammad group's responsibility in changing the foreign policy of Pakistan and bringing it into the western alliance. The concomitant influx of military and economic assistance consolidated the military-bureaucratic camp's position, both in the short and long term.

The objective of the Punjabi group was to promulgate a unitary structure with One Unit as its centre piece. There were no differences over the objectives but only how it could be achieved. The hardline approach of Mirza and Ayub,- their intention to by-pass constitutional processes and rule through executive fiat was overruled by US support for Chaudhri Mohammad Ali's political option. However the constitution was not a product of consensus and accommodation between the disparate parties. Support for it was marshalled in the assembly through a combination of Machiavellian and bulldozing tactics and there lay its essential flaw. The military-bureaucratic oligarchy achieved success by imposing its will over the opposition and the structures which it created could only be sustained by the continuation of executive pressure. Mirza used the Presidency to pulverize and manipulate the fragile polity of Pakistan into smaller units so that he could recombine them into new coalitions which were loyal to him. When it became clear the capricious disequilibrium was inimical to the mandarins and praetorian guards and to him personally, he began to consider alternatives. Authoritarian rule had been always the preferred option for Mirza and Ayub but they

¹⁴⁶ NAUS, RG 59, Box 3864, 790D.00/10-1558, Memorandum from the Ambassador [Langley] to all Embassy personnel, 15 Oct. 1958.

were dissuaded by US influence. Consequently Mirza's intervention in the political arena and the military support for it were based on the assumption that the collapse of the democratic process would justify Martial Law.

Ironically, the provocative activities of the centre contributed to the revival and unity of the centrifugal opposition. The emergence of the Republican Party as a result of the split in the Muslim League undermined, perhaps, the only organization that could have legitimized the attempts at centralization. But the League was torn asunder and reduced to a rump, its influence limited only to the Punjab. The unexpected end product which emerged from the political melting pot was the combined opposition in West Pakistan. In the minority provinces of West Pakistan the anti-centrist opposition cut across party lines to form the Anti-One Unit Front which had support from members of the Muslim League, Republican Party and the most implacable opponent of unification, the National Awami Party. The opposition to One Unit could also count on the support from the East Pakistan National Awami Party which emerged as an influential organization. Suhrawardy undoubtedly led the single most effective All-Pakistan party which was well placed for electoral success in the eastern wing. However it was patent that without coming to terms with the demands of the National Awami Party and the Anti-One Unit Front he could not take office as the next premier. Thus whatever political permutation was to emerge after the general election, Suhrawardy would probably lead a coalition which was determined to scrap the constitutional structures that had been imposed by the Punjabi group.

Precisely, to defend their gains which had been secured through centralization, Mirza and Ayub imposed Martial Law. It was feared that the resurgent centrifugal forces would undermine the position of the army and the alleged collapse of law and order became a cover for their activity. Ultimately, Pakistan's constitutional politics perished not due to any inherent weakness but by the coercive power of those who feared its success. The constitutional process died no natural death but it was the victim of political assassination. However Mirza himself became a victim of the military group and was ousted from power. He had become too closely associated with the political turmoil and his rash attempt to remove Ayub only confirmed that he was an incorrigible intriguer who was best exiled. The army rejected the anti-centre demands of the opposition and pursued policies that maximized the possibility of conflict both internally and externally. Ayub Khan's strategy was fraught with dangers,- heightened possibility of conflicts with India and of secessionist movements within Pakistan. It established the hallmarks of Pakistani politics as Punjabi domination imposed on the rest of the country. The fundamental tension between centrist structures and policies meant to shore up that domination and centrifugal forces was at the root of the discontent which led

to the emergence of Bangladesh. The same tensions underlie the basic political problems of post-1971 Pakistan as well. Their roots go back to the pre-partition decades, the unresolved tension between all-India organizations claiming allegiance of all Muslims and the regional interests fostered by devolution of power to the provinces.

CONCLUSION

The parameter of South Asian Muslim politics were firmly set by the 1935 Act. Muslim political loyalties were divided between strong regional parties and weak organizations with ambitions of centralized leadership. Sub-continental parties such as the Congress and the Muslim League, with some exceptions in the case of the former, had little influence. They were confronted by regional parties in the Muslim-majority provinces keen on maximizing their autonomy at the periphery, of these the Unionists were the most powerful. Their position was also reinforced by activities of communitarian parties which further undermined all-India political organizations. The opposition between the two forces established a historical continuity which stretched across the chasm of partition.

However the Congress' success in the 1937 elections initiated a major political shift. The regional Muslim or Muslim dominated parties feared that the Congress would corral them into a Hindu-dominated unitary state. Thus for Muslims the political focus shifted back to the centre and revived the fortune of the AIML and Jinnah as protectors of Muslim interests at the all-India level. The revival was aided by the Congress' Quit India Campaign and the encouragement that Jinnah received from the Raj as a counterweight to the Congress' perceived threat to the war effort. Initially Jinnah was only able to win over the élites of the Muslim-minority provinces, by playing the anti-Congress card. Among the urban masses Jinnah was less successful and forced to play second fiddle to Mashriqi until the mid-1940s when the Khaksar star waned. By 1944 the Muslim League was influential among the urban population throughout India, particularly in the Muslim-minority provinces. The League then tried to widen its popularity by using community consciousness to pull the regional parties into its orbit. The élites of the Muslim-minority provinces funded the pro-Pakistan publicity generated by intellectuals and helped establish the hegemony of the Pakistan idea, despite its many contradictions.

Muslim nationalism acquired greater influence in the provinces, thanks to Jinnah's enhanced all-India status and the Pakistan slogan. But the regional parties remained strong. In the Punjab, Khizr, backed by the British, strongly resisted the League's advance. In Bengal it could be transformed into a mass organization because it was taken over by elements concerned primarily with Muslim regional interests. But in Sind and Sarhad, Jinnah and Pakistan had hardly any influence at all. Thus by 1944 the League had achieved partial unity in the sub-continent's Muslim politics but still faced strong challenges in the provinces.

However the end of the War in Europe was followed by constitutional negotiations which generated political uncertainties. The League capitalized on anxieties of the Muslims of the Muslim-majority provinces

and welcomed deserters from the provincial parties into its fold. They were helped by the emergence of economic nationalism which gave Muslim nationalism a mass base. The Congress had lost much of its support among Muslims by 1937. The incarceration of its leaders and cadres after 1942, had left the League free to take full advantage of its already declining popularity. When the Congress returned to the negotiating table only weeks after the leaders were released, it stood no chance of catching up with the League.

On the basis of his enhanced power Jinnah was able to extract the maximum constitutional concessions from the British and the Congress. But the weakness of the unifying impulse was at the root of Muslim ideological confusion. Jinnah's understanding of Pakistan changed because of pressures from within the party and he had to accommodate the different interpretations in order to avoid a revolt against his leadership. The problem was compounded by the League's lack of strong party structure needed to control and enforce discipline over the regional supporters. Jinnah's personal authority was of limited value in the periphery. There were some instances where the central leadership could enforce their authority, e.g., the expulsion of Khizr and Sayed and the reorganization of the NWFP League. But the AIML was virtually bereft of constructive capacity. It was dependent on the provincial leaders for repairing any damage and advancing the party's cause.

Furthermore strong regional concerns and identities had penetrated Muslim ethnicity as in the case of Bengal and the Punjab. In the Sarhad and Sind the matter was complicated by the emergence of Pakhtun and Sindi ethnicity as a counter to Pakistan ideology. However the opposition to the Muslim League collapsed almost overnight owing to contingent circumstances. The civil disobedience movement mounted by the League at an extremely tense moment in the history of the Muslim community triggered off a communal explosion which engulfed northern India. The ferocity of the violence caused a collapse in the support for anti-League parties in the Muslim-majority provinces and their fate was sealed when the Congress demanded partition.

Pakistan came into existence through political exigencies which became a powerful influence during the negotiations for the transfer of power. Hence there were difficulties, many unforeseen, which confronted the Muslim League leadership in their efforts to establish their authority in the new state. The League had to remove the confusion surrounding the concept of Pakistan itself harmonize the strong currents of regional interest with the aims of the leadership and set up a new centre.

The leadership's perception of potential threat from India left it in no doubt that a strong centre was crucial if Pakistan was to survive as an independent state. This was one of the few areas where there was an agreement, in principle, between the Punjabi and Bengali groups in the cabinet. But the fact that centralization was to be achieved by aligning with the United States was the source of some of the differences

within the cabinet and party and with the emerging opposition. However the leadership, rather than reaching a broad consensus, dealt harshly with all potential opposition and anybody who suggested alternatives to the government's strategy. They made examples of hapless small groups such as the People's Organization, the Communist Party of Pakistan and the Jinnah Awami Muslim League. Internal dissent within the provincial Leagues was crushed equally robustly. Executive fiat and party discipline were deployed to subdue recalcitrant chief ministers and replace them with pliant supporters with varying degrees of success. However the continuous intervention by the military-bureaucratic oligarchy had serious long term implications. It retarded the emergence of an alternative leadership, broke up the Muslim League into numerous opposition parties and ultimately prepared the ground for the Governor-General's assault on parliamentary democracy itself.

Nazimuddin's downfall was due to at least two separate intrigues against his government. The Prime Minister's attempt to diffuse the opposition to Karachi which was building up in East Bengal through constitutional concessions was expressed in the Final Report. The possibility that through the political process Bengal could dominate Pakistan set the alarm bells ringing in the military-bureaucratic camp and among the provincial politicians in the Punjab. Daultana turned the anti-Ahmadiyya agitation against the Premier in order to depose him. Ghulam Mohammad aware of this manoeuvre allowed Daultana to mortally wound Nazimuddin so that neither could resist him when he staged his take-over bid. The fact that the Bengali group was prepared to placate the religious opposition by sacrificing Zafrullah the architect of Pakistan's pro-western foreign policy, increased the urgency for the Governor-General to rid himself of the Bengali group led by Nazimuddin.

The emergence of the Punjabi-dominated military-bureaucratic combine as the dominant force in the country caused a major shift in the politics of Pakistan. The usurpers had only limited political support in Lahore and were surrounded by strong currents of anti-centre politics emanating from East Bengal, NWFP and Sind. As a result the political configuration established by Muslim nationalism was restructured and Muslim politics was again marked by strong centrifugal tendencies as it was in the 1930s and early 1940s. However Punjab's position was changing: from being a major advocate of provincial autonomy it emerged as the greatest enthusiast for a strong centre. Ghulam Mohammad's dismissal of Nazimuddin destroyed the fragile unity wrought by Muslim nationalism and reactivated the strong regional concerns in Pakistan's politics.

The military-bureaucratic oligarchy's determination not to concede ground to the opposition and reach a political solution only aggravated the political instability. The compromise formula of Mohammad

Ali Bogra was a dead letter even before it had been finalized. Khwaja Nazimuddin's legislative coup caught Ghulam Mohammad's cohort by surprise and led directly to the counter-coup. When his actions became entangled with the courts the consensus in Ghulam Mohammad's camp was that if the verdict went against them they would resort to military rule. Time was on the side of the centre. John Foster Dulles had decided to support the military-bureaucratic camp in recognition of their service in bringing Pakistan into the western alliance.

The objectives of the Punjabi group was to establish a strong centre with One Unit as its hub. However the constitution was not a product of any consensus or accommodation but achieved with brute force and there lay its essential flaw. The military-bureaucratic oligarchy could only sustain its control over the opposition by holding ruthlessly on to the reins of power. The brittle unity in Pakistan's politics was broken up by President Mirza in his quest for new loyal coalitions. When it became clear that the political process had become so volatile that it was slipping out of the Punjabi group's control military take-over was contemplated. For Mirza and Ayub this always had been the preferred option but they had been dissuaded by US influence. Consequently there was an assumption behind Mirza's manipulation of the political process that if it got out of control they would have the necessary justification for taking authoritarian action.

As expected the arbitrary actions of the junta led to the revival of the anti-centre politics. The Muslim League broke up and some of its following reconstituted as the Republican Party whose influence was limited to the Punjab. In the minority provinces of West Pakistan the opposition cut across party lines to form the Anti-One Unit Front which had support from members of the Muslim League, Republican Party and the National Awami Party. The opposition to One Unit could also count on the support from the East Pakistan National Awami Party which emerged as an influential organization. Undoubtedly the Awami League was the only effective All-Pakistan party and was expected to do well in the elections particularly in East Pakistan. But it was also clear that it would have to accommodate the demands of the National Awami Party and the Anti-One Unit Front if it was to form the government. Such a coalition almost certainly would have had to scrap One Unit.

It was precisely for this reason that Mirza and Ayub imposed Martial Law. They feared that the anti-centre forces would capture political power and dismantle the constitutional structures used to keep the Punjabi group in power. However Mirza also was ousted from power. He had become too closely associated with the political turmoil to be tolerated. His rash attempt to remove Ayub only confirmed his image as a trouble maker who had to be got out of the way. Ayub Khan pursued an uncompromising line refusing to accommodate the demands of the opposition. His efforts to concentrate all powers in the hands of a central

oligarchy maximized the possibility of conflict both internally and externally. Some State Department officials noted that his strategy increased the chance of confrontation with India and secessionist movements within Pakistan. It simply reinforced the emerging trend in Pakistan's politics, - viz., a Punjabi dominated centre imposing its control on the rest of the country. The fundamental tension between an autocratic centre and regional interests was at the root of the discontent which led to the emergence of Bangladesh. Under different circumstances it was also the ultimate cause for the Baluchistan rebellion of the 1970s, the uprising in Sind in the 1980s and the recent emergence of *Muhajir* ethnicity. This tension between inept efforts at centralization and assertion of regional autonomy which can be traced back to the colonial period remains the basic problem underlying the politics of Pakistan even today.

GLOSSARY

<i>Abwab</i>	Illegal exaction.
<i>Alim</i>	(pl. <i>ulama</i>), Scholar versed in Islamic knowledge.
<i>Anjuman</i>	Association, society.
<i>Anna</i>	Indian currency, sixteenth of a <i>Rupee</i>
<i>Ajlaf</i>	(sing. <i>jalaf</i>), of the lower orders.
<i>Ashura</i>	Voluntary fast-day which is observed on the 10th of <i>Muharram</i> .
<i>Ashraf</i>	(sing. <i>Sharif</i>), Muslims of respectable status.
<i>Assalam alikum</i>	Peace be with you.
<i>Atta</i>	Flour.
<i>Azad</i>	Free, independent.
<i>Bania</i>	Hindu trader or money lender.
<i>Barawafat</i>	The 12th day of the month <i>Rabi al-awwal</i> . It observed as a holy day in commemoration of the death of the prophet Mohammad.
<i>Bhadralok</i>	'Respectable people', refers particularly to high caste Hindu élite of Bengal.
<i>Biraderi</i>	Patrilineal kinship group.
<i>Chehlum</i>	Funeral observance forty days after death. Shiahs observe a ritual anniversary for the death of the sons of Ali.
<i>Darbar</i>	Court of a king or great saint.
<i>Dars-i-Nizamia</i>	Traditional curriculum, emphasising Arabic, philosophy and jurisprudence which is used in most Muslim seminaries.
<i>Dal-bhat</i>	Literally rice and pulses, used to signify basic subsistence.
<i>Fatwa</i>	An opinion on a point of law concerning civil or religious matters by a Muslim divine.
<i>Firman</i>	Royal proclamation.
<i>Gaddi</i>	Throne or seat of authority.
<i>Hari</i>	Sharecropper without occupancy rights or landless labourer.
<i>Hijrat</i>	Flight, act of migration from religious persecution.
<i>Inam</i>	Tax free land grant.
<i>Izzat</i>	Prestige, honour.
<i>Jagirdar</i>	In Sind a landholder who has a revenue free land grant.
<i>Jirga</i>	Tribal council, body of tribesmen representing a tribe <i>vis-à-vis</i> the government.
<i>Jotedar</i>	Peasant farmer, usually one with large holdings.
<i>Jukta</i>	United.
<i>Kafir</i>	Unbeliever, non-Muslim.
<i>Kamin</i>	Village menial, artisan.
<i>Khan</i>	Chief, landlord.
<i>Khatib</i>	One who delivers the sermon in a mosque.
<i>Khel</i>	Subdivision of a tribe.
<i>Kisan</i>	Peasant
<i>Korbani</i>	Sacrifice, an offering.
<i>Krishak</i>	Peasant.
<i>Lambardar</i>	Village headman.
<i>Lasker</i>	Tribal war party.
<i>Lunghi</i>	(lit. a cloth used as a wrap), allowance given by government to individuals.
<i>Madh-i-Sahabah</i>	Praises recited in the honour of the first four caliphs by sunnis.
<i>Madrasa</i>	A secondary school or college for Muslims.
<i>Maktab</i>	School for teaching children elementary knowledge of the Koran.
<i>Maulana</i>	A title generally used for an <i>alim</i> .
<i>Maulvi</i>	A title equivalent to <i>maulana</i> .
<i>Mir</i>	A Baluchi tribal chief or leader in Sind.
<i>Mofussil</i>	The rural districts.
<i>Muhalla</i>	A ward or quarter
<i>Muhajir</i>	Literally a refugee, commonly used to signify the Urdu speaking minorities in Pakistan.
<i>Muharram</i>	The month in which Hussain, grandson of the prophet Mohammad was assassinated.
<i>Mujtahid</i>	In UP usually applied to Shiah <i>ulama</i> .
<i>Mullah</i>	A preacher usually attached to a mosque.
<i>Murid</i>	The disciple of a spiritual mentor or <i>pir</i> .
<i>Namasudra</i>	Agricultural castes in Bengal.
<i>Pakhtunwali</i>	Pakhtun social code.
<i>Pir</i>	Spiritual guide.

<i>Proja</i>	Tenant.
<i>Purba</i>	Eastern.
<i>Rabani</i>	A Muslim who believes in an egalitarian Islamic state.
<i>Rais</i>	A notable, patron or prominent person.
<i>Ramazān</i>	The Muslim month of fasting.
<i>Rupee</i>	Currency of India and Pakistan
<i>Sabha</i>	An association or society.
<i>Sajjad-nashin</i>	Custodian of a <i>sufi</i> shrine.
<i>Samiti</i>	Party or association.
<i>Sangathan</i>	A movement aimed at unifying Hindus.
<i>Sarhad</i>	The North West Frontier Province.
<i>Satyagraha</i>	Non-violent civil disobedience.
<i>Satyagrahi</i>	A <i>satyagraha</i> practitioner.
<i>Sayed</i>	Descendent of the prophet.
<i>Sharia</i>	Islamic law derived from the Koran and <i>Sunna</i> .
<i>Shuddhi</i>	'Purification', the reconversion to Hinduism of those who had embraced other faiths.
<i>Sufi</i>	Muslim mystic.
<i>Sunna</i>	Teachings of the prophet Mohammad.
<i>Swaraj</i>	Self government.
<i>Tabarra</i>	Cominations or curses against the first three caliphs whom Shiahs consider as usurpers of Ali's rightful succession.
<i>Tabligh</i>	Proselytizing Muslim group.
<i>Talimat</i>	Education
<i>Talukder</i>	In UP a superior landholder engaged with the state in collecting revenue.
<i>Tanzim</i>	A movement aimed at unifying Muslims and improving them educationally.
<i>Tarburwali</i>	Rivalry between close kin.
<i>Ummah</i>	The Muslim world.
<i>Vakil</i>	Pleader, also used to denote an advocate or representative.
<i>Wadera</i>	Landlord in Sind.
<i>Waqf</i>	(Pl. <i>auqafs</i>), Muslim religious trust.
<i>Zaildar</i>	Semi-official functionary in charge of an administrative subdivision in Punjab.

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