Muslim politics in the North-West Frontier Povince 1937-1947

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ABSTRACT

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MUSLIM POLITICS IN THE NORTH-WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE

1937-1947

This dissertation examines Muslim politics in the North-West Frontier Province of India between 1937 and 1947. It first investigates the nature of modern politics in the Frontier Province and its relationship with all-India politics. The N-WFP was the only Muslim majority province which supported the INC in its struggle to represent an Indian nation against the British raj, rather than of joining other Muslims in the AIML. The N-WFP had its own peculiar type of society, distinct from the rest of India. In the Frontier Province, Islam was interwoven to such an extent with Pashtoon society that it formed an essential and integral part of it; and the Pashtoons' sense of separate ethnic identity, within the bounds and framework of Islam, become an acknowledged fact. In this Muslim majority province, there was no fear of Hindu domination, as was prevalent among Muslims in Hindu majority provinces. This was a principal reason for the initial failure of ML to acquire support in the FP. The study also explores the rise of the Khudai Khidmatgars and the reasons for the preference of majority of the N-WFP Muslims for Congress. It argues that the coming together of the KKs and the Congress gave the former popularity, and an ally in all-India politics and the latter a significant base of support in a Muslim majority province. It elucidates the changing political contexts of the period 1937-47 and shows how loyalties were contingent on these circumstances. It is therefore not just about Frontier politics, but, at a deeper level, about the nature of evolving political identities in the sub-continent. The thesis concludes with a discussion of the All-India National Congress 'desertion' of the Frontier people on the eve of partition, the dismissal of the provincial Congress ministry by Jinnah, and the deeply ambiguous positions of the KKs in the context of the new nation of Pakistan.

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This study focuses on the North-West Frontier Province of India, which had unique historical characteristics. Due to its strategic location on the frontier of British India, the Frontier province had been of special importance to the colonial government. During the early twentieth century, when the need to introduce constitutional reforms and permit more popular government was recognised and being realised elsewhere in India, the Frontier was excluded from such developments. Furthermore, the N-WFP became the only Muslim majority province which provided strong support for the Indian National Congress during the freedom movement.

The thesis examines why and how the N-WFP Muslims preferred Congress to alliance with their co-religionists of the All-India Muslim League, and what Congress got from its alliance with the Khudai Khidmatgars, and vice versa. During the later years of the freedom movement, the ML, which earlier had very little support in the Frontier Province, succeeded in getting a hold in various parts of the province. This study discusses in detail the reasons for a change in the outlook of the Frontier Muslims. The forces behind the shifting of loyalties of the Frontier Muslims at the final stage of the partition are analysed in detail, as is the 'abandonment' of the KKs by the Congress at that crucial time. The specific ethnic problems and issues which distinguished the N-WFP from the rest of India gave it a particular kind of identity and importance both in colonial India and independent Pakistan: they illuminates some of the profound issues at stake in Indian politics in the final years of imperial rule, particularly issues of shifting and contested regions, ethnic, religious and national identity.

The thesis begins by concentrating on the geo-political position of the N-WFP and its importance in the colonial period. Chapter One examines the historical background of the province with particular emphasis on its socio-economic conditions and its peculiar type of society, and analyses the local nature of Islam. It highlights the economic divisions in Muslim society, which were to be significant in determining subsequent political loyalties.

Chapter Two examines the emergence of the KKs as a political force and seeks to explain their support for Congress. The KKs arose from the experiences of the previous movements against British rule, and of social reforms, its first cadres coming from rural Pashtoon-dominated areas. Through the creation of a youth movement, a section of the Pashtoon intelligentsia sought to move from mere 'social reform' to more obvious 'political' activity. The KK organisation was created in collaboration with the Youth League to enlist the support of wider social groups. Both bodies endeavoured to eradicate 'social evils' from Pashtoon society, espoused the cause of the Pashto language and literature, and consistently struggled against British imperialism. The chapter highlights how various sections of Pashtoon society interpreted the KKs' programme in their own ways. It argues that the KKs developed non-violence as a political creed in their own terms derived from their understanding of Islam, using the symbols of Pashtoon culture, quite independently of the influence of Gandhi. The fervent anti-imperialism of the KKs and Congress brought them

together and their formal affiliation took place immediately after the Karachi Congress in 1931. Through this alliance, Congress gained a political base in the N-WFP and the KKs a major ally. The pressure of the KKs' mass movement compelled the British to introduce Dyarchy and Responsible Government in the province in 1932.

The Third chapter examines the contest between various political groups and organisations for supremacy in the provincial assembly elections held in 1937. The provincial Congress became the majority party, but pending the decision of its central organisation, it refused to accept office for the time being, providing a chance for other groups to attempt the ministry-making game. After a short scramble for power, Sir A. Qaiyum, a staunch supporter of the Raj, was invited by the Governor of the N-WFP to form his ministry. During its brief tenure of office, the ministry lost its credibility among the Frontier Muslims, thus providing a chance for Khan Sahib, the Congress leader in the House, to move a vote of no-confidence and form a Congress ministry. The chapter also discusses measures taken by the Congress ministry to relieve the tax burden borne by the majority of the peasants and the ordinary KKs. These measures proved beneficial for a large section of the Frontier society, but aroused a strong reaction from the 'big Khans' and other members of the elite and title-holders, whose privileges were curtailed. They considered it as a direct blow to their prestige, honour and authority. To voice their grievances against the Congress ministry, they flocked to join the newly organised PML, which they considered as the best bulwark against Congress. The Frontier Governor sided with the Muslim elite and tried to protect their interests, as they were the local supporters of the British Raj. A discussion of the agrarian unrest during the first Congress ministry and its 'mishandling' by the provincial Congress leadership also forms an important section of this chapter. In the N-WFP, as in Bihar and the UP, Congress workers were agitating against the 'harsh measures' taken against them by the authorities, whom they accused of protecting the class interests of the big Khans, title-holders and other members of the landed elite. The situation worsened further when the Congress Premier adopted a stern policy towards the 'agitators', mostly Congress workers. On the intervention of the Congress high command and some local leaders, the matter was resolved.

Chapter Four examines the revival of the ML in the N-WFP. It has been argued that although Jinnah was able to establish some contact with sections of the Muslim intelligentsia and other elite groups of the province, the party enjoyed only marginal support at this time. During his visit to the province in 1936, Jinnah failed to elicit mass support for the League, and the League was unable to field even a single candidate in the 1937 elections. However, since some of the big Khans lent support to the ML after the death of Sir A. Qaiyum, it registered some success in the by-elections of 1938. In popular perception, the League was viewed as a party of the elite, of Khan Bahadurs, Jagirdars, various other title-holders, and big Khans, and was seen to be pro-British in its politics. The League members carried out communal propaganda against the KKs and Congress. Its leaders sought to mobilise the people around tales of 'Hindu atrocities'; but failed because there was no threat of 'Islam in danger' in the N-WFP. The majority of the FP Muslims showed little interest in the communal ideology of the League. On the outbreak of war, both Congress and the AIML made support for the war effort conditional upon the fulfilment of their own demands.

Chapter Five deals in detail with wartime politics in India and its repercussions on the Frontier. Particularly important was the Muslim League's campaign for a separate Muslim nation state, Pakistan, which was a highly ambiguous demand for many Frontier people. After the resignation of the Frontier Congress ministry, there was little political activity in the FP, and most politically-minded people took very little interest in the distant theatre of war. The Frontier Congressmen joined the 'Individual Satyagraha' organised by Gandhi half-heartedly, and lenient treatment by the Frontier authorities prevented any organised agitation. Arrests were confined to the active Congress workers, and the ordinary members of the KKs were left undisturbed. During the initial stages of 'Quit India', the N-WFP remained 'calm and peaceful', unlike the other provinces of India. Various factors were responsible for the 'success' of the Frontier Government's policy. The causes of the failure of the Congress civil disobedience will be analysed in detail. An important factor which contributed to the 'success' of the provincial authorities was the support of PML, Khaksars and the big Khans. A brief mention is also made of the attitude of a significant number of the mullahs, who, drifting away from their traditional anti-establishment ideas, supported the government, arguing for the destruction of Fascism, which was termed 'anti-Islam'. A remarkable feature of Muslim politics during the war years was the formation of a League ministry in the N-WFP in May 1943, through the official patronage of the Governor N-WFP and the provincial bureaucracy. The main purpose was to prove to the outside world that despite the non-participation of Congress, other political groups and communities were contributing to the Allied war effort. Sardar Aurangzeb Khan, the Chief Minister, was reminded time and again by the League party workers to declare his position on Pakistan, but surprisingly he tactfully 'shelved the issue' whenever it came up for discussion. The League Ministry failed to popularise the Pakistan scheme in the N-WFP. This prompted staunch Leaguers K.B. Saadullah Khan and some others to vote against the League ministry and support Congress' move of no-confidence.

The Sixth chapter, after analysing in detail the policies and programme of both the major political parties regarding the N-WFP, discusses the rapid changes that were taking place on an all-India level and their repercussions in the FP at the end of the war. The compulsory grouping system of the Cabinet Mission Plan, according to which the N-WFP had to form part of (Muslim majority) Group B was opposed by the Frontier Congress. They sensed in it a 'Punjabi domination' which was unacceptable to the KKs and the Frontier nationalists. The chapter also deals with the Hindu-Muslim riots in other parts of India and their far-reaching effects on the N-WFP. The communal ideology of the AIML was rejected earlier by the Frontier Muslims, but the communal riots changed the outlook of a majority of Muslims in the N-WFP. Earlier they were thinking in terms of Pashtoon first and Muslims afterwards, but the riots led them to think otherwise. The PML publicised the riots at the highest possible pitch. Delegations were sent to the riot-effected areas, who brought back with them the accounts of Hindu atrocities against Muslims. These proved effective, and it has been rightly argued that the ML achieved within months successes which otherwise it could not have thought of achieving in years. The official visit of Nehru (October 1946) to the tribal areas of the N-WFP is also discussed. Nehru had to face hostile demonstrations, and the provincial Congress accused Caroe, the N-WFP Governor, and the Frontier bureaucracy, of organising the anti-Nehru demonstrations, a charge denied by the authorities. According to the Frontier officials, the tribesmen were unhappy about the formation of a Hindu-dominated central government, and they foresaw in it a perpetuation of Hindu rule in the sub-continent which was unacceptable to them.

Chapter Seven deals mainly with the circumstances leading to the creation of Pakistan and the last phase of the nationalist movement in the N-WFP. By the end of 1946, the weak organisation of the PML was transformed and then it became an indomitable rival of the Frontier Congress. The support base for 'Pakistan' was provided by the province's urban centres, Hazara and the D.I.Khan, the two districts where non-Pashtoons predominated. The chapter discusses in detail the exclusion of the League from power at the most critical time in those provinces which were to form a significant part of the future Pakistan, and its adoption of 'un-constitutional' measures to dislodge the non-League ministries there. After the League's 'victory' in the Punjab, the N-WFP became the focus of attention for the League high command. It was the only province in the League's proposed Pakistan which had a non-League ministry, so the Leaguers considered it essential to wrest it from Congress control.

At the final stage of transfer of power, Mountbatten found the N-WFP to be a 'battle ground' between Congress and the League. Both major political organisations were engaged in proving their respective claims on the FP. However, the central government had its own plans to implement in the province, and decided to hold a referendum on the question of the N-WFP's joining India or Pakistan. This chapter analyses the events leading to the holding of the referendum, and the circumstances leading to its boycott by the nationalists. As it was geographically impossible to join India, the KKs demanded the insertion of a third choice of Pashtoonistan along with India and Pakistan. The government was not ready for the inclusion of the third option, nor did the Congress Working Committee officially press for it, so the government refused to concede the demand of the Frontier nationalists. The KKs boycotted the referendum, saying that without the option of Pashtoonistan it was absurd; however, it was held in July and it resulted in the N-WFP's joining Pakistan. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the dismissal of Khan Sahib's ministry and the position of the KKs in the newly created state of Pakistan.

The thesis concludes with a discussion of the causes of the popularity and success of the KKs in the N-WFP, and their overall position in the history of nationalism in the sub-continent. Despite being a close ally of Congress, they were abandoned by Congress at the final stage of partition, and left alone to face the new circumstances arising out of the partition of India. The KKs were not the only Muslim organisation who opposed Pakistan. Other parties and groups with similar anti-Pakistan views were accepted in the newly created state, but the Frontier nationalists remained in limbo till the very recent past.

The argument of this thesis is that the specificity of Pashtoon identity with its combination of religion and nationalism, is crucial for understanding the character of the KK movement and the politics of the N-WFP. The shaping and re-shaping of the alliances during the last few years before partition have to be understood in the context of the FP's position as a part of British India, as imperial power waned, plans for de-colonialisation and partition were hurried forward, and riots in other parts of India embittered communal relations. Underlying the chronological account is an attempt to clarify the particular local circumstances which helped to mould the political identity of Muslims in the Frontier, in particular their sense of 'nationalism', and the alliances into which this drew them. This in turn will contribute to a broader understanding of new political identities being created in the sub-continent in the

1920s — in particular, those drawing inspiration from religious belief and affiliation.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AC	Assistant Commissioner
AFM	Archives of Freedom Movement
AICC	All-India Congress Committee
AIHM	All-India Hindu Mahasabha
AIML	All-India Muslim League
AINC	All-India National Congress
CA	Constituent Assembly
CC	Chief Commissioner
CLAD	Central Legislative Assembly Debates
CD	Cunningham Diaries
CID	Central Intelligence Department
CM	Chief Minister
CP	Central Provinces
CPC	Criminal Procedural Court
CSASC	Centre for South Asian Studies Cambridge
CWC	Congress Working Committee
CWMG	Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi
DC	Deputy Commissioner
DCC	District Congress Committee
D.I.Khan	Dera Ismail Khan
FCR	Frontier Crimes Regulations
FCSP	Frontier Congress Socialist Party
FP	Frontier Province

FPCC	Frontier Province Congress Committee
GR	Governor's Report
HDP	Hazara Democratic Party
HMG	His Majesty's Government
Home/Poll.	Home and Political Record
HSNP	Hindu-Sikh Nationalist Party
IAR	Indian Annual Register
ICP	Islamia College Peshawar
IGP	Inspector General of Police
IOLR	India Office Library and Records
IPC	Indian Penal Code
JUH	Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Hind
JUS	Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Sarhad
K.B.	Khan Bahadur
KK	Khudai Khidmatgar
K.S.	Khan Sahib
MP	Member of Parliament
MIP	Muslim Independent Party
ML	Muslim League
MLA	Member Legislative Assembly
MLNG	Muslim League National Guards
NAP	National Archives of Pakistan
NAI	National Archives of India
NMML	Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

N-WFP	North-West Frontier Province
PA	Political Agent
PAP	N-WFP Provincial Archives
PCC	Provincial Congress Committee
PLAD	Provincial Legislative Assembly Debates
PML	Provincial Muslim League
QAP	Quaid-i-Azam Papers
R.B.	Rai Bahadur
RI	Rigorous Imprisonment
R.S.	Rai Sahib
RTC	Round Table Conference
SBP	Special Branch Peshawar
SHC	Shams al Hasan Collection
SWJN	Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru
UMNP	United Muslim Nationalists Party
UP	United Provinces
WML	Women's Muslim League

GLOSSARY

anjumaan	:	association.
astanadar	:	an individual with hereditary spiritual status.
azad	:	free, independent.
bigar	:	forced labour.
bania	:	merchant, trader or moneylender (in most cases were the Hindus in the N-WFP).
fatwa	:	formal judicial decree by a learned religious figure.
fiqh	:	Islamic jurisprudence.
hadith	:	saying of the Holy Prophet based on the authority of a chain of transmitters; 'tradition'.
hartal	:	protest meetings.
hijrat	:	migration, exodus.
inam	:	grant of land revenue free or of control over land revenue.
jagir	:	grant of an estate revenue free.
jihad	:	a religious war of Muslims against unbelievers.
jirga	:	council of Pashtoon elders; also can be used for a party.
khel	:	clan or a sub-division of a Pashtoon tribe.
kisan	:	peasant.

* the terms in the glossary are ones which appear more than once in the text. Other Pashto and Urdu terms are defined within the text

lambardar	village revenue official.
lashkar	tribal army.
lathi	thick stick, usually bamboo, sometimes bound with iron rings.
mahajan	money-lender.
maulana	title of respect accorded to Muslim judges, heads of religious orders and persons of great learning.
murid	disciple of a Muslim spiritual leader, particularly of a Pir.
naib	deputy, assistant.
pashtoonwali	Pashtoon code of life; Pashtoon system of values.
parajamba	factionalism.
pir	an astanadar; any hereditary spiritual leader in Islamic tradition.
razakar	volunteer.
sajjada nashin	successor to a sufi saint at his shrine, usually a family descendant.
salar	commander, general.
salar-i-azam	commander-in-chief.
sanad	document specifying grant.
satyagraha	Gandhian non-violent protest campaign; lit. 'truth force'.
tacavi, takavi	loan made by government for agricultural purposes.
tarbur	first cousin; in Pashtoon society an enemy among one's

		close patrilineal cousins.
tarburwali	:	rivalry between close patrilineal cousins.
tehsil	:	the largest administrative sub-division within a district.
ziarat	:	shrine of a holy man.

MAP

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation deals with the complex political and ideological developments in the North-West Frontier Province during the last decade of colonial rule. It examines the emergence of modern styles of agitational and democratic politics among the N-WFP Muslims, the majority of whom were Pashtoons, by focusing on the Khudai Khidmatgar movement. The issue of Pashtoon ethnicity, its interaction with sub-continental Muslim identity and Indian nationalism, are central themes of this study. This tri-polar relationship had its ambiguities, especially in relating Pashtoon ethno-regionalism with Muslim nationalism as articulated by the All-India Muslim League.

There are two major reasons to study this particular period (1937-1947) in the history of the province: i) Following the implementation of the Government of India Act of 1935, the N-WFP experienced more open, semi-constitutional politics and governance during the decade leading to independence. New political structures and incentives, like a wider franchise and greater powers for provincial politicians, meant a new and intensive style of politics, necessitating a new relationship between politicians and the wider public; ii) It was during this decade that the AIML evolved as the most significant all-India Muslim force by spear-heading the demand for 'Pakistan'. Such a super-ordinate programme essentially led to regionalist responses from India's regional Muslim groups, varying from co-option to sheer antagonism. It was vital for the League to establish itself in the Muslim majority provinces, essential for 'Pakistan', thus paving way for the establishment of a separate homeland for the Muslims in South Asia. Its claims to be a 'representative body of the all-India Muslims' were challenged in the N-WFP by a majority of the Frontier Muslims, who found articulation through the KK movement under the leadership of the Khan Brothers. They gave the League a cool response, taking no interest in its communal ideology and party programme, at least for the time being. During this crucial period the League remained busy trying to 'wrest' the N-WFP from the KK-Congress alliance, and to establish itself there, thus proving to be the real representative of the Indian Muslims. The Frontier Congress had to counter the League's advances, mobilising Pashtoons' dislike of British imperialism and their anti-colonial stand on an all-India level. Moreover, this period saw the shifting of loyalties, the abandonment of old allies and the former 'comrades-in-arms'.

A chronological account of political development is central to its historical reconstruction. A systematically constructed account of significant events discloses the political processes and their inherent dynamics. History is not merely a collection of events but, more importantly, a study of interaction between political structures, dominant ideologies and given power configurations at a given point in time and place. In this thesis, the interplay of all these elements is articulated, in order to account for pre-1947 political developments. However, the approach adopted in this thesis is not simply chronological, as within a broad chronological framework there is an analysis of the underlying themes of the inter-relationship between ethno-regional and trans-regional forces. The thesis also examines the social basis of provincial politics, mobilisation strategies applied by different parties, and the role of the colonial administration. The politico-administrative framework established under the Government of India Act of 1935, supplied the context within which the various competing forces organised themselves to pursue their own respective ends.

In the context of the India-wide programme of the AIML, the N-WFP was imbued with its own ethnic particularism. This particularism, which was articulated by the KK movement, was not in tension with Indian nationalism as advocated by the INC. But it posed greater problems to the League for whom, nonetheless, the FP was a crucial province in their future 'Pakistan'. Such an intricate and competitive configuration made the province's politics an arena of intense debate. Eventually the trans-regional forces represented by the League were able to bypass the region's ethnic specificity and, like several other South Asian regions, the N-WFP experienced a new phase in its politics. Following the referendum of July 1947, political events from across the Indus over took provincial politics and the N-WFP became a constituent of the new state of Pakistan.

With the emergence of the Khilafat movement in the early twentieth century, nationalist sentiments, in the modern sense, became accentuated in the N-WFP. The Khilafat movement, which had both anti-imperialist and Islamic inspirations, exerted great influence on the emerging political consciousness of the province. These early beginnings were important for the later development of nationalist politics. The nationalism of the Frontier was, in its ethos, religious — in harmony with Islam — and radically anti-imperialist. Given the structure of support that the empire had established for itself, it was inevitable that nationalism should find itself in opposition to the hitherto dominant notables of the province. As a result throughout the period of our study a conflict ensued between the proponents of the nationalist movement, especially the KKs, and the notables, who were the pillars of the political establishment. Of the region's ethnic groups the Pashtoons constituted the largest, comprising more than 56% of the population in the settled districts and almost 100%

in the tribal areas. Given the special administrative nature of the N-WFP, which was bifurcated into 'tribal' and 'settled' areas, the present study found it more expedient to concentrate on the settled districts[1] — which composed the core of the province. The choice of the province lies in the fact that it is structured political arena and also because Pashtoon ethnicity covered the province as a whole. It was the achievement of the KKs to have grounded themselves in the numerically dominant group, but it inevitably meant that their opponents, the British administration in the province as well as the ML in later years, would seek to mobilise many of the non- Pashtoon groups to the cause of Pakistan when the crisis of the empire escalated in 1946-47.

The struggle between Indian nationalism and Muslim particularism which called itself an alternative, legitimate nationalism, and was represented by the AIML, became acute following the partial transfer of power under the Act of 1935. The League acquired a far greater following in the Muslim minority provinces than it did in the Muslim majority provinces, vis, Bengal, Punjab, Sind and the N-WFP. Among these, only the N-WFP was dominated by the Congress, while in the other provinces different local groups, e.g. the Krishak Proja Party of Fazlul Haq in Bengal, the Unionists of Sir Fazl-i-Hussain in the Punjab, the Sindi 'nationalist' Muslims under Allah Bakhsh Soomro and G. H. Hidayatullah, competed with the ML for political allegiance. There were thus two sets of struggles among the Muslims in the Muslim majority provinces: one between the Congress and the ML and the other between the ML and other 'nationalist' Muslim parties.

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[1]: The N-WFP consisted of the settled districts and the tribal areas. Since the scope of the dissertation is confined to an analysis of organised party politics and its relationship to the national movement, the tribal areas have not been included in the study. In order to maintain a close military control the colonial government did not allow organised political contestation in those areas. Consequently the base of the freedom struggle and of the KKs was virtually non-existent in those areas.

After the adoption of the Pakistan Resolution by the ML in March 1940, a conflict between the ML and so-called 'nationalist' Muslims became acute. While Muslims in every province of what later became Pakistan were ethnically distinct from each other, and generally aspired to local autonomy, the ML sought to subordinate them to a more centralised control. The drive towards the centralisation of Muslim politics gathered intensity after the Cripps proposals of 1942, which seemed to concede the possibility of the separation of the Muslim majority. The primary resource mobilised by the ML for establishing its ascendancy over local movements for autonomy in the Muslim majority provinces was the slogan of 'Islam in danger' and hostility towards the Hindus. While this strategy succeeded in Sind, Punjab and Bengal it did not get very far in the N-WFP simply because there were few Hindus in the province. While Hindus in Bengal and Sind, and Hindus and Sikhs in the Punjab were in substantial numbers, enough to constitute something of a threat to the League's design, in the Frontier they could be wholly ignored. This meant that the cause of nationalism could be successfully pitted against Muslim separatism on the one hand and the League's pursuit of hegemony on the other. Frontier nationalists could thus combine nationalism and ethnic aspiration in harmony. Rittenberg correctly observes that the KKs 'saw much less scope for the expression of Pakhtun regionalism within the Muslim League, for its ideology demanded that they abandon their separate ethnic ambition in the interest of communal unity'.[2] For the ML on the other hand it was vital to enlist the Muslim majority provinces, especially in the north-west, to the cause of Pakistan — if any one of them were to opt out there could be no Pakistan. Hence the League sought ferociously to overcome the non-League Muslim political formations in these provinces.

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[2] : S. A. Rittenberg, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Pakhtuns, The Independence Movement in India's North-West Frontier Province, 1901-1947* (Durham, 1988), p. 6.

Ethnicity[3] was more important in the politics of the FP rather than class differences. It was one of the least economically developed provinces of the British Indian empire. There was very little industry, not much western education and little urbanisation. The role therefore played by the Muslim intelligentsia in the development of the provincial politics was, in comparison with provinces like Bengal and the Punjab, much less significant. The KKs had established their following almost wholly in the rural population, while the ML was largely urban in its following until the crisis of 1946-47. The rural, middle-landed class support of the KKs held good despite a growing appeal to Islam in the context of the partition agitation. The final outcome of the struggle, as reflected in the July 1947 referendum did not suggest that their support had significantly diminished. In this respect, the hitherto established view of the scholars that somehow the referendum signified a triumph of Muslim nationalism, drawing its strength from religious sentiments,[4] is highly questionable.

The very special features of the region gave rise to distinctive developments and alignments during the last decades of the imperial rule which were of great significance to its history. This dissertation addresses them through the following questions: Why did the N-WFP Muslims prefer Congress to the Muslim League? What did the Congress get from its alliance with the Khudai Khidmatgars, the Pashtoon nationalists, and *vice versa*? During the later years of the freedom movement, the ML, which earlier had no grass roots support in the FP, succeeded in establishing a foot hold in various parts of the province. Did this signify any substantial change in the outlook of the Frontier Muslims? What were the reasons behind the shifting of loyalties before Partition? Furthermore, why were the KKs 'abandoned' by the Congress in the final stages of the freedom struggle, and with what implications for the N-WFP? How far did the ML's religious appeals affect the politics of the N-WFP? What were the specific ethnic problems and issues which distinguished the N-WFP from the rest of India, and gave it a particular kind of identity and importance in the colonial period and also in independent Pakistan?

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[3]: Ethnicity is a junior partner of nationalism and may have its cultural, ethnic or secular/traditional postulations. The lingual, religious, biological or spatial (territorial or diasporic) togetherness rationalised through historical consciousness may project towards ethnic, national or trans-national solidarity. For more details see E. J. Hobsawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge, 1992); E. Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford, 1983); and, B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London, 1983).

[4]: Rittenberg, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Pakhtuns*, pp. 244-245; E. Jansson, *India, Pakistan or Pakhtunistan* (Stockholm, 1981), pp. 220-228.

The present thesis is a contribution to the historiography which has developed in the light of new data and approaches now available to historians. The very idea religious/communal, territorial, ethnic and ultimately 'national communities' in India would have been anathema to Indian nationalists who considered the Raj to be the ultimate spoiler of an 'Indian unity'. Pakistani nationalists, conversely, traced the roots of Muslim nationhood from the very advent of Islam in South Asia, with the raj and 'baniya' only conspiring to weaken it through various tactics. On the other hand, the 'Cambridge School' of South Asian history came to see the political conflicts in the sub-continent from the perspective of competing elite groups pursuing their own worldly interests, and the colonial state, itself, playing broker amongst feuding territorial, religious and ideological communities. In addition, one notices a wider spectrum of intellectual positions derived from leftist and subaltern orientations seeking explanations of the role of the traditional, landed and modern Indian elites.[5]

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[5]: It appears to be a rather simplistic overview of the major trends though one has to be cognisant of the variations and a multipolar nature of intellectual debates amongst the historians within each category.

The politics of Muslim communities and their identities in India have received much attention from historians. After the partition of India the main focus of historical writing centred on the emergence of modern Indian nationalism, the independence of India, and the creation of Pakistan. From the 1970s this changed in favour of an emphasis on regional studies and the relationship of regions with their particular types of society and politics to all-India politics. Various studies have appeared on the growth of 'Muslim nationalism' and its insistence on a separate destiny for Muslims, which culminated in the establishment of Pakistan. For some historians regional structures have appeared crucial, for others skilful leadership, and for yet others identity and Islamic consciousness.

Anil Seal offered a new and path-breaking perspective on the politics of educated elite which broke . He concentrated on the inter-elite factional struggles and the accompanying strategies of political mobilisation as they affect particular regional, social and economic structures in the Indian society. His main subject is the Presidencies of Bengal, Bombay and Madras during the Viceroyalty of Lytton, Ripon and Dufferin. Apart from utilising the published official record, Seal relies on a number of private papers of local rulers/elite politicians for tracking their 'attitudes and policies'. The local population, Seal argues, could not expel British by force: not because the foreigners were stronger but because Indians lacked unity. The raj initially relied on force, not only striking terror in its opponents but also awe and respect. But obviously the British could not rely on force at all times. Moreover, they were confronted with the main issue of whether to rule India from Calcutta or from London. Gradually, they were convinced of the need to utilise/exploit the services of the locals in strengthening the British imperialism in South Asia. This also saved them money in paying for additional Britishers. The locals who offered themselves as 'collaborators' of the raj did so for a number of reasons: they wished to earn for themselves a prestigious position in the modern society, and also to reap handsome dividends in return. Gradually this whole effort led to the evolution of western educated elite who could play the role of intermediaries between the government and a majority of the local population. It also gave rise to the political mobilisation of more Indians. The pioneers of the modern political mobilisation in India, according to Seal, were these western-educated people, majority of whom were based in the Presidencies. Thus Bengal, Bombay and Madras which were important centres of Indian political life became the early centres of Indian political organisation of a non-traditional type.[6]

The inter-elite struggle, according to Seal, is primarily an educated urban middle class struggle. The warring elite try to mobilise other social groups and classes, and if need be, the masses in general in their support in order to gain more strength and recognition. They seek government attention and are willing to serve as 'collaborators' to win its favour. This favour helps them against their counterparts in this bid for power, authority and control. While there is no gainsaying that 'collaboration' between the educated elite and the colonial government made sense in urban settings, Seal's argument cannot be applied to the case of N-WFP as a whole. Firstly, there was no large scale educated urban-middle class in the FP. It was backward politically, educationally, socially and economically. Secondly, the dominant political elite were the rural elite, big Khans, landholders and the titled gentry. The level of socio-economic development in the province was low, with the result that there were few privileged social groups in the system. Power vested in the big landowners, and rural middle classes, apart from some Ulema and *sajjada nashins*. The elite at the top were from the rural middle class, followed by a sprinkling of educated persons such as lawyers, journalists, teachers and students. Thus there was little room for urban elite to manoeuvre. Politics was primarily the work of landed interests, particularly the rural middle class, as represented by the likes of Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum and Sardar Aurangzeb Khan, to name only a few. There was hardly any distinct and developed educated urban middle class. Thus unlike the rest of India, the nucleus of power, necessary for political mobilisation rested in the rural areas. The tussle was not between the educated elite groups rather it was between the powerful landed elite: the pro-British big Khans enjoying government favours and the rural middle class Khans who were unhappy over the dominance of big Khans in the government affairs. Aggrieved and alarmed at the growing influence of the big Khans, they joined the newly formed KK movement in large numbers. Indeed the movement comprised a significant number of these Khans, in addition to a large number of peasants, tillers, artisans and members of other working classes, particularly in Peshawar Valley. Despite their large numbers, these middle class Khans followed the party programme and policy of the KKs. Hence, there was no inter-elite struggle in the sense suggested by Seal. Political struggle was primarily between the rural middle class on both sides, for and against the British imperialists. The anti-British camp was further divided: one entirely against any sort of collaboration, co-operation and contacts with the British (Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the majority of the KKs), and, other seeking some engagement rather than collaboration with the British government (Khan Sahib and other provincial Congressmen) to pursue their anti-British agenda.

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[6]: Anil Seal, *The Emergence of Indian Nationalism* (Cambridge, 1971).

The former favoured social uplift schemes but agitational politics while the latter was inclined towards constitutional politics.

Thus, one cannot agree with Seal if one takes the case of Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the party leader who did not belong to the educated urban middle class and who was against any collaboration with the government. At several occasions he refused even formal meetings with the representatives of the raj, including the Chief Commissioner of the province. Seal's argument, however, may seem somewhat relevant while discussing Khan Sahib's case. A firm believer in constitutional politics, the western educated Khan Sahib, elder brother of Abdul Ghaffar Khan, at various occasions collaborated with the government and accepted three times the Chief Ministership of the province during the last decade before partition. But, one must remember that the permanent leadership of the KKs rested with Abdul Ghaffar Khan and not with Khan Sahib.

According to D. A. Low, the British, since their advent to India, created a class of 'chieftains' and 'intermediaries' in order to facilitate the 'peaceful' and orderly functioning of the raj. During the early decades of the 20th century, the British relied on these people and used them against the nationalists, specially during the 1930s. As for the day-to-day administration of the country, the members of the subordinate bureaucratic 'Provincial Services' were used. Majority of them, Low argued, were drawn from the landed aristocracy and elitist families which had a vast experience of serving the rulers. They provided the link between the Britishers and the social elite, majority of whom were landlords and prosperous peasants in the rural areas. Gradually, the British realised that the bureaucracy could not help much in the continuation of their rule in India. They deployed 'neo-darbari' politicians who could serve their purpose better. In addition to the conferment of titles, award and honours, under this modified system, 'prominent' Indian notables were appointed to the central and provincial legislatures. It also led to the introduction of legislative politics by electing the Indians to municipal committees and district boards. This 'large scale' political mobilisation of the Indians resulted in the formation of various associations and political parties including the Indian National Congress, All-India Muslim League and many more political organisations advocating their own respective ideologies and party programmes[7]. Unlike other parts of India, the majority of the inhabitants of the N-WFP were against British rule in India. The British, however, in line with their efforts in other provinces of India, did try and create a class of loyalists, including some 'chieftains' and big Khans to support their rule. In recognition of their services to the Raj, Jagirs, honorific titles and 'Inams' were conferred upon them from time to time. These loyal Khans and other pro-government landed aristocracy were used against the Pashtoon patriots during the civil disobedience movements. Like other provinces of British India, a large number of these people were included in the Provincial Legislative Council (1932). However, during the first Congress Ministry laws were passed which aimed at curtailing the privileges of the nobility. The passage of Agriculturists Debtors Relief Bill, the abolition of honorific titles, 'Inams', of Zaildari, Lambardari and the Honorary Magistrates and putting an end to the system of nomination of the sons of nobility for higher government positions were few among various other anti-Khan measures adopted by Congress ministry to 'undermine' the influence of the 'nobles'. This was regarded a 'death-blow' to the prestige and position of the big Khans and other title-holders. The Governor of N-WFP, however, tried his best to protect the allies of colonialism. Wherever possible, he withheld his procedural assent necessary to the formal approval of all such legislation. While disagreeing with Low that loyal Indians were appointed to the central and provincial legislatures, in the N-WFP, unlike other provinces of British India, the anti-colonial forces not only dominated politics outside the assembly but also they were in majority inside the provincial legislature. Thus, political mobilisation in the FP was provided by the anti-imperialist forces and not by the loyalist elements, as was the case in some parts of India. In the Punjab, the Unionists, including Sir Fazl-i-Hussain, Sir Sikandar Hayat and Khizar Hayat Tiwana, belonging to landed aristocracy, not only provided political mobilisation to their own community, the Muslims, but also abridged the gap between various other communities. They succeeded in bringing Hindus and Sikhs within the fold of Unionist Party, thus making it cross-communal organisation. But they were more interested in the protection of their class-interests rather to contribute to the communal harmony between the various communities inhabiting the Punjab. No wonder, during the partition massacre, the Unionist failed to avert the communal massacre in the province. In the N-WFP, which was an overwhelming Muslim majority province, the KKs, not only provided a platform for the anti-British elements in the province, it also resisted the outbursts of the communal violence in the province. Its anti-British stand won for it the support at the grassroots levels. The KK resisted the onslaughts of the landed aristocracy — the big Khans against the poor peasants, tillers and other working groups making the organisation popular. The KK leaders approached the masses directly. This was one of the main reasons of its popularity in the province which resulted in a great political mobilisation in the N-WFP.

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[7] : D. A. Low (ed), *Congress and the Raj: Facets of the Indian Struggle, 1917-47* (London, 1977).

Francis Robinson's work deals with the gradual separatist tendencies among the UP Muslims in the wake of Hindu revivalism, the Hindi-Urdu controversy, dissension over jobs, and the membership on the various representative bodies in an adversarial relationship between the two communities. The UP Muslim elite, according to Robinson, were far from a unitary group as the ideological rift between various sections of Muslims i,e, Shias and Sunnis, betrayed any effort for unity. In the same vein, the cleavages between the modernists and the traditionalists or generational differences between the 'Old Party' and 'Young Party' only added to existing fragmentation. Issues like the Aligarh University, the local language controversy, the need for a Muslim political party, the Cawnpore Mosque controversy and the attachment for Pan-Islamic issues brought divergent Muslim leaders including the Ulema, *sajjada nashins* and modernists together but only for a while. Thus, the Muslim elite, after 1857, were not only engaged in an ever-changing relationship with the colonial state and an increasingly powerful majority, they were equally arraigned against one another. In such a state of affairs, there ensued a race for personal aggrandisement and sectional interests. After 1922, one sees a major transformation when the landed interests stage a come-back with sectional interests superseding the community interests.[8]

Ian Talbot's main argument resolves around 'collaboration' of the inhabitants of the Punjab with the British imperialism. He analyses the causes of that great association which led to the maintenance of British authority in the Punjab, a Muslim majority province, crucial to the future state of Pakistan. The relation between the local loyal notables, who always were at the forefront of political mobilisation in the province, and, the central government has also been discussed. The region's importance, according to Talbot, was not only owing into its strategic location, but also because of the centre of the army recruitment on which lay the foundation of British empire in India. Talbot seeks to explain how the British secured the overwhelming support of the rural population of the province to strengthen the imperial army by joining it in large numbers. Moreover, political mobilisation in the province, with a particular reference to the formation and growth of Unionist Party — a loyalist coalition of Muslim, Hindu and Sikh landed aristocracy — is also examined at great length. Talbot also focuses on the final phase of the partition by providing details of the Punjab politics when Unionists gave way to ML and the League succeeded in winning over the majority of Muslim population of the province, which he describes as 'the heartland of a future Pakistan state', to its side. Talbot has concluded his account by examining the riots in the Punjab followed by the partition of India.[9] The majority of the N-WFP population, unlike the Punjab, were anti-establishment. Pashtoons, the dominant ethnic community of the province resisted the British imperialism in that part of South Asia. Their sense of belonging to a superior race always kept them motivated and charged in defending their region against the invaders, including the British. The strategic position of the N-WFP made it a 'hunting ground' for the imperial army. Alarmed at the expansionist policy of Tsarist and afterwards Soviet Russia, the British regarded it as the most important area in defence terms and guarded it against the Russian advances in the region. To keep a close watch on the

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[8] : F. Robinson, *Separatism Among Indian Muslims: The Politics of the United Provinces' Muslims, 1860-1923* (Cambridge, 1974). For an interesting debate on this subject, see P. R. Brass, 'Elite Groups, Symbol Manipulation and Ethnic Identity among the Muslims of South Asia' in D. Taylor and M. Yapp, (eds.), *Political Identity in South Asia* (London, 1979); and, F. Robinson, 'Islam and Muslim Separatism', *ibid.* Also see P. R. Brass, *Language, Religion and Politics in North India* (Cambridge, 1974); and, G. Pandey, *The Ascendancy of the Congress in Uttar Pradesh 1926-34* (Delhi, 1985).

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[9]: Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj 1849-1947* (Delhi, 1988).

Frontier tribes and to provide the area an 'efficient administration' the area was separated and constituted as a separate province in 1901. Special legislation were introduced and the province was kept under the charge of a Chief Commissioner. All constitutional reforms enacted in other provinces of India were refused to the province on the grounds of its peculiar situation. Apart from a small number of leaders of landed elites, unlike the Punjab, the majority of the people of the FP did not collaborate with the Raj. Army recruitment in the province was negligible and apart from a few tribes in the southern districts (and that too was for the economic reasons) no one seemed willing to enlist in the army to strengthen the imperialism. Moreover, unlike other Muslim majority areas, in the N-WFP, the communal concerns had entirely different connotations. The N-WFP, in a stark contradiction to the Punjab, was an overwhelming Muslim majority province. While viewing the cross-communal nature of the Unionist Party in the Punjab, the majority of its members belonged to the landed aristocracy, loyal to the raj, struggling for the protection and security of their common class-interests. In the N-WFP, prior to the communal riots in northern India (1946-47), which changed the outlook of a number of Pashtoons, there existed communal harmony in the province. The 93% Muslims had no threat perceptions from the minority community, most of them traders and businessmen. This being one of the major reasons that fears of 'Hindu domination' found no place in the Frontier and the AIML initially failed in popularising its ideology and party programme there. The peculiar circumstances of the province and the nature of Pashtoon particularism provided a chance to the INC to establish itself in the N-WFP, a stronghold of Pashtoon nationalists. In contrast to the elements of loyalty in the Unionist members in the Punjab, the cross-communal nationalists politics of the N-WFP were anti-

British. Unlike the Punjab, therefore, there was no large scale communal riots during the partition because despite their 'desertion' by the INC, the KKs still held strength in the province and this being one of the main reasons that during partition the large scale killing of non-Muslims was prevented in the N-WFP. The KKs who had successfully combined the values of *Pashtoonwali* with their political philosophy, followed the strong traditions of Pashtoon culture and protected the lives and property of the non-Muslims in the N-WFP.

David Gilmartin explores major causes that contributed to the creation of Pakistan which he regards as the 'most successful' of the present century's Islamic movements that brought an Islamic transformation of the post-colonial state. Indian Muslims, according to Gilmartin, were appealed in the name of religion. They were exhorted to support Pakistan, thus identifying themselves with the Prophet and the 'Quran', in a struggle between 'Haqq o batil'. The political objectives of the Pakistan movement, Gilmartin argues, were shaped by the institutional structures of the British colonial state. The Muslim leaders urged the Indian Muslims to forge unity in their ranks, thus creating in them a sense of belonging to a separate community, and this eventually led to the establishment of Pakistan. The British government lent their support to the Muslims and under the rapidly changing circumstances encouraged such conceptions. Gilmartin is of the opinion that only after fully comprehending the relationship between Islam and empire, the movement for Pakistan can be understood. He stresses the role of religion in the making of Pakistan. He has tried to piece together the cumulative nature of the Pakistan movement combining 'din' and 'duniya' to obtain a larger popularity. The ML, according to Gilmartin, had been successful in mobilising strong support of the *sajjada nashins* and Ulema in the Punjab to win over the

Muslim masses to support its candidates in the elections of 1945-46, thus paving the way for the achievement of Pakistan.[10] Being an overwhelming Muslim majority province, Islam constitutes an integral part of the Pashtoon society. To them a Muslim way of life was correspondent to the Pashtoon culture and their way of life. Therefore, religion on the Frontier was part of a peculiar Pashtoon identity which encouraged and sustained movements against the British imperialism. Unlike the Punjab and few other Muslim majority provinces, the Ulema in the N-WFP were anti-British, always preaching a 'Jihad' against the foreigners. The struggle of 'Haqq o batil' as referred by Gilmartin was thus perceived not as one between the dominant Hindu community of India and Muslims, but a struggle against the British who had 'usurped' India. This being one of the main reasons that ML initially failed in establishing itself in the FP. The perceived (or real) threat of 'Islam in danger' was utilised by the ML only for a brief period during 1946-47 when the communal riots in northern India alarmed pro-ML Pashtoons and they were for a moment moved by religious than ethnic considerations. As in the case of Punjab, the League during the elections of 1945-46 appealed the Pirs and *sajjada nashins* in the name of a separate homeland for Indian Muslims. It successfully mobilised some prominent Pirs and *sajjada nashins* including the Pir of Manki Sharif (Nowshera) and Pir of Zakori (DIKhan), who, with a large number of their adherents supported the League candidates. Moreover, the 'murids' of the Pir of Manki were at the forefront of the agitation against Khan Sahib during the League's agitation against the Congress ministry in 1946-47. But once this so-called Islamic sentiment had run its course, the Pashtoon fell back on their ethnic identity as the subsequent events amply demonstrated.

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[10]: David Gilmartin, *Empire and Islam: Punjab and the Making of Pakistan* (London, 1988).

Mushirul Hasan's study is a 'reappraisal' of some important themes relating to Indian nationalism, communalism and separatism. The main theme of his research, however, is to analyse how various sections among the Indian Muslims supported the nationalist politics which eventually led to their support of the INC. Hasan has also discussed the role of the British government in defining political identities in religious terms and transforming them into constitutional arrangements. Hasan wonders as to why secular nationalism, despite its strong roots in the Indian Muslims, failed to create a united nation, based on the participation of all major Indian communities. Hasan concentrates on the politics at national level, covering both political leaders and organisations. He also discusses 'high politics' in two Muslim majority provinces i.e., Bengal and the Punjab, whose full-fledged support made the creation of Pakistan possible. Hasan also discussed the role of UP Muslims who played central role in moulding political attitudes and in shaping the destiny of their co-religionists in other parts of the country. He regards the UP Muslims as a community but fails to identify the 'essentials' for a community. He has argued that a significant number of Muslims remained loyal to the Congress despite the League's communal appeal to the Muslims to support Pakistan. However, during the last few years of the Raj, a widespread sense of the need to 'safeguard' Muslim interests was created, which eventually led in places to communal riots, and paved the way to partition.[11] Hasan concentrates on the political mobilisation of Indian Muslims, particularly of Bengal, the Punjab and UP. However, wittingly or unwittingly he has ignored the overwhelming Muslim majority province of the N-WFP and its strong support for the nationalist politics. As argued in the present study, ethno-particularism of Pashtoons prevented them from considering themselves part of the larger Indian Muslim community. Instead, the Pashtoons viewed themselves as belonging to a larger world Muslim community, thus for the time being ignoring the 'communal' appeal of various political organisations. Even during the elections 1945-46, the League failed to mobilise the majority of Pashtoons to its side by campaigning in favour of Pakistan. However, the communal riots of northern India had affected the provincial politics and a section of the N-WFP Muslims temporarily gave up their sense of belonging to the Muslim community of India and supported the creation of Pakistan.

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[11] : Mushirul Hasan, *Nationalism and Communal Politics in India, 1885-1930* (Delhi, 1994).

R. Ahmad's work deals mainly with the political mobilisation of the Bengal Muslims. After analysing in detail the causes of the peaceful association of Hindus and Muslims for centuries, the British government, he argues, acting upon their flagrant policy of 'divide and rule' successfully created split between the two major communities inhabiting India. He tries to explain how the British succeeded in dividing the Muslims and Hindus in the name of religion while they failed to create dissension among them on various other grounds including ethnic and interest-based divisions. In the main, however, Ahmed concentrates upon the growth of Bengali Muslim identity and the resultant political awareness at the turn of the century which led to the formation of AIML in 1906. The Indian Muslims started thinking in terms of protection of their rights and became class-consciousness demanding from the government to safeguard their class-interests against the majority Hindu community.[12] Unlike Bengal and some other parts of India, in the N-WFP, the British failed initially to exploit the religious sentiments of the local population. As there was social harmony between the majority Muslim community and the Hindus, mostly traders and businessmen, communal tensions were negligible. This was one of the main reasons that communal politics found no way to enter the Frontier during the early decades of 20th century. The Pashtoon national movement further provided a boost to this consonance between the Muslims and the Hindus annoying the colonialists. The KK leaders were urged by the Frontier authorities to severe their connection with the 'Hindu Congress' and the government would accept their demands. But to the chagrin of the Provincial authorities they refused to do so. However, alarmed at various 'pro-Hindu' measures of Khan Sahib's ministry, in 1937, some prominent Muslims revived the Provincial Muslim League, promising to safeguard the interests of the Frontier Muslims. Though there were ethnic tensions in the N-WFP like Pashtoons vs non-Pashtoons exploited by the government, especially in Hazara, there was no large scale communal violence prior to 1946-47. AIML succeeded in propagating the accounts of 'Hindu atrocities upon the Muslims' in other parts of the sub-continent thus providing a chance to communal strife to enter the FP.

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[12] : Rafiuddin Ahmed, *The Bengal Muslims, 1871-1906: A Quest for Identity* (Delhi, 1981).

Ayesha Jalal's emphasis is on the politically astute leadership of Jinnah, who, according to her, combined various vested-interest groups of pro-League Muslims and successfully led them to the creation of Pakistan. Jalal seems to be solely interested in 'high politics' as her emphasis remains on the major continental actors in the movement for Pakistan in 1940s.[13] Farzana Shaikh, however, gives importance to the growth of religious consciousness among a considerable number of Muslims in the sub-continent drawing on the long-existing stock of Muslim political thinking about the nature of their community. They came to view their political identity endangered in the Hindu-majority and Hindu-dominated sub-continent, and were convinced of the need to protect their interests by creating a separate homeland for themselves. According to her without a proper comprehension of Islam and its influence on Muslim elite, any study of the Pakistan movement will be incomplete. The author sees the final struggle in the forties in the perspective of enduring Muslim tradition and not merely as a bargaining chips.[14] Sarah F. D. Ansari, in her useful study on Sind, dilates on imperial control over the region through the landed intermediaries, the majority of whom, unlike the clergy in the N-WFP, were pro-establishment. Together the *waderos*, the clergy and Pirs were influential in Sind and the colonial government relied on them for support in return for lands and other types of rewards. In Sind, Muslim politics was highly fluid with the formation and reformation of the groups whose main concern was the safeguard of their class interest. However, in the final phase of the freedom struggle, as in Punjab, the majority of Sindi Pirs were won over by the League on the Pakistan issue and thus successfully mobilised the support of the Muslims to the establishment of the new state.[15]

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[13]: A. Jalal, *Jinnah: The Sole Spokesman, the Muslim League and the demand for Pakistan* (Cambridge, 1985).

Joya Chatterji has concentrated on the changing patterns of Bengali politics in the crucial period of the last two decades before partition. Her main focus is on 'bhadralok' politics which in the present century moved away from the nationalist politics to more parochial concerns. The central theme of her study is an analysis of the changes in bhadralok politics and to explain their apparent shift from 'nationalism' toward 'communalism'. During the period under discussion, according to Chatterji, Bengal lost its transcending position in the mainstream of nationalist politics. The reason being that 'bhadralok' perceived politics more and more in terms of communalism. They focused on provincial concerns rather than all-India affairs. Moreover, besides discussing the various aspects of contemporary Muslim politics in Bengal, Chatterji also analyses the factionalism in the provincial Congress and particularly the tensions between the Bose Brothers and the Congress high command. The Brothers, according to Chatterji, were not allowed by the central organisation of the Congress to reach an amicable settlement with the Muslims and other communal forces in the province, which resulted eventually in the partition of Bengal.[16] Unlike Bengal there was no 'bhadralok' class in the N-WFP society. The politics during the early decades of the present century revolved around the big Khan, majority of them uneducated who lent their support to the raj. They tried their utmost to keep the local population unaware of the political developments taking place elsewhere in India. Benefiting from the anti-colonial feelings of the majority of the local population, the INC established itself firmly in the N-WFP. Its association with the Frontier nationalists provided it a chance to gain grassroots support even in the rural areas of the province. Like the Bose Brothers, the Khan Brothers dominated the Frontier politics. However, unlike the Bose Brothers, the Khan Brothers, except a brief period during the war time, enjoyed full confidence in Congress circles. Whenever there were indications of the partition of India the Frontier Congress leaders were time and again assured by the Congress high command that on no terms they would agree to the partition of India. This being one of the main reasons that Abdul Ghaffar Khan paid very little attention to his talks with the League leaders to discuss for the KKs and the N-WFP an honourable place in the future Pakistan. On the announcement of 3 June Plan and Congress' acceptance of it, Frontier nationalists were caught in dilemma. By then it was too late for them to reach an amicable settlement with Jinnah and the ML. This resulted in the resumption of hostilities even after the creation of Pakistan, where they were dubbed as 'traitors' and 'enemies' of Pakistan and they had to face the wrath of the Pakistani state and its establishment. Moreover, after the 3 June Plan, like the Bengal the N-WFP also lost its importance to the Congress and they only paid a token protest on the 'imposition' of the referendum on the people of the N-WFP.

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[14]: F. Shaikh, *Community and Consensus in Islam: Muslim Representation in Colonial India, 1860-1947* (Cambridge, 1989); also see Peter Van Der Veer, *Religious Nationalism Hindus and Muslims in India* (California, 1994).

[15]: Sarah F. D. Ansari, *Sufi, Saints and State Power: The Pirs of Sind 1843-1947* (Cambridge, 1992).

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[16]: Joya Chatterji, *Bengal Divided Hindu communalism and partition, 1932-1947* (Cambridge, 1994).

Y. Samad has focused on the political and constitutional history with the pre-eminent issues of nationalism and ethnicity. His work is an interesting interface between politics of parties and personalities. By assuming the regional identities as 'given', he sees Muslim nationalism, giving in to powerful centrifugal forces. Moreover, he accepts regionalist sentiments as permeating realities much to the chagrin of the India-wide 'nationalists' like Jinnah and his successors in the new state.[17] T. Hashmi's research posits the Pakistan movement as a culmination point for Muslim identity among the Bengali peasantry. He perceives Pakistan as an emancipatory ideal for the Muslim peasants in Bengal.[18]

Inspite being a Muslim majority province, the N-WFP had very little in common with other Muslim majority provinces of British India. Unlike the significant and influential number of Hindus in Sind, the Punjab and Bengal, they were in a negligible position in the FP. Politics evolved around Pashtoon ethnicity and its particular type of nationalism, always in contrast with the League's ideology and party programme. The majority of the N-WFP Muslims supported the INC in the all-India context, thus providing the Congress with a solid base in a pre-dominantly Muslim majority province. Moreover, the majority of the Frontier Ulema were anti-establishment, in contrast with the pro-government clergy in Sind and the Punjab. Therefore, communalism had very little appeal in the region as compared to the other Muslim majority provinces in the sub-continent. However, the literature on communalism of other regions of India has little to tell us about the province's pattern of political development for there was no communalism in the province. Politics in the N-WFP developed perforce within the context of politics in the sub-continent. But its regional specificity, as pointed out in this thesis, made it uniquely different from other regions. The thesis also attempts to provide another regional study of a particular group of Muslims and the relationship between 'secular nationalism' and of 'Muslim nationalism' in their politics. It shows how in this unique province ethnic, religious and political identities intersected and reinforced each other.

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[17]: Y. Samad, *A Nation in Turmoil Nationalism and Ethnicity in Pakistan, 1937-1958* (Delhi, 1995).

[18]: Taj-ul-Islam Hashmi, *Pakistan as a Peasant Utopia. Class Politics and Decolonization of East Bengal* (Denver, 1992).

The politics of pre-independence India were dominated by Indian nationalism on the one hand and Muslim particularism on the other. This Muslim particularism developed rather late, from about 1936, and it developed unevenly in different parts of the country. Muslim aspirations were differently conceived and expressed depending upon local traditions and circumstances. In the Muslim minority provinces 'Muslim nationalism' was more popular with Muslims than it was in Muslim majority provinces. The strength of communal sentiment, which Muslim nationalism harnessed to its political purposes, co-related strongly but immensely with the relative strength of the Muslim populations in the provinces of British India. The conflict between Indian nationalism and Muslim nationalism inevitably divided the Muslims between two camps: 'nationalist' Muslims associated with the Congress and Muslim 'nationalists' associated with the ML. For the nationalist Muslims being Muslim, i.e. adherence to the religion of Islam, did not entail opposition to Indian nationalism or seeking a separate destiny for the Muslims of the sub-continent, which to most of them seemed utterly impracticable and indeed not in the best interest of the Muslims themselves.

It was, ironically, perhaps only in the N-WFP that the Muslims could have aspired to sovereign independence. But in the climate of communal[19] politics of the time, with the dominant doctrine of self-determination for nationalities and the divisive policies of the raj, Muslim nationalism emerged as a powerful force in the sub-continent and led eventually to the partition of India.

While in the rest of North India, 'religious nationalism' acquired some appeal from the early twentieth century, in the N-WFP there was never any real fear of 'Islam in danger'. This was one of the main reasons that the League, a self-proclaimed representative of Indian Muslims, initially failed to establish itself in the FP. Consequently, when in the 1940s, it wished to gain decisive power over areas that would soon constitute Pakistan, it had to revise its strategy in the N-WFP. The fact that religion was rarely used for communal purposes (except briefly in 1946-47) has led some scholars to accord primacy to Pashtoon 'ethnicity' over Islam in the making of Frontier politics. While it is certainly true that Muslim sectarianism never had much appeal, this does not imply that the Pashtoons treated Islam as a marginal factor in their lives. Deeply religious and steeped in the history of Islamic lore, the Pashtoons viewed Islam as one of the principal constituents of their Pashtoon self definition. To them a 'Muslim' way of life and Pashtoon culture were not opposites but complementary attributes of their identity. This is evident from the emergence and rise to popularity of the KK movement. The name KKs (Servants of God) itself denotes the strong linkage of the Pashtoons with Islam. Pashtoons were urged to join the movement to purge society of anti-Islamic 'evils'. The presence of a large number of Ulema in the KK movement was another sign of the significance of religion, creating a sense of belonging to a larger Muslim *Ummah* (Community). Abdul Ghaffar Khan, himself a devout Muslim, used Islamic symbols of fraternity, love and brotherhood in creating Pashtoon resistance to British rule and in forging links with all-India nationalism. Himself well-versed in the essential knowledge of the Quran and *Hadith*, and always conscious of the glorious past of Islam, he urged Pashtoons to follow the teachings of the Holy Prophet and to observe non-violence. When the ML and the pro-establishment *maulvis* accused the KKs of friendship with the 'Hindu Congress', they were reminded of early Islam, of the time when the Holy Prophet himself made certain alliances with Jews against the enemies of Islam.

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[19] : Communalism refers to the coming together of people as a group of a common religious affiliation where in members consciously choose to define themselves politically as well as religiously in terms of that affiliation and identify with the interest of the group. Usually such a unity crystallises, subsuming vast differences within the group, only at certain moments when it opposes a perceived interference into its affairs by another community or by the state.

Therefore, religion on the Frontier was combined with a specific Pashtoon identity and this mix gave rise to regionally specific political movements against the raj. The KK movement was a continuation of the religio-political movements of 1897 and the 1910s, but with a difference in strategy. All these movements had aimed at getting rid of imperialism but, while earlier movements advocated armed resistance, the KKs adopted non-violence as their creed. However, despite being Muslim, the separate identity of the Pashtoons and their love of what they saw as their traditional society distinguished them from other Indian Muslims.

Their sense of 'Pashtoonism' drew on currents which emerged in the late 16th and 17th century, when Pashtoons viewed the Afghan-Mughal conflict as *their* struggle against usurpers from Hindustan and Delhi. It expressed itself in the poetry of Khushal

Khan Khattak, the greatest Pashto poet of the late 17th century, whose works remained in oral culture and were now widely disseminated with the coming of print culture. Khushal voiced the idea of a separate Pashtoon State, *Pashtoonkhwa*, stretching from Qandahar to Attock. Abdul Ghaffar Khan combined Islamic values of hatred against slavery with Pashtoon values of freedom, and utilised its combination on the basis of his own freedom struggle. The majority of the Pashtoon had no objection to the KKs' affiliation with Congress because it was ready to help them achieve their regional objectives and encouraged notions of *Pashtoonwali*.[20] The League, on the other hand, advocated the Pashtoons' incorporation into a larger Muslim community of Hindustan (and later Pakistan), and was not ready to accept their separate identity. This was one of the main reasons for a lack of support for the League in the Pashtoon-dominated areas of the N-WFP, and its popularity in Hazara and some urban centres of the province where the non-Pashtoons predominated. However, in late 1946 the League succeeded, to an extent, in spreading its communal ideology within the N-WFP, largely as a result of the communal violence in north India, especially Bihar. The Pashtoons were asked to save Islam from complete annihilation in the rest of India, and told that Islam was in crisis. For the time being a small but influential section of Pashtoons gave secondary importance to their Pashtoonism, and their sense of belonging to a wider community of Muslims in India temporarily predominated.

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[20]: The way of life of the Pashtoons in 'traditional' Pashtoon society is to a large extent controlled by an unwritten code called 'Pashtoonwali'. They are bound by honour to respect it and to abide by its rules, otherwise they would bring disgrace not only to themselves but also to their families. Though Pashtoonwali is very vast in its meaning and interpretations, the main characteristics of this code requires a Pashtoon to offer *Melmastia* (hospitality), to grant *Nanawatey* (asylum) irrespective of their caste and creed even to his deadly enemies, and to take *Badal* (revenge) to wipe out insult to insult. One of the other pillars in Pashtoon society is its reliance upon the *Jirga* (assembly of elders). In the past, the Jirga had to perform the three-fold duties of police, magistracy and justice. It maintained peace and order during disorders and anarchy. The Jirga was the authority for settling disputes and dispensing justice. Cases of breach of contracts, disputes about tribal boundaries, distribution of water, claims to lands and pastures, and infringement of customs, grant or inheritance were all within the jurisdiction of Jirga. Its members were elected by the whole body of the Pashtoon tribe, mostly from among the *Speen Geerey* (grey beards) — the persons of experience, knowledge and character. No records were kept but the memories of the Pashtoon elders served as the record office. Though in settled districts of the N-WFP, after the annexation of the province by the British, the whole tribal system was replaced by ordinary law, it is still in practice in the tribal areas and has not lost its force and validity.

One of the most remarkable features of the Frontier politics in our period of study was the adoption of non-violence by the KKs as their creed and their strict adherence to it. Until the early 1920s Pashtoon society, like many other tribal societies, was notorious for factionalism and violence, and the Pashtoons prided themselves on military glory and weaponry. Traditionally, the *parajamba* (taking sides) led many Pashtoons to change allegiances without giving heed to the ideologies and party programmes of particular political organisations. *Tarburwali*, (enmity between first cousins) has always been regarded by scholars as the main reason for changing loyalties among the Pashtoons. The KK movement represented a complete change from the earlier armed movements to a non-violent struggle against imperialism. Besides getting rid of the foreign yoke, the Pashtoon reformers' main emphasis was on the prevention of violence and blood-feuds, particularly over property disputes among the *tarburs*. Its volunteers were taught not to resort to violence; they bore no arms and carried no weapons. Inspiration was provided by giving examples from the lives of the Holy Prophet and other prophets, including Jesus Christ, of how they faced humiliation and oppression boldly by non-violent means.[21] The accounts of the lives of the holy men had a great impact on the collective mentality of the Pashtoons. Many biographers of Abdul Ghaffar Khan, including Tendulkar, Desai, Easwaran, Lalpuri, Korejo and Zutshi, have attributed his non-violence to the influence of Gandhi. They argue that Abdul Ghaffar Khan's non-violence was a variant of the doctrine preached by Gandhi at the all-India level.[22] But the emphasis of these authors seems misplaced. 'Satyagraha' was a concept unknown to the Pashtoons. Rather, Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his comrades developed their own non-violent ideology on the basis of Islamic and Christian teachings and related it to the circumstances of their province. They were able to spread the message of non-violence so effectively largely because it addressed the problematic issue of blood feuds.

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[21] : 'Congress and Muslims', Speech of Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Mongri Maidan, Calcutta, 4 April 1931, S. No. 1, Tendulkar Papers, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi, p. 6.

In 1940 a section of Indian Muslims, politically represented by the AIML, demanded Pakistan — a separate homeland for themselves. They demanded the division of India on the basis of two 'nations', Muslims and Hindus. The supporters of the partition claimed that Muslims had a different historical heritage, different heroes and different collective memories from those of Hindus. To them the only thing keeping India together was British rule. 'The moment it ceases, India will revert to its old normal component parts'.[23] In the demand for Pakistan, some saw protection for religion and safeguards for the Muslim minorities in the Hindu-majority provinces. Some saw in it the protection and advancement of the interests of the Muslim aristocracy, the landlords and the middle classes, whom the ML represented, and 'who look for their class aggrandisement and want a larger share than they have hitherto had in the administration of the country and the capitalistic ventures of the future'. The Muslim capitalists, it was argued, were unable to compete with their Hindu counterparts. Instead, by misusing religion, they intended to capture governmental machinery to further their own interests and to 'keep the masses in their present state of poverty and subjection'.[24] Moreover, the chances of success for the Muslim middle class in India were meagre, as they had entered the world of capitalism much later than the Hindus. But if Pakistan were achieved, 'they would have an opportunity of investing their money, of dominating commerce, the professions, and government service, and of raising the tariffs to foster their own industries'.[25]

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[22]: For more details see D. G. Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan* (Bombay, 1967); M. Desai, *Two Servants of God* (Delhi, 1935); E. Easwaran *A Man to Match His Mountains* (California, 1985); G. Lalpuri, *Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan* (Delhi, 1985); M. S. Korejo, *The Frontier Gandhi His Place in History* (Karachi, 1994); G. L. Zutshi, *Frontier Gandhi* (Delhi, 1970); and, R. S. Nagina, *Gandhiji Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan Ki Nazar Men* (Delhi, nd).

[23]: Sardar Aurangzeb Khan, 'A Reply to Hindu Critics', *Progress*, Bombay, 28 April 1940.

In the N-WFP the demand for Pakistan aroused mixed feelings. The provincial Congress regarded the League's demand for partition during the war years as only the perpetuation of British rule in India. The ML was accused of creating communalism and hatred between the communities inhabiting the sub-continent. The League sympathisers, however, were in no way ready to accept Hindu majority rule under a Hindu raj. During its tenure of office (May 1943-March 1945), the ML ministry under Aurangzeb tried its best to avoid any discussion of Pakistan. In the elections of 1946 the League approached the Muslims of the N-WFP on the issue of Pakistan but failed to win the required support. During 1946 the weak organisation of the Frontier ML was transformed, so that it became a formidable rival of the provincial Congress. The majority of the N-WFP Muslims were against the role of the big Khans, Khan Bahadurs and other title-holders in the League. The provincial organisation was 'overhauled' and the intelligentsia was given a prominent role in it. Moreover, the Ulema were also approached in the name of Pakistan, a separate homeland for the Muslims. Pakistan, it was claimed, offered the only peaceful solution to the Hindu-Muslim problem. The riots in northern India proved a blessing in disguise for the PML. Accounts of the Hindu atrocities against Muslims were related and the Frontier Muslims were appealed to for help on behalf of their Muslim brethren in other parts of the sub-continent. The communal riots in India temporarily changed the outlook of a section of the Frontier Muslims. The League exploited this situation and succeeded in convincing Mountbatten, the Viceroy of India, during his Frontier visit that the Frontier Muslims wanted to join Pakistan. The Frontier Congress leaders could not cope with the drastic situation elsewhere in India. The League's success in the Frontier referendum was regarded as an expression of the wish of the inhabitants of the N-WFP to join Pakistan. The acceptance of the partition plan, and, in particular, the agreement to the holding of referendum in the N-WFP on the issue of Hindustan versus Pakistan was a real set-back to Frontier Congressmen, who were not prepared to face the new circumstances, which they regarded as a surrender to the forces of communalism. Despite the strong opposition of the nationalists and other anti-League forces, the ambiguous nature of the demand of Pakistan became a reality for them on 14 August 1947.

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[24]: Shaukatullah Ansari, *Pakistan: The Problem of India* (Lahore, 1945), p. 61.
[25]: *ibid.*

The present study differs from the previous research both in terms of source material and the central argument it seeks to develop. Apart from utilising a number of English language sources[26] the present research is also a result of an extensive survey of Pashto and Urdu sources. The use of Pashto material as well as recently de-classified material from Peshawar archives adds a unique dimension to its perspective. In particular, this study utilises the records of the Special Branch of Police, now housed in the provincial archives, Peshawar. The relevant files of the Special Branch, more than 1200 in number, mainly consist of the CID Diaries and confidential secret reports submitted by intelligence officials to the higher authorities. These reports were aimed at providing information on contemporary political events.

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[26]: The AICC Papers in the NMML in New Delhi, now available to scholars for consultation, provide a fairly complete record of the N-WFP provincial Congress affairs and their relationship to the central organisation. The most important records pertaining to the Frontier politics in the IOLR are the Private Papers in the European Mss. EUR. Collection. These consist of the reports, diaries and letters written by British officials serving in various capacities in the Indian sub-continent.

In addition, an extensive use has been made of various editions of the *Pakhtun*, the official organ of the KKs, not available at any one archival centre. About two hundred issues of *Pakhtun* have been collected with great pains, which were mostly destroyed during the police raids. Personal memoirs and diaries, published and unpublished, are another important source. In the latter case, generally the people were reluctant to give their diaries to some one unfamiliar to them: familial connections and personal contacts were used to seek their co-operation. The result was that the author was able to utilise a large number of these memoirs in the present research, some times providing very rare information on political developments, such as the KK-INC merger and its impact on the provincial politics, the war time politics of the FML, the formation and working of the Muslim League Ministry under Sardar Aurangzeb and numerous hitherto unknown details of the events leading to the eventual partition of India. Moreover, a large number of interviews conducted by the author are also used here. These interviews taken about half a century after the original events took place are a rich source on the contemporary Frontier politics. They have been used with great care: they have never been used alone to reconstruct the course of events, and their testimony has always been corroborated with official information and other written sources. The author found no difficulty in interviewing the stalwarts of the Frontier politics, especially the hitherto neglected rank and file of various political organisations. Except a former civil servant, no one objected to the use of a tape recorder and thus interviews were duly recorded. However, it was difficult to interview the women KKs. Strict observance of 'purdah' in the Pashtoon society forbade them to talk with an outsider. Written questions were then provided to them with a request to furnish the relevant information which they did accordingly. Being well-aware of both Pashto and Urdu languages, no need was felt to acquire local interpreters and translators.

The use of Pashto sources and the oral testimonies provides very rare details of some of the important social and political events of the province, including details of the *Anjuman-i-Islah-ul-Afaghana*, particularly its educational activities. Abdul Akbar Khan, one of its founding members in his unpublished autobiography (presently under the possession of the author) gives details on the background of the establishment of the *Anjuman*, not available anywhere else. The social and educational backwardness of the Pashtoons, according to Akbar, prompted Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his associates to form the *Anjuman*. Under the auspices of the *Anjuman*, *Azad Madrassas* were revived, mostly in Peshawar Valley. They proved to be popular institutions. Their popularity was reflected in the ever increasing number of students. However, due to paucity of funds and lack of qualified teachers the *Anjuman* members abandoned the project after a few years.

The indigenous sources also provide detailed information on the emergence of the KK movement, its development in various phases and affiliation with the Congress. The Pashtoon patriots were unhappy over the development of an 'ugly' situation in the neighbouring Afghanistan. Amanullah Khan, the young anti-British revolutionary king of Afghanistan was ousted from power and the country was in turmoil. The Pashtoon intellectuals saw the secret hand of British intelligence in his ouster from power. They felt that one important reason that the British succeeded in ousting Amanullah was the relative backwardness of the Afghan people who failed to respond to the situation correctly. They decided to launch an organised movement towards the 'uplift' of the Pashtoon community. Hence the formation of the KK organisation in 1929. In 1930, the Pashtoon national movement came into prominence. After the Qissa Khwani bazaar massacre on 23 April, the organisation was banned and the leaders incarcerated. Under the given circumstances, Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his associates decided to affiliate the KKs with an all-India organisation. Initially, they turned towards the AIML. But keeping in view the anti-British character of the KKs, the ML refused to support them. The INC readily gave their full support to the Pashtoons against the colonialists. Abdul Ghaffar Khan affiliated his organisation with the Congress, and was accused by his opponents and some of his former colleagues of causing harm to the Pashtoon cause. These and other details on the factionalism in the KK organisation, and, on its association with the 'Hindu dominant Congress' were available no where else but in some unpublished Pashto sources and in the oral testimonies of the KKs.

A special effort has also been made to explore Frontier politics during these formative years with reference to gender and peasant conditions. Interestingly, Pashto sources, both written and verbal, provides an extensive amount of evidence on these two hitherto un-researched topics. The KK movement, in view of the major female representation in its cadres, provided a unique opportunity to expand the political community of this otherwise 'male-dominated' Pashtoon society. To a large extent the motivation to undertake this inquiry was rooted in the quest for female participation in the provincial politics. While earlier studies on the Frontier politics are silent over the participation of women in the KK movement, the present work covers this neglected area. Equally, while one finds a growing number of valuable books and articles in peasant studies on regions like Bihar, the UP and Bengal, there has been a total neglect of such studies on the N-WFP. At least one aspect of the KK movement was its success in mobilising peasants against their exploiters — the big Khans and their British patrons. The ideology of liberation and emphasis on Pashtoon particularism fuelled the Khidmatgar movement, bringing it directly into conflict with colonial rule, big Khans and the urban bourgeoisie. Pashto sources, both written and unwritten, provides a fairly detailed account of the agrarian unrest in the province during the first Congress ministry. In particular, details on Ghalla Dher movement which had a telling effect on the agrarian relations in the province are taken from the oral testimony of the participants of the movement. These participants include ring leaders like Mian Akbar Shah whose account is supported by the published Pashto account of Warris Khan, another active contributor to the movement.

In October 1946 J. Nehru visited the tribal area of the N-WFP. He faced hostile demonstrations. The Congress accused the British government of plotting these demonstrations against Nehru, which were, of course, time and again refuted by the government. During a field trip to India and Pakistan in 1994-95, apart from taking interviews in the settled districts of the FP, the author also visited the tribal territory including Miranshah, Razmak, Wana, Jandola, Tank, Khyber Agency and Malakand, all those places visited by Nehru in 1946. Some of those tribesmen who took active part in the anti-Nehru demonstrations were interviewed: it was revealed about fifty years after the actual event took place that the Political Department of the Government of India master-minded these hostile demonstrations to convince Nehru and through him the Congress high command of the waning influence of the Khan Brothers and to prove that the tribesmen were supporting Pakistan. In April 1947

Abdul Ghani Khan, elder son of Abdul Ghaffar Khan, formed the militant *Zalmai Pakhtun*. The main reason behind its formation was to counter the violent activities of the ML National Guards, to protect the un-armed KKs and to prevent the violent outbursts of communal violence in the N-WFP. No detailed information on the organisation, except Ghani Khan's interviews and few other relevant Pashto documents, utilised in the present research, are available.

Before concluding discussion on the utilisation of Pashto and some other hitherto un-used sources, a mention must be made of the non-violence of Abdul Ghaffar Khan and its relevance to the one advocated by Gandhi on an all-India level. The biographers of Abdul Ghaffar Khan, as discussed earlier, regarded Abdul Ghaffar Khan's non-violence as a variant of the doctrine preached by Gandhi. The use of Pashto sources, especially the oral evidence reveals that it has nothing to do with the Gandhian non-violence. Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the KKs developed their own non-violent ideology, keeping in view the peculiar character of Pashtoon society. This non-violence was primarily based on the basis of Islamic teaching and was related to the Pashtoon's particularism, their 'distinct' ethnicity and religion. The Pashtoons were urged to abandon their blood-feuds, prevalent in their society. The KKs adopted the non-violence as a creed. An interesting situation developed in 1939 when differences emerged between Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the Congress high command, including Gandhi, on the issue of non-violence. On the outbreak of the war, Congress was thinking in terms of offering conditional support to the British during the war period. Abdul Ghaffar Khan, a firm believer of non-violence, however, was against participation in the British war efforts. He urged Congress not to co-operate with the British government and to declare their policy clear on the said issue but in vain. As a protest, he resigned from the membership of CWC. He rejoined it after the adoption of Ramgarh Resolution by the Congress, thus demonstrating that he was a man of strict principles and not a blind follower of Gandhi. While discussing the last phase of the Frontier politics before partition, some authors give priority to religion on Pashtoon ethnicity. According to them, religion prompted the Pashtoons to give up their sense of belonging to a separate community and instead gave priority to Islam which was said to be in danger. However, a careful study of the relevant Pashto sources and the oral testimonies reveals that this shifting of loyalties in late 1946 and early 1947 seems to be a transitory phenomenon. After the creation of Pakistan, alarmed at the 'anti-Pashtoon' measures of the then Pakistani authorities, particularly their mishandling of the KK organisation, the Congress deserters and Pashtoon patriots rejoined the nationalists.

There has been a dearth of serious historical writing on the N-WFP, and there are significant inadequacies and limitations in the little research that has been done on the area. One of the main reasons for this been the failure of scholars to consult sources in Pashto and Urdu, and sometimes their lack of access to the N-WFP Provincial Archives, Peshawar, and the India Office Records and Library, London.

Among the more important studies on the Frontier politics available in English include: S. A. Rittenberg *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Pakhtuns, The Independence Movement in India's North-West Frontier Province, 1901-1947*; E. Jansson *India, Pakistan or Pakhtunistan*; A. K. Gupta's, *North-West Frontier Province Legislature and Freedom Struggle 1932-1947*; and, M. Banerjee's recently submitted D. Phil thesis entitled 'A Study of the Khudai Khidmatgar movement 1930-1947 N.W.F.P., British India' (University of Oxford, 1994). In Pashto and Urdu there are a few studies including Abdul Wali Khan's *Bacha Khan Au Khudai Khidmatgari*; Warris Khan, *Da Azadi Tehreek*; Abdul Khaliq Khaleeq, *Da Azadi Jang*; Ahmad, *Khudai Khidmatgar Tehreek*; Farigh Bokhari, *Bacha Khan*; and, A. B. Yusufi, *Sarhad Aur Jaddo Jehad Azadi*. On the development of the ML in the provinces eventually making Pakistan Ian Talbot's, *Provincial Politics And The Pakistan Movement The Growth of The Muslim League in North-West and North-East India 1937-47* remains a major work. My own work, *Muslim League in N.W.F.P.* deals with its growth in the province since 1912 to 1947.

Among these studies, Rittenberg's pioneering work remains perhaps the most important and comprehensive of its kind. He has taken Pashtoon ethnicity as the defining constituent of political consciousness and constructed his account of provincial politics in the pre-partition era by utilising a wide variety of archives, in addition to interviews and press reports. Rittenberg has emphasised the traditional divisions in the Pashtoon society, operative in the formation and reformation of alliances, which also resulted in greater political mobilisation. He concentrates on two crucial periods in the region's history: 1929-32 and 1945-47. The first period saw the emergence and popularity of the KKs and their affiliation with the INC, while the second witnessed the shifting of loyalties. Although acknowledging the role of class factors, he basically sees party politics intertwined with inter-sectional differences among the Khans — the landing Pashtoon elite. In this scenario, Rittenberg, is led by the Swat model formulated by Frederick Barth in his classic study of the Swat, essentially an anthropological account of the Pashtoon society of the time.[27] Primarily there were two difficulties with Barth. Theoretically, he failed to take into account the developmental factors, particularly the increasing role of the Pakistani state in the political affairs of Swat leading ultimately to its demise as an independent princely state. And secondly, Barth is not on a solid ground when he works at the micro-level of the society and draws conclusions at the macro-level of political system and elite politics in the state. Rittenberg might have done well to study and analyse the Frontier politics on its own. In fact, Swat, then a monarchy, was politically and administratively different from the rest of the province. No wonder, Rittenberg failed to understand certain significant aspects of Pashtoon ethnicity. For instance, he concludes that the clergy in Pashtoon society is mainly non-Pashtoon; while the fact is that majority of the Ulema and the maulvis are Pashtoons. In addition, he was unable to consult material which has since become available in the Peshawar archives. As argued throughout this thesis, Pashtoon ethnicity is the key to understanding Pashtoon political consciousness. It also expressed itself through complex political processes operating in the context of all-India politics and the colonial framework. It is this complex interaction between the trajectories of Pashtoon ethnicity, further compounded by ideological and sectional factors, and the colonial order which carries this study beyond Rittenberg's findings.

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[27] : Frederick Bath, *Political Leadership Among Swat Pathans* (London, 1959).

Like Rittenberg, Jansson also gives importance to the traditional factionalism of Pashtoon society. However, he differs from the former on various points: for instance he denies there was a 'massive' change in the Frontier politics during the last two years of the raj, as Rittenberg supposed. Instead, Jansson seeks to trace the origins of the shifts in the social, economic and cultural conditions prevalent in the Pashtoon society, which determined the modes of political developments in the N-WFP. He identifies various key groups in the Frontier, who in pursuit of their own sectional interests supported the PML. For his source material, besides relying on Rittenberg, Jansson has consulted the record of the AIML. However, he was unable to locate either the source material on the provincial Congress or documents now available in the provincial archives, Peshawar. He has also depended on some interviews but remained sceptical of their historical significance 'since human memory is notoriously unreliable and selective, such oral evidence, given more than thirty years after the events it concerns, can be used only with the utmost care'.[28] While agreeing with Jansson that oral testimonies be used with great care, the significance and historical value of the oral record should not be undermined, especially in societies like the N-WFP where there is very little written record available on politics, the main reason being lack of education in the N-WFP. Most of the written record presented the official view of the events, which needed more care and thorough investigation.

Parallel to these works, Gupta has discussed the geo-political importance of the N-WFP with a particular reference to the British policies in the region. The British Frontier policies, according to Gupta, were dominated exclusively by 'Russo-phobia' — the fear of the Imperial Russia during the late 19th and early 20th century, especially after the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. These strategic considerations compelled the British Indian government to form the N-WFP in 1901. After giving a brief account of the administrative set-up of the new province, Gupta also elaborates on the ethnic composition of the Frontier, concentrating on its dominant group the Pashtoons. However, Gupta tends to ignore the powerful and often ambiguous relationship between politics, society and ideology. Part of the problem is that he is not able to consult material available in IOLR and the N-WFP Provincial Archives,

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[28] : E. Jansson, *India, Pakistan or Pakhtunistan*, p. 22.

Peshawar. Gupta has extensively used the Provincial Legislative Assembly Debates and the personal papers of J. Nehru and R. Prasad thus confining himself only to the legislative history of the N-WFP.[29] His emphasis on legislative debates lead him to concentrate more on the legislative developments ignoring some other important issues around him not covered by the Debates i.e., the Khilafat, Hijrat and other pan-Islamic movements in the N-WFP. Moreover, due to his bias towards the Congress, he give very little space to the PML, its ideology, policies and programmes in the FP, thus lacking objectivity at times.

Banerjee's recent study of the KK essentially is an anthropological study and is largely based on interview material. She, like Gupta, is of the opinion that it was the constant threat of the Russian expansion that compelled the British to treat the FP differently. Besides discussing the emergence of the KKs, Banerjee has analysed the factors which successfully drew a 'segmentary' society into nationalist and state politics. She concentrates on the nationalist Pashtoons who modified their traditional ideas and adopted new methods to counter British rule. Banerjee has emphasised the traditional institutions and political structures within the Pashtoon society, which encouraged the Pashtoons to join the anti-colonial forces. Given the anthropological approach, Banerjee does not pretend to explain the historical and political processes at work in Pashtoon society. Also, she is handicapped by a lack of knowledge of Pashto, leading to errors of judgement at various points. For example, she concludes that the Ulema in the FP were the 'supporters of British interests'. Interestingly, unlike the other Muslim-majority provinces, the majority of the Frontier Ulema were anti-British and were always at the forefront of movements aimed at getting rid of British imperialism. A large number of Ulema joined the KK movement and were its members. Maulana Mohammad Israel, Maulana Ghulam Rasul and Mian Abdullah Shah Mazara were few among many others KK stalwarts who suffered and faced the British atrocities during the civil disobedience movement. In addition, Banerjee does not quite follow the flow of events as they unfolded at various stages. She misses on important developments and at times when she does succeed in identifying them in her narrative, she fails to put them in a proper historical and chronological sequence. Most glaring instance is her argument regarding the formation of a Muslim League government in the N-WFP. As she put it, the League government was formed 'for a brief period after the first elections in 1935, but this was largely due to Sir Abdul Qayyum whose early death in the same year reverted the Muslim League to its earlier ineffectuality'.[30]

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[29] : A. K. Gupta, *North-West Frontier Province Legislature and Freedom Struggle 1932-1947* (Delhi, 1988).

The fact of the matter is that under the Government of India Act, 1935, the first general elections for the provincial legislatures were held during 1936-37. In the N-WFP, Congress became the largest majority single party by securing 19 seats out of 50. But pending the decision of Congress high command it refused to form government. It was only then that the Governor N-WFP invited Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum to form government, largely supported by the Independents and Hindu-Sikh Nationalist Party. Sir Abdul Qaiyum form his government on 1 April 1937 and was ousted from power by Khan Sahib in September 1937 by moving a vote of no-confidence against him. He succeeded him as the first Congress Chief Minister of the N-WFP on 7 September 1937. Sir Abdul Qaiyum died on 4 December 1937 and not in 1935 as reported by Banerjee. He was a non-Leaguer. Despite his efforts, Jinnah failed even to nominate a single member from the FP to contest the provincial elections on League ticket. Moreover, Banerjee is not right in describing the Hijrat Movement as one that was to 'the Independent Tribal Area'. She also mentions a second Hijrat in 1926 when Abdul Ghaffar Khan migrated to Afghanistan. As is evident from the details of Khilafat and Hijrat movements, the Indian Ulema, after proclaiming India as 'Dar-ul-Harb', advised the Indian Muslims, not only Pashtoons, to migrate to 'Dar-ul-Islam' — neighbouring Afghanistan whose Amir Amanullah Khan promised to help them against the colonialists. There is no second Hijrat to Afghanistan in the annals of the Frontier history. Probably she has confused it with Abdul Ghaffar Khan's pilgrimage to Holy Places in 1926. Banerjee has cited 'Governor Reports' of 1929-31. The N-WFP became a Governor's province like other Indian provinces in April 1932. Then she puts the dates of the Frontier referendum between 6 and 16 June 1947. The referendum was held from 6-17 July and the results were made public on 20 July 1947. These are some of the major difficulties with her account both in terms of her data and inferences drawn upon them.

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[30] : Mukulika Banerjee, 'A Study of the Khudai Khidmatgar movement 1930-1947 N.W.F.P., British India' (University of Oxford, 1994).

Talbot's *Provincial Politics and the Pakistan Movement* is a scholarly account of the provincial politics of the Muslim majority areas that formed the future Pakistan. He has analysed the reasons for the lack of ML support in the 'Pakistan areas'. After elaborating on the causes of League's success, he tries to concentrates on the issues that brought together various divergent ethnic communities like the Bengalis, Punjabis, Sindhis and the Pashtoons to struggle jointly from a common platform of the AIML to achieve Pakistan.[31] In a limited space, he provides a comparative study of Muslim politics in various major provinces and has successfully contributed how the pre-independence regional legacy retains a considerable importance in explaining the pattern of post-1947 developments. That explains, for instance, the lack of support for the KKs in non-Pashtoon areas, such as Hazara and the urban DIKhan.

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[31] : Ian Talbot, *Provincial Politics and the Pakistan Movement The Growth of the Muslim League in North-West and North-East India 1937-47* (Karachi, 1988).

Wali Khan's *Bacha Khan Au Khudai Khidmatgari* is a combination of the author's personal experiences of the KK movement, supported by the archival material in the IOLR. After discussing the strategic importance of the N-WFP, Wali Khan gives details of the emergence of the Pashtoon national movement. Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his associates, according to the author, were perturbed over the growing factionalism and blood-feuds among the Pashtoons. Moreover, they felt the British government had a vested interest in intentionally keeping the population of the N-WFP educationally backward and thus deny them constitutional reforms at par with other provinces of British India. The author gives details of the civil disobedience movement (1930-34) and of KK-Congress affiliation. He discusses in detail the working and performances of the Frontier Congress ministry, particularly its efforts to curtail the privileges of the nobility. Dr. Khan Sahib, the Frontier Premier successfully introduced and passed various legislation which, according to Khan, relieved the common man of undue burden. Khan accused British imperialism of creating 'communalism' in India which resulted in the Hindu-Muslim riots at various parts of the country. He sees the secret hand of the British in popularising the idea of a separate homeland for the Muslims, thus giving a boost to the ideology and party programme of AIML. After elaborating on various partition plans, Khan tends to conclude that Pakistan was a brain child of the British government. In this context, he cites certain 'secret documents' of the India Office. Moreover, during the war years, he 'reveals' collaboration between the Viceroy and the League leaders. He concludes his account by giving details of the final phase of the partition of India with a particular reference to the referendum and finally N-WFP's joining Pakistan.[32] However, the author wittingly or unwittingly overlooks certain important events of the Frontier politics. For instance, despite discussing the working of the first Frontier Congress ministry, he does not mention the Ghalla Dher peasant movement, when the KKs were against their own ministry. Moreover, during the last phase of the freedom movement, the KKs were 'abandoned' by the Congress high command. They were left alone to face the rapid developments taking place at the all-India level. There is no mention of the 'desertion' of the KKs by the Congress in Khan's work. Such omissions belittle the scholarly value of Khan's book.

Warris Khan's *Da Azadi Tehreek* is a comprehensive and insightful account of the Ghalla Dher peasant movement. Himself a staunch follower of the KK organisation, the author mentions various phases of the movement. Most of the land in Ghalla Dher belonged to the Nawab of Toru, an influential zamindar of District Mardan who was not content with the agreed share in the crops, and pressed for more all the time. Harassed and infuriated, the peasants, majority of whom were in the KK movement, were left with little choice but to defy the authority of Nawab. They started an organised agitation against the 'high-handedness' of the Nawab. The Nawab responded by threatening to evict them from his land with the help of local police. This marked the beginning of the Ghalla Dher movement. The peasants had the full support of the local Congress and the KKs. Dr. Khan Sahib, the Congress Premier who himself was in charge of Law and Order, on Nawab's request, took a strong action against the agitational peasants. No wonder, Khan Sahib was accused of protecting the landed aristocracy by using force against the tillers. The agitation lasted for few months and an amicable settlement was reached after interference of Congress high command. Warris, himself an activist in the Ghalla Dher kissan agitation, provides rare information on the development of the movement. Despite being a member of the KK, he boldly criticises the pro-Nawab steps of the Provincial Congress Ministry, who were opposed to the cause of the poor tillers, thus alienating a considerable number of the local KKs from the organisation.[33] Although the book deals mainly with the Ghalla Dher movement, it gives details of the organisation of the KK and the causes of its popularity in the rural areas. Though a useful addition to the peasant studies, particularly in the N-WFP, a considerable portion of the book has been given to the narration of family background and some other irrelevant details which affects seriously the scholarly value of the work.

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[32] : Abdul Wali Khan, *Bacha Khan Au Khudai Khidmatgari* (Peshawar, 1993).

Ahmad's *Khudai Khidmatgari Tehreek* is a first hand source on the KK movement. Being himself a member of the organisation, Ahmad has taken pains in providing the minutest details of how the movement spread in Peshawar Valley. Most important portion of the work is the detailed account of the civil disobedience movement (1930-34) and the harsh punishment meted out to the KKs. The volunteers bore all hardships with forbearance and courage; did not retaliate, even to the worst kind of humiliation they had to suffer.[34] The author, however, concentrates exclusively on the KK movement, and thus we do not learn much from him about other political forces and organisations in the province.

Yusufi's *Sarhad Aur Jaddo Jehad i Azadi* is a detailed account of the 20th century Muslim politics in the N-WFP. Yusufi dwelt upon the formation of the Frontier

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[33]: Warris Khan, *Da Azadi Tehreek* (Peshawar, 1988).
[34]: Ahmad, *Khudai KhidmatgarTehreek* (Peshawar, 1991).

Muslim League (1912) and regards it as the first serious foray of the Frontier Muslims in modern politics. The League, however, unlike its parent organisation at the all-India level, soon ran into conflict with the British government, providing a platform to the pan-Islamists in the province against the government. The result was that within a few years of its formation, the organisation was banned, the leaders either imprisoned or exiled. The most useful part of Yusufi's work is his detailed discussion of local politics. The urban social workers/politicians were always at the forefront of active politics. Being a political worker, Yusufi was directly involved in the Khilafat and Hijrat movements in the Frontier. He thus provided a useful account of both events. Yusufi also gives first hand information of the factionalism in Provincial Khilafat Committee leading to its division into two parts: one supporting the INC and the national movement and other following the lines of the Central Khilafat Committee and eventually merging into the Frontier ML in 1937. Yusufi also gives the details of constitutional developments in the N-WFP. He has a brief discussion of the provincial politics during early 1930s.[35] Being a staunch supporter of the ML, Yusufi has given very little credit to the Khan Brothers for the mass mobilisation in the Frontier politics and blamed them for their pro-Pashtoon 'biases'. Though a very useful account of the early Muslim politics in the N-WFP, the subjective approach of the author makes it a less credible source of analysis and interpretation of the period under review.

The argument of this thesis is that the specificity of Pashtoon identity, with its combination of religion and nationalism, is crucial for understanding the character of the KK movement and the political processes in the province. The shifting alliances that emerged during the final phase leading up to partition are to be accounted by the fact that the N-WFP was a part of the larger structure of British India and the pressures of north-Indian developments inevitably impinged, catastrophically in some respects, on the life of the province. This work should enhance our historical understanding of both the general historical processes in the sub-continent since the early 1920s along with the uniqueness of the N-WFP. In particular, it addresses the complex issues of emergent regional, ethnic, religious and national identities in India at a time of rapid political change, leading to the end of imperial rule. The formation of political communities in the twentieth century, issues of identity, evolution of different styles of leadership and the role of ideology are some of the most important themes of history of South Asia; and, it is to that history that this thesis seeks to make a contribution.

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[35] : A. B. Yusufi, *Sarhad Aur Jaddo Jehad i Azadi* (Karachi, 1989).

The order of chapters in this thesis is as follows: Chapter One introduces the province and describes its geo-political location, socio-economic structure and the local nature of Islam as these existed in the early twentieth century. Chapter Two examines the emergence of modern political formations and their relationship to social reforms. It analyses the rise of the KKs as a political force and seeks to explain their support for Congress. Chapter Three discusses the contest between various political groups and organisations for supremacy in the provincial assembly elections of 1937. Chapter Four focuses on the revival of ML in the N-WFP during the years 1937-39. It shows how the League's support was limited to elite groups and the pro-British Ulema in this period. Chapter Five deals with war time all-India politics and its repercussions on the Frontier. It assesses the reactions to the League's Pakistan Resolution. Chapter Six elucidates the rapid political changes occurring in the province and in the country as a whole during 1946. In this context it analyses the policies and programmes of the KK-Congress and the League. Chapter Seven discusses the circumstances leading to the creation of Pakistan and the last phase of the nationalist movement in the N-WFP.

As explained above, the theme undertaken in this study is of a broad political movement which was able to contain the multiple identities of the N-WFP people as Pashtoons, Muslims and Indians. However, in 1946-47, this triangular edifice, for reasons very largely external to the N-WFP falls apart, leaving the one-time Indian Muslim nationalists in a 'Pakistan' which they did not want, and in which they lost power and became an alienated group. Such a major transformation has profound implications for our understanding of nationalism, communalism, and identities of nation, religion and ethnic grouping in South Asia.

CHAPTER ONE

N-WFP AND ITS SOCIETY

Geographical Features of the Province

The region designated by the colonial rulers of India as the North-West Frontier Province has always played a significant role in the making of Indian history owing to its crucial geo-political location. Once a corridor for countless invaders, this land of the Pashtoons or Pakhtuns (Pathans, which is the Hindustani rendering of Pashtoon) remained in imperial times a subject of special interest and importance for historians, travellers, politicians, military men and administrators. It is still a rich field of research for anthropologist, sociologists and other scholars. The N-WFP (as it will be referred to) is situated between the parallels of 31°.4′ and 36°.57′ north latitude and 69°.16′ and 74°.4′ east longitude. Its extreme length since its early colonial administrative demarcation is 408 miles, and its greatest breadth 279 miles, giving a total area of approximately 39,900 square miles.[36] On its north lies the Hindu Kush; to its south it is bounded by Baluchistan and the Dera Ghazi Khan district of the Punjab; Kashmir and Punjab are located to its east and on the west it is bordered by Afghanistan. The province has three main geographical divisions, namely: (1) the cis-Indus district of Hazara, (2) the comparatively narrow strip between the Indus and the hills constituting the settled districts of Peshawar, Kohat, Bannu and Dera Ismail Khan (henceforth D.I.Khan), and (3) the rugged mountainous region between these districts and the border with Afghanistan, known as the tribal belt. For administrative purposes the province was divided into five districts,[37] each under a Deputy Commissioner, and a trans-border tribal belt made up of five political agencies subject only to the control of the Chief Commissioner in his capacity as Agent to the Governor General, each administered by a Political Agent.

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[36]: *Census of India 1911 volume XIII, North-West Frontier Province* (Peshawar, 1912), pp. 5-7.

The physical features of the province present an extremely complex and varied picture. The province extends from the Sulaiman mountains and Gomal Pass in the south, to Chitral and the Pamirs in the north. It is shut off from the Pamirs by the Hindu Kush mountains (see map on p xxii).[38] The cis-Indus district of Hazara forms a wedge extending north-eastwards into the Himalayan Range. Its northern areas are hilly and its southern part open, leading to the fertile lands of the Punjab. The average rainfall is about 40 inches. It is bitterly cold in the winter and generally temperate in the summer. Of the other settled districts, the Valley of Peshawar is for the most part highly irrigated presenting in spring an extremely beautiful view of waving corn lands and smiling orchards framed by rugged mountains. Adjoining Peshawar Valley, and separated from it by the Jowaki hills, is Kohat, a rough hilly tract intersected by narrow valleys. Bannu plain lies to the south of Kohat. Around Bannu city these plains are irrigated from the Kurram river and possess considerable fertility. According to the *Census Report of 1921*, they 'appeared to travellers, wearied with the harsh desolation of Kohat hills, a very oasis in the desert'.[39] A vast area, in part green and in part barren, divides the Bannu from D.I.Khan. For the most part the plains of D.I.Khan form part of a clay desert possessing great natural fertility, which in years of heavy rains bears abundant grass and crops. In these districts summers are hot and the average rainfall is much lighter than in Hazara, i.e., about 11 inches in D.I.Khan and from 12 to 23 inches in other districts. From the early twentieth century the tribal territory has consisted of thickly timbered forests and fertile valleys, while in some valleys there has been a little cultivation. The hills in the tribal area are for the most part barren and treeless.

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[37]: Presently the Frontier districts are twenty-four. They include: Abbottabad, Bannu, Charssadda, Chitral, D.I.Khan, Dir, Hangu, Karak, Kohat, Kohistan, Mansehra, Mardan, Nowshera, Peshawar, Swabi and Swat.

[38]: *Census of India 1921 volume XIV, North-West Frontier Province* (Peshawar, 1922), pp. 7-9. Interestingly a popular tradition has compared the province with a palm and the extended fingers of a right hand. According to it, in the palm, at the root of the first finger is Peshawar — the capital, forty miles away to the east from the Attock bridge over the Indus river which flows, across the wrist. The thumb pointing north, leads to Malakand, Swat and Chitral; the index finger represents the direction over the Khyber Pass towards Kabul; the second finger leads to Kurram Agency via Kohat; the third via Bannu to Waziristan, and the fourth, further south, through Tank to Gomal Pass. The interstices are occupied by the Frontier tribesmen. *Report of the Indian Statutory Commission volume1: Survey* (London, 1930), p. 317.

The north-western hills of the N-WFP have some very important passes, serving for centuries as routes of invasions as well as trade links between Central Asia and the sub-continent. The Baroghil and Dorah passes lie in the northern zone of the Hindu Kush, the former leading into the Pamirs, and the latter into Afghanistan. Further south a route leads from Afghanistan via Kunar Valley into Bajaur, Swat and then Peshawar Valley. Still further south and beyond the Hindu Kush lies the famous Khyber Pass[40] leading into Afghanistan via Torkham. Piewar Kotal and Shutargardan passes in the south lead to Kabul and Ghazni. The Tochi and Gomal passes also lead to Afghanistan.

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[39] : *Census of India 1921, vol. XIV*, pp. 7-9.

[40] : Khyber Pass, the main route of communication between Afghanistan and the sub-continent is the most famous of all the passes of the N-WFP. It has been witness to the marches of Aryans, Persians, Greeks, Scythians, White Huns, Mongols, Muslims and many others. There are three routes through the Khyber Pass: the old caravan route for mules and camels; the fascinating zigzag road for vehicular traffic and the railway line completed in 1925.

Historical Background

The province has long seen settled civilisation, but as it is situated on a highway of conquest, it has been subject to vicissitudes of fortunes over a long time. It has been overrun again and again by successive invaders, beginning with the Aryans who penetrated through the northern hills more than four thousand years ago. Then came the Persians, when Darius I annexed Gandhara around 518 BC. From the sixth century BC to the fifth century AD, this area remained a hunting ground for many groups, ranging from the Greeks to the Mauryans, the Bactrian Greeks, Scythians, the Kushanas, the White Huns and the Guptas.[41] The first contacts of the Pashtoons[42] with the Muslims date back to the middle of the seventh century. By the tenth century an independent Turkish principality had been established by Alaptagin, with his capital at Ghazni. Subuktagin, a son-in-law and slave of Alaptagin, was the first Muslim king of Ghazni, who invaded the land of the Hindu Shahiya kings of Kabul and drove them 'down country'. After this the Frontier underwent a major transformation. The Muslim Turks, descendants of earlier invaders, and, a local ethnic group of Muslim Pashtoons emerged as a dominant group, replacing the erstwhile Hindu Shahis. Interestingly some tribes of the Pashtoons initially opposed the Ghazni forces, but ultimately became the supporters and allies of Mahmud, son of Subuktagin, and helped him win many battles in India and in Central Asia. The incoming Muslims intermingled and intermarried with local inhabitants who gradually and voluntarily accepted Islam. Throughout the medieval period until 1818 the province remained part of the Muslim empires of north India. The internecine wars between the Pashtoon tribes gave a chance for Ranjeet Singh, the Sikh ruler of the Punjab, to conquer the trans-Indus region in 1818 as far as D.I.Khan and Bannu. In 1834, after the defeat of the Pashtoons at Nowshera, the Sikhs occupied Peshawar. Their garrisons were stationed only in the plains, and they had to send out troops every time they needed to collect taxes and revenue from the Pashtoons.

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[41]: D. C. Obhrai, *The Evolution of North-West Frontier Province* (Peshawar, 1938, rep. 1983), (hereafter *The Evolution*), pp. 1-9; A. Qaiyum, *Gold and Guns on the Pathan Frontier* (Bombay, 1945), pp. 5-9.

[42]: There are various theories about the origin of the Pashtoons and their identity. According to some indigenous and some other observers like Khwaja Niamatullah, Hafiz Rahmat Khan, Afzal Khan Khattak, Qazi Ataullah, H. W. Bellew, Sir William Jones, O. Caroe, M. Elphinstone, Major Raverty and a host of others the Pashtoons are Semitic. According to another school of historians like Abdul Haye Habibi, Bahadur Shah Zafar, Ahmad Ali Kohzad, Abdul Ghani Khan, the Pashtoons are Aryans who migrated from Central Asia and settled in the plains and hills of eastern and southern Afghanistan and north-western regions of Pakistan. For more details see Afzal Khan Khattak, *Tarikh Murrassa* (Peshawar, nd); Bahadur Shah Zafar, *Pashtane Da Tarikh Pa Ranha Key* (Peshawar, nd); Qazi Ataullah, *Da Pakhtano Tarikh* (Peshawar, nd); Abdul Ghani Khan, *The Pathans* (Peshawar, 1958) and Ahmad Ali Kohzad, *Tarikh i Afghanistan* (Kabul, nd).

Finally, in 1849, after the defeat of the Sikhs and the annexation of the Punjab, the North-West Frontier districts came under the British East India Company. The British divided the Frontier into two parts for governmental purposes. The plains were organised as the settled districts with a regular administration, and the mountainous region was considered as the independent tribal belt; occasionally indirect control over it was exercised by using economic sanctions and the despatch of troops to enforce imperialist policies there. The region remained part of the Punjab till 1901, when Lord Curzon, the Viceroy of India, separated the five settled districts of Hazara, Peshawar, Kohat, Bannu and D.I.Khan, joining them to the five agencies of Malakand, Khyber, Kurram, North Waziristan and South Waziristan, and thus forming a separate province: the North-West Frontier Province of India. The formal inauguration of the new province on 26 April 1902 provided an occasion for the Viceroy to hold a big *Durbar* of three thousand dignitaries in Shahi Bagh, Peshawar. Curzon hoped that the creation of the new province would lead to the 'peace and tranquillity and contentment of the Frontier'. The Viceroy added that its direct control by the government would be advantageous both to the government of India and the Frontier people. According to him the system of rule would become efficient and service would be more quickly rewarded and merit would be 'better known'.[43] He assured the audience that he would be watching the administration of the new province with care and fondness and would see to it that local patriotism was 'jealously guarded', and that the new province should prove itself 'ever more and more deserving of the interest that has secured for it a separate existence and an independent name'.[44]

Socio-Economic Background

The total population of the province, according to the *Census Report of 1921*, was 50,76,476. Of these about 93% were Muslims, while the remaining 7% were non-Muslims.[45] Almost all the Muslim inhabitants were *Sunnis*, except a very small number of *Shias*, living mainly in Kohat and Kurram agency. Of the non-Muslims, the proportion of Hindus was the highest, followed by the Sikhs and Christians respectively. There were a few Zoroastrians, Jews and Jains in the N-WFP, but their number was too small to influence social life and politics.

Out of the total population of the province, only 7% were recorded as residing in towns.[46] The non-Muslims usually preferred towns, for specific reasons. The Hindus were mainly traders and military suppliers of foodstuffs and other necessities of life, so naturally they concentrated in cities and towns. In many cases the Sikhs, too, were military suppliers; and they also were urban dwellers. The Christians in the Frontier were nearly all Europeans, employed in the army and in civil administration, whose duties were concentrated mainly in the headquarters of the districts or the cantonments. However, migration to towns in some cases was due to the insecurity of life and property which the non-Muslims felt during any civil unrest, especially in those towns which were adjacent to the tribal areas. There was also some intra-provincial migration, some of it casual and on a temporary basis. Within the province movement was frequent. Factors like drought or the deployment of troops to certain areas contributed to this. Of course, many who gained government employment moved to urban centres.

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[43]: Lal Baha, *N-WFP Administration Under British Rule 1901-1919* (Islamabad, 1978), pp. 12-31; C. C. Davies, *The Problem of the North-West Frontier 1890-1908* (Cambridge, 1932), p. 167; C. F. Andrews, *The Challenge of the North-West Frontier* (London, 1937), pp. 40-46; A. Swinson, *North-West Frontier People and Events* (London, 1967), and, D. Dilks, *Curzon in India* (London, 1969), I, p. 229.

[44]: Curzon quoted in Baha, *N-WFP Administration*, p. 26.

[45]: *Census of India 1921, vol. XIV*, p. 11.

[46]: *Census of India 1911,vol. XIII*, p. 15.

The Pashtoons had dominated the province numerically. However, in Hazara and in urban D.I.Khan, besides Pashtoon, a mixed population of Awans, Gujars, Jats and Balochs were also found. Pashto,[47] the language of the Pashtoons, was spoken by over 56% of the population of the province, followed by Hindko[48] and other languages, together spoken by about 42% of the population.[49] If one includes the tribal territory, however, the preponderance of Pashto will be found to be much greater, as all of the tribal population were Pashto-speakers.

Most of the N-WFP rural people were agriculturists. The proportion was highest in Hazara where as many as 766 persons out of every 1000 derived their livelihood from agriculture. Next to Hazara came Peshawar with a proportion of 687 per *mille* of population subsisting by agriculture; then Kohat, Bannu and D.I.Khan with 579, 501 and 539 respectively.[50] Prior to the arrival of the British, there was collective ownership of property amongst the Pashtoons. The distribution of land was according to the rules laid down in the *Daftar* of Shaikh Milli, a 16th Century Yusufzai chief. Land was distributed in accordance with the number of male members of a particular tribe. After every four years the land was reallocated. Those who had earlier had less productive lands were given fertile land and *vice versa*. The British, on their occupation of the N-WFP, encouraged individual property holding. As in other parts of the sub-continent, rules were laid down concerning land ownership, rent and revenues. To maintain their authority, the British had created and relied upon on an indirect system of administration. A large number of the landed elite were employed to secure political control and the consolidation of imperialism in that part of South Asia. Their services were utilised by the colonial government in the district judicial and revenue administration, military service, and in active work against any political agitation, particularly during the twentieth century. In lieu of their services to the Raj, they were given honorific titles such as Khan Bahadurs (henceforth K.B.s), Khan Sahibs (hereafter K.S) and were granted jagirs, *Inams* (both in term of cash and property) and revenue remissions. Furthermore, the elite were always given preferential treatment in the nomination of their sons and relatives to government posts. These big 'Khans',[51] or the privileged landed aristocracy, were regarded by the imperialists as the 'natural leaders'[52] of the people. They owned large lands (sometimes thousands of acres of land was possessed by them e,g., Nawab M. Akbar Khan of Hoti, Nawab Dost M. Khan of Tehkal and K. B. Mir Alam Khan of Tangi), and possessed enormous wealth, had great social status and exercised great influence over the villages. Another group of the landed elite, the smaller Khans, though numerically strong, was less favoured by the government. As a group they were not opposed to the British government; in fact most of them wanted to gain recognition by and more favours from the government. Their direct contacts with the peasants and ordinary cultivators provided a firm base for the future development of the province. No details are available on the exact landholding of these Khans. The definition of the 'big Khans' and 'small Khans', therefore, is based on the position in the local hierarchy they enjoyed, rather than on the relative status of their landholdings.

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[47] : Pashto, the national language of the Pashtoons is divided into two great branches, northern Pakhto and southern Pashto. The speakers of Pakhto includes the Afridi, Bangash, Mohmand and Yusufzai tribes and Pashto is spoken by Khattak, Marwat, Wazir and other tribes in the south.

[48] : Hindko, the language spoken by peoples in the western Punjab as well as non-Pashtoons of the Frontier was termed by Sir George Grierson as Lahnda or Lahndi — Lahnda means the west. According to him it 'has no literature, and has no standard form, so that it is rather a group of connected dialects than a language with a definite standard'. *Census of India 1911, vol. XIII*, p. 203.

[49] : *Census of India 1911, vol. XIII*, pp. 196-197.

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[50] : *Census of India 1921, vol. XIV*, p. 266.

[51] : Khan is the most common title the Pashtoons like to put after their names as a mark of distinction to show that they belong to one of the established Pashtoon clans, but here it can be used for those who have some holdings in the shape of property and land. At the time of the annexation of the province [1849], they were found mainly in Yusufzai and Khattak areas, and in other areas the corresponding title were 'Arbab' and 'Malik'. A few men in the province also held the distinct title of 'Nawab'.

The Khans, both big and the smaller ones, did not cultivate the land by themselves. Under their tutelage were *dehqans*, *hamsayas* and *faqirs* (those peasants who lived on the property of a Khan whose land he cultivated), who simply tendered their allegiances to the Khans and acted on their directives. The bulk of the agricultural population of the province were *khudkasht zamindars* or those cultivators who rented land from the big zamindars in return for a share in the crop. Then came the *Barkhakhor* or *ijaradars*, those who got their income from agricultural land, but did not cultivate the land by themselves or through their relations or servants. They rented the land from a zamindar for a fixed term at some fixed cash rates. They were 'neither so frugal nor prosperous as the better of the peasant proprietary class'...and a 'good twenty per cent of them', according to S. S. Thorburn, an ex-Settlement Officer, were 'deeply involved in debt, and a large majority habitually live beyond their income'. Only very few of them were 'shrewd, careful men, and their holdings and incomes' were growing.[53] The tribes falling under the category of land-holders included all Pashtoons, Baloch, Jat, Mishwani, Qureshi, Rajput, Awans, Swati and Tanaolis.[54] In the greater part of the province the Hindus were not found in possession of land; however, in the D.I.Khan, they were well-known as agriculturists.[55] The principal cash crops of the province were: in the cold weather, maize and millet; in the spring, wheat, barley and gram. Rice, sugar-cane, cotton and tobacco were the fine crops of the province. Of the total cultivated area 25% was irrigated by canals and 2% by perennial rains. A number of people earned their livelihood as employees of the Department of Forests or as wood-cutters and charcoal burners, but mainly they were concentrated in Hazara. Pastoral work, fishing, hunting, local cottage industries on a very small scale, — manufacturing of woollen fabrics, weaving blankets, carpet making[56] etc., — were also a source of income for the people.

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[52]: *Census of India 1921, vol. XIV*, pp. 265-267. For more details on the government policy and its patronage of the big landlords see P. Reeves, *Landlords and Governments in Uttar Pradesh A study of their relations until zamindari abolition* (Bombay, 1991), pp. 1-29; S. A. Rittenberg, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Pakhtuns: The Independence Movement in India's North-West Frontier Province 1901-1947* (Durham, 1988), pp. 29-41, 43-46; D. Gillmartin, *Empire and Islam: Punjab and the Making of Pakistan* (London, 1988), and, Imran Ali, *The Punjab Under the Imperialism* (Princeton, 1988).

In education the Frontier province before 1947 was one of the most backward of the Indian provinces. Muslims and especially the Pashtoons lagged behind other communities in receiving English and Vernacular education. Of the religious communities, Christians were by far the best educated. Next to them came the Sikhs and then the Hindus.[57]

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[53]: The main causes of sinking into poverty, according to Thorburn were that the head of the family spent too much on hospitality etc., earning for himself a reputation through it. Moreover, his sons were brought up in idleness and were married early. The 'false pride' of their family background compelled them to disdain to work with their own hands; and all these things finally resulted in borrowing from Hindu *banias* (returning it double after the harvest) and in some cases even in mortgaging his land. S. S. Thorburn, *Report on the First Land Revenue Settlement of the Bannu District in the Derajat Division of the Punjab* (Lahore, 1879), p. 59.

[54]: *Census of India 1921, vol. XIV*, p. 233.

[55]: *Census of India 1911, vol XIII*, p. 65.

[56]: *Census of India 1921, vol. XIV*, pp. 267-271.

TABLE 1: EDUCATION BY RELIGION, SEX AND LOCALITY

Number per *mille* who were literate:

Districts	Muslims	Hindus	Sikhs	Christians
	males-females	males-females	males-females	males-females
Hazara	17 - 1	392 - 41	321 - 59	858 - 776
Peshawar	27 - 1	340 - 124	450 - 180	915 - 616
Kohat	28 - 1	330 - 21	578 - 67	818 - 730
Bannu	22 - -	351 - 13	572 - 90	603 - 639
D.I.Khan	32 - 1	442 - 44	465 - 109	834 - 683

Source: *Census of India 1911, vol. XIII*, p. 188.

Out of every 1000, according to the *Census Report of 1911*, only 25 males could fulfil the *Census* criteria of literacy.[58] During the subsequent decade a significant improvement i.e., from 25 to 43 was noticed.[59] It seems that the inhabitants felt alienated from modern education. As recorded in the *Census Report of 1911*, the Pashtoons 'despised education as fit only for Hindus and cowards', as they had little need for spelling, but much for swordsmanship. Undoubtedly this was in part a colonial construct, arcane and essentialist: yet it was true that levels of literacy were low. It was also alleged that the Muslims followed agriculture, in which the necessity for literacy was not great compared with trade and business occupations[60] Mostly they lived in the rural areas where the opportunities and inducements for acquiring proficiency in reading and writing were restricted. Moreover, the secular nature of the school courses, and the absence of adequate incentives for children's education were also held responsible for the backwardness of education in the area. First, the people were poor and looked upon their children as economic assets, since they could earn a small daily wage or perform tasks for which their families would otherwise have had to hire labour. Second, pre-existing illiteracy contributed to apathy towards education, particularly in the case of girls. Third, the non-utilitarian nature of the courses of study meant that parents were unwilling to risk alienating their children from agricultural pursuits by sending them to school. Fourth, school courses were secular in nature in a society deeply imbued with a Pashtoon understanding of Islam. Finally, factional rivalries among the Pashtoons prevented co-operation in establishing and managing schools.[61]

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[57]: The high proportion of literacy among the Sikhs was probably due to the fact that Sikh picked up rudimentary Gurmukhi for the purpose of reading the scriptures. For the Pashtoon 'the Hindustani is more or less a foreign language to the people of this province, especially to the Pashto-speaking Mussalmans who take much longer time to acquire a working knowledge of Urdu than those whose mother tongue is Punjabi'. *Census of India 1921, vol. XIV*, pp 172-173.

[58]: *Census of India 1911, vol. XIII*, p. 175.

[59]: *Census of India 1921, vol. XIV*, p. 169.

The Nature of Islam in the Province

Islam was central to the society of the province. Among the Pashtoons Muslim clerics were looked upon with high esteem and deference. They participated in almost every aspect of Pashtoon society, and they provided guidance in both religious and personal matters. In tribal areas they exercised judicial and executive powers and even assumed political authority during periods of crisis. The bulk of the population of the province were Sunni Muslims. They were the followers of Imam Abu Hanifa (699AD-769AD), the great oracle of Sunni jurisprudence, whose doctrines 'are distinguished by the latitude allowed to private judgement' in the importance of law. There were no *Malikis* (the followers of Imam Malik) nor *Hanbalis* (the followers of Imam Hanbal) in the Frontier, and a nomadic tribe living in the lower Indus area claimed to be the followers of Imam Shafi.[62] In early medieval times, it was permissible to consult all the four schools[63] of *Fiqh* (Muslim jurisprudence). The *Shias*, scattered in the province, were in a relatively large number in the Kurram agency. There were a few *Wahabis* (followers of Abdul Wahab) and some *Ahmadis*[64] (followers of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, who claimed to be *Mahdi* or Messiah).

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[60] : *Census of India 1911, vol. XIII*, p. 175.

[61] : *Census of India 1931 volume XV North-West Frontier Province* (Peshawar, 1933), p. 166; Yusufi, *Peshawar* (Karachi, 1984), pp. 42-44.

There has been no tradition of priesthood in Islam. No caste or family that has some special power can claim it as their right. However, it is obligatory in Islam to obey those who possess sufficient religious knowledge.[65] In the N-WFP, there were several kinds of religious specialists. There were *Sufis*, engaged in meditative disciplines, who had direct knowledge of religious truths, and the *Ulema* (plural of *Alim* — those individuals who are skilled in theology and are qualified to give an opinion on religious matters), who by their decisions regulated the life of Muslims. The main stream of Sufi influence came to India from the north. Shaikh Ali Hajvairi, Muin-ud-Din Chishti, Baha-ud-Din Zikirya and Jalal Tabrizi were some among many others who preached Islam in India.[66] Those mystics were the main agencies of conversion and it was through the efforts of their selfless services to their faith that so many were attracted to Islam in the sub-continent.

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[62] : *Census of India 1921, vol. XIV*, p. 84.
[63] : M. Mujeeb, *The Indian Mussalmans* (Delhi, 1985), pp. 57-58.
[64] : *Census of India 1911, vol. XIII*, p. 73.
[65] : B. D. Metcalf, *Islamic Revivalism in British India: Deoband 1860-1900* (Princeton, 1982), pp. 17-18.
[66] : Mujeeb, *The Indian Mussalmans*, p. 116.

There were various Sufic Orders (according to *A Dictionary of Islam* they were more than 32 in number)[67] but the most popular and well-known in that part of South Asia were *Naqshbandi* (founded by Khwaja Baha-ud-Din Naqshbandi d. 1390 AD); *Qadiriya* (Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani AD 1078-1166 AD); *Suharwardiya* (Sayyid Mutahar-ud-Din Suharwardi d. 1275 AD) and *Chishtiya* (Khwaja Muin-ud-Din Chishti AD 1143-1236 AD). Put simply, Sufism brought Islam to the masses and the masses towards Islam.[68]

The Ulema were trained in Muslim theological disciplines such as *Sharia* — the Islamic way of life, comprising beliefs, rituals, practices, public and personal law and rules of behaviour in social intercourse. They enjoyed superior status to *Imams* (those who lead the public prayers and are appointed by the congregation, or section of the town or village who frequent the mosque in which he leads the prayers). The Ulema not only led the prayers but also gave *Khutbas* — the sermon or oration delivered on Fridays at the time of *Zuhr* (meridian) prayer. (Sermons are also delivered on the two *Eids* in the morning after the sunrise). According to S. Ansari, while a majority of Indian Ulema

> enjoyed a tradition of collaborating with local, often Muslim rulers, supporting and propping up the fortunes of the ruling powers, a significant minority never sought help or recognition from the State. Similarly, while certain Sufis maintained a strict separation from the affairs of the state, others became famous for the good relations which they established with the government of the day.[69]

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[67] : T. P. Hughes, *A Dictionary of Islam* (London, 1885), p. 117.
[68] : Mujeeb, *The Indian Mussalmans*, p. 116.
[69] : Sarah F. D. Ansari, *Sufi Saints and State Power: The pirs of Sind, 1843-1947* (Cambridge, 1992), p. 5.

Mostly the Ulema in the N-WFP belonged to that group which kept themselves aloof from the rulers and the state. Unlike the state patronage of the Ulema in Sind, in the Frontier, as the majority of the Ulema were anti-establishment, none of them was given any jagir or state endowment for their services to the colonial rulers. Throughout British rule in India, they opposed it with their full power and strength, and as early as the 1890s many Pashtoon Ulema, namely Powindah Mullah, Mastana Mullah, Sandakai Mullah, Syed Akbar Mullah, Adda Mullah and Fazli Wahid Haji Sahib of Turangzai, had mobilised a religio-political militancy against the government.[70] Another category of religious leadership consisted of *Astanadars* — those whose ancestors in remote or recent past acquired the title of Saint by a repute for holiness and piety and left behind memorials in the shape of mosques or shrines. They can be further divided into *Sayeds*, *Pirs*, *Mians* and *Sahibzadas*. The Sayeds were a priestly class claiming direct descent from the Prophet through Fatima, his daughter. The Pirs and Mians were the descendants of Pashtoons, whose social position and privileges in Pashtoon society were hereditary. The Sahibzadas ranked after Pirs and Mians and were not so numerous but were more wealthy. The religious leaders in some cases possessed substantial material power in terms of the possession of land, which was given to them or to their ancestors by the Pashtoons out of reverence or in return for their services as mediators. On the whole, however, their job was not well-paid; they subsisted on a small piece of land set aside in certain cases to support their mosque. Mostly they were dependant on Khans and other rich persons of the Pashtoon community.

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[70]: For more details on the rising of 1890's see W. Churchill, *The Story of Malakand Field Force* (London, 1899); R. Warburton, *Eighteen Years in the Khyber* (London, 1900); J. M. Adye, *Indian Frontier Policy* (London, 1897); C. E. Bruce, *Waziristan 1936-37* (Aldershot, 1938); C. F. Andrews, *The Challenge of the North-West Frontier* (London, 1937); R. I. Bruce, *The Forward Policy and Its Results* (London, 1900); A. Keppel, *Gun Running on the North-West Frontier* (London, 1921).

The traditional factionalism in Pashtoon society had reconstructed the pattern of politics in the N-WFP. The *parajamba* (taking sides) led many Pashtoons to align themselves with the parties which could safeguard their interests against their rivals. Sometimes it even resulted in shifting of loyalties without giving heed to the ideologies and party programmes of particular political organisations. *Tarburwali* (enmity between cousins) has always been regarded by scholars working on the area as the main reason for factionalism in Pashtoon society, although, as a Pashto proverb has it, a much-hated cousin was likely to help one during a crisis. During the colonial period it was mostly the landed elite, both the big Khans and the smaller ones, who provided a base for the creation of warring factions in the FP. For the most part, they led the political organisations in the province, and the formation and dissolution of alliances always revolved around them. In the rest of India, the urban politicians predominated at the forefront of every political movement, but in the N-WFP, due to its peculiar type of society, the rural political figures and social workers were the leaders of the political movements throughout the present century.

Conclusion

We have analysed in detail the strategic importance of the N-WFP and its significant role in the shaping of Indian history due to its geo-political location. The focus remained on the specific nature of the Frontier society, constituting 93% Muslim majority with a 7% non-Muslims, mostly Hindus. On their occupation of the FP the British introduced an indirect system of administration. The services of the local landed elite were utilised by the colonialists to gain and secure firm control of the area, thus strengthening British imperialism. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the nature of Islam in the FP. Unlike other Muslim majority provinces of India such as Sind and the Punjab, the majority of Ulema in the N-WFP were anti-establishment and were in the forefront of every religio-political movement aimed at getting rid of the British hegemony in that part of South Asia. Chapter Two examines the role of the Khilafat movement in shaping the politics of the province in the 1920's, the background to the emergence of the KKs, and the civil disobedience movement of the early 1930's.

CHAPTER TWO

GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS IN THE PROVINCE

This chapter examines the emergence of the Khudai Khidmatgars (henceforth the KKs) as a political force and seeks to explain their support for Congress. The KKs arose from the experiences of the previous movements against the British rule, most notably the Khilafat and Hijrat campaigns of the early 1920s. The first batches of the KK volunteers came from rural Pashtoon-dominated areas and had links with the reform movement of Haji of Turangzai and with the pan-Islamists. Through the creation of a youth movement, a section of Pashtoon intelligentsia sought to move from mere 'social reform' to more obvious political activity. The KK organisation was created as a collaborator of the Youth League to enlist the support of wider social groups. Both bodies endeavoured to eradicate 'social evils' from Pashtoon society, espoused the cause of the Pashto language and literature and consistently struggled against British imperialism. The chapter highlights how various sections of the Pashtoon society interpreted the KK programme in their own way. It argues that the KKs developed non-violence as a political creed in their own terms using the symbols of Pashtoon culture, quite independently of the influence of Gandhi. Deeply religious in their daily life, the cultural basis of Pashtoon non-violence was derived from their understanding of Islam. The fervent anti-imperialism of the KKs and the Congress brought them together and their formal affiliation took place during the Karachi Congress in 1931. Through this alliance, the Congress gained a political base in the N-WFP and the KKs a major ally. The pressure of the KK mass movement compelled the British to introduce Dyarchy and Responsible Government in the province in 1932.

Political Development

The organised party politics that historians associate with the Indian national movement began to emerge in the N-WFP in the first decade of its formation as a separate province. It originated in the Peshawar Valley, where some educated Hindus organised support for the INC. Amir Chand Bombwal founded the province's first nationalist Urdu newspaper *Frontier Advocate* in 1905. In February 1907, Ram Chand, another educated Hindu from Peshawar had formed a provincial branch of the Congress.[71] No further details are available on its organisation and membership. However, due to the strategic position of the N-WFP, the colonial government attempted to curb political activities there. The newly organised party was banned and most of its leaders were detained under the notorious Frontier Crimes Regulations (hereafter FCR), which provided for suppression of crime in the settled districts.[72] Others went underground, providing arms and ammunition to the revolutionaries in India and helping political figures wanted by the state to escape to Afghanistan.

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[71] : A. C. Bombwal, *Punjab Kesari: Lala Lajpat Rai: Some Reminiscences* (Dehra Dun, 1962); Bombwal, *Pandit Motilal Nehru: A Great Friend of the Frontier People: Some Reminiscences* (Dehra Dun, 1963); S. A. Rittenberg, 'The Independence Movement in India's North-West Frontier Province 1901-1947' (hereafter 'Independence Movement'), (Columbia University Ph. D thesis), p. 56.

[72] : It provided for powers of courts and officers; the civil references to Jirgas appointed by the government; penalties in shape of fines on communities and tribes; with powers of demolition of buildings used by anti-state elements; power to arrest and imprisonment, giving no right to appeal but a restricted power of civil or criminal revision by the Chief Commissioner. Obhrai, *The Evolution*, p. 118.

The first serious foray of the Frontier Muslims into the modern style of politics was the formation of a branch of the Muslim League in 1912 at Peshawar. Mian Abdul Aziz advocate, a resident of Peshawar city, became its president and Ali Abbas Bokhari, a former student of Oxford University, its secretary. Unlike its parent organisation on the all-India level, the nascent branch of the Frontier ML was anti-British. The provincial Leaguers approached the Muslims of the N-WFP urging them to fight the anti-Muslim forces in the Balkan wars. The Frontier authorities could not tolerate these 'extremists' while the war was being prosecuted; the organisation was banned, and the leaders were arrested. Bokhari, however, managed to escape to Afghanistan. Aziz moved down country and reappeared on the platform of AIML in the early 1930's.[73] Thus the Frontier Provincial Muslim League (henceforth PML) remained in existence for only four years. After the expatriation of its first organisers the League ceased to function in the N-WFP.

On the suppression of the pan-Islamic tendencies amongst the educated urban intelligentsia of Peshawar, the centre of politics shifted to the rural areas. Fazli Wahid, the Haji of Turangzai, who belonged to a saintly family of Charssadda, concentrated on social and religious reforms. The Pashtoons were urged to give up their blood-feuds and to improve their social habits i.e., to avoid spending lavishly on marriage and funeral ceremonies. He advised Pashtoons to resolve their disputes through Sharia and not according to the English law. He was assisted by a few 'enthusiasts' amongst the Pashtoon intelligentsia, including Abdul Ghaffar Khan, a young Mohammadzai

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[73]: Very little is known on the early Muslim politics in the N-WFP. The above account is based on letters from Mian Abdul Aziz to Wazir Hasan, Secretary AIML, 22 September 1912, F. No. 206, Freedom Movement Archives, Karachi (henceforth AFM), pp. 10-12; Ali Abbas Bokhari to Wazir Hasan, 23 June 1914, *ibid.* pp. 5-5(e); Wazir Hasan to Ali Abbas Bokhari, 25 June 1914, *ibid.* p. 15; Ghulam Hussain to Wazir Hasan, 16 October 1914, *ibid.* p. 1; Qazi Mir Ahmad to Wazir Hasan, 15 April 1916, *ibid.* p. 10; Syed Mahmood Shah to Zahoor Ahmad, 20 November 1919, *ibid.* p. 12; Mian Abdul Aziz, *The Crescent in the Land of the Rising Sun* (London, 1941); S. W. A. Shah, *Muslim League in the N-WFP* (hereafter *Muslim League*), (Karachi, 1992), pp. 20-22; Yusufi, *Jaddo Jehad*, pp. 169-173.

Khan of Charssadda, who later on became the most popular figure in Frontier politics. An organised campaign against the illiteracy of the Pashtoons was initiated. Their joint efforts resulted in the establishment of a network of *Azad Madrassas* in various parts of the Peshawar Valley. Besides religious education, stress was laid upon the cultivation of patriotism. No further details are available about the exact number of Madrassas, the number of students, teachers or their source of income. The government decided to put a ban on the activities of Turangzai and his associates. To avoid arrest, at the end of April 1915, Turangzai crossed over to the independent tribal belt. After his escape, the authorities banned the Madrassas and incarcerated the teachers. With the flight of Turangzai to the tribal belt, the movement in the settled districts collapsed.[74]

To curb possible revolutionary and terrorist activities, the government of India forced the Rowlatt Act through the Central Legislative Assembly (hereafter CLA) during the war. Although the ostensible reason for promulgating the Act ceased to exist after the war, it still remained in operation. The Indian nationalists opposed the Act, and, Gandhi, the Congress leader, issued a call for an all-India *hartal* on 6 April to protest against the Rowlatt Act.[75] Responding to Gandhi's call, on 6 April a complete hartal was observed in Peshawar. Urban political workers of the city, Muslims and non-Muslims, participated. Following Peshawar, similar protest meetings were reported from other settled districts of the province. Meanwhile, news of firing on innocent citizens at Jallianwala Bagh, Amritsar, reached the province. Abdul Ghaffar Khan held a protest meeting at Utmanzai. The participants numbered between

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[74]: Farigh Bokhari, *Bacha Khan* (Peshawar, 1957), p. 46; Abdul Khaliq Khaleeq, *Da Azadi Jang* (hereafter *Azadi*), (Peshawar, 1972), pp. 7-8.

[75]: Call for Hartal by Gandhi, *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi* (henceforth *CWMG*), vol. 15 (Ahmedabad, 1965), pp. 177, 183-188. Full details can be seen in Judith M. Brown, *Gandhi's Rise to Power Indian Politics 1915-1922* (Cambridge, 1972), pp. 160-189.

50,000 and 70,000. In the rural area of the N-WFP, this was the first meeting of its kind convened to express solidarity with the rest of the sub-continent.[76] The effects of the all-India agitation combined with developments in neighbouring Afghanistan. Amir Amanullah, ascended the throne in February 1919. Partly influenced by the Indian revolutionaries then residing at Kabul,[77] Amanullah, on 4 May declared war on the British Indian government.[78] The inhabitants of the FP were called upon to raise the standard of rebellion against the colonialists. To prevent troubles in their rear, Martial Law was declared in the N-WFP and on 7 May troops occupied Peshawar. A number of arrests were made; the majority of those arrested were kept in various prisons in the province, while the most 'dangerous' ones were deported to the Andamans. On the cessation of hostilities between Afghanistan and the Indian government after six months the political prisoners from the province were released.[79]

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[76]: For more details see Yusufi, *Jaddo Jehad*, pp. 210-228; Yusufi, *Meet the Frontier Gandhi* (Bombay, nd), p. 22; Khaleeq, *Azadi*, pp. 11-16; Bokhari, *Bacha Khan*, pp. 47-53; R. Furneaux, *Massacre at Amritsar* (London, 1933), p. 99.

[77]: During the second decade of the twentieth century, the number of the 'wanted' Indian political activists in Kabul exceeded hundred. They had been busy in anti-British activities. To induce the pro-British Amir Habibullah to support Turkey and Germany in war against the British, an Indian-Turko-German Mission was despatched to Kabul in October 1915. Prominent members of the Mission included Mahendra Pratap, Burkatullah, the Indian revolutionaries; Rauf Bey and Kazim Bey, noted Turkish commanders, and, two Germans, Von Hentig, a diplomat and Captain Neidermayer. The Mission failed in achieving its goal, however, it succeeded in establishing an Indian Provisional Government at Kabul on 1 December. Many members of this mission were present in Afghanistan until 1919. For more details see M. Pratap, *My Life Story of Fifty Five Years* (Dehra Dun, 1947); M. Hauner, 'The Soviet Threat to Afghanistan and India 1938-1940', *Modern Asian Studies*, (hereafter *MAS*) 15, 2, (1981), p. 288; F. R. K. Marwat, 'The Evolution and Growth of Communism in Afghanistan: 1917-79' (unpublished Ph. D thesis, University of Peshawar, 1992), pp. 170-171.

[78]: For more details see: L. Thomas, *Beyond Khyber Pass* (New York, 1927); G. Macmunn, *Afghanistan: From Darius to Amanullah* (London, 1929); L. B. Poullada, *Reform and Rebellion in Afghanistan, 1919-1929* (London, 1973), and L. W. Adamec,

Khilafat and Hijrat Movements

When the Khilafat movement was launched towards the end of 1919, it received widespread support in the N-WFP. Indian Muslims had close religious ties with the Turkish Sultan who was also their spiritual head, the Khalifa. During the war years Indian Muslims were concerned about the fate of Turkey. To gain the support of the Indian Muslims in the war effort, the British Premier had promised to protect the Holy Places and to safeguard their religious sentiments. However, once the war was over, the victors decided to reduce the Ottoman Empire to a petty kingdom. The Indian Muslims started the Khilafat movement and emphasised the freedom of a universal Khalifa from any foreign control. The politically-minded Hindus decided to support the Muslims in the Khilafat movement.[80]

In the N-WFP, the general feeling among Muslims was in favour of supporting the Khilafat cause. A Sarhad Khilafat Committee was formed, and branches were opened in the districts. Following the directives of the Central Khilafat Committee, it was decided not to participate in the official peace celebrations. To show solidarity with the rest of the Indian Muslims, hartals were observed at several places and titles were renounced. Resignations from the police and the civil administration were also reported.[81]

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[80]: Details can be seen in G. Minault, *The Khilafat Movement Religious Symbolism and Political Mobilization in India* (Delhi, 1982), pp. 67-110; F. Robinson, *Separatism Among the Indian Muslims* (Cambridge, 1974), pp. 204-344; A. Hamid, *Muslim Separatism in India* (Lahore, 1971), pp. 108-150; A. K. Azad, *India Wins Freedom* (Calcutta, 1959), pp. 8-10; G. Krishna, 'The Khilafat Movement in India: The First Phase', *The Journal of Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, 20, (1968), pp. 37-53; J. Gallagher, 'Nationalism and the Crisis of Empire, 1919-1922', *MAS*, 15, 3, (1981), p. 363; D. Gilmartin, 'Religious Leadership and the Pakistan Movement in the Punjab', *MAS*, 13, 3, (1979), p. 500; Y. Samad, 'South Asian Muslim Politics 1937-1958', (Oxford University unpublished Ph. D thesis, 1991), pp. 10-11.

[81]: Lal Baha, 'Khilafat Movement and the North-West Frontier Province', *Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan*, XVI, (July 1979), pp. 5-11; Shah, 'N-WFP and the Khilafat & Hijrat Movements', *Central Asia*, (Summer 1987), pp. 126-128.

An offshoot of the Khilafat agitation was the Hijrat movement. The Ulema declared India as *Dar ul Harb* (land of war) and issued *fatwas* for migration to *Dar ul Islam* (land of Islam).[82] Indian Muslims were looking towards Afghanistan, with whom they had religious, cultural, political and ethnic ties. Amanullah offered asylum to the intending *Muhajirin*. Peshawar became the hub of the movement. In the beginning the government discouraged Hijrat, but later on people were encouraged to go to Afghanistan in large numbers. In this the government's twin objectives were to remove active political workers from the province and to burden the limited finances of Afghanistan.[83] The Muhajirin, who exceeded 60,000 in number, were welcomed by the Afghan government. Amanullah offered them jobs and cultivable lands. They refused his offer and demanded the waging of war against the British. Amanullah was unable to concede their demand. Differences emerged which resulted in the return of Muhajirin to India. The return journey was miserable. The impoverished and destitute Muhajirin were resettled in their home areas. Thus ended the 'ill-conceived, miscalculated and ill-organised' Hijrat movement in complete failure.[84] However, it provided the Frontier Muslims with an opportunity to organise themselves politically. After their return from Afghanistan, the Khilafatists of the N-WFP, like those of rest of India, had been divided into two camps: those who supported the Congress, and those who joined the AIML.

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[82] : H. Malik, *Moslem Nationalism in India and Pakistan* (Washington, 1963), p. 343.

[83] : Lal Baha, 'Hijrat Movement and the North-West Frontier Province', *Islamic Studies Journal*, (1979), p. 231.

[84] : M. N. Qureshi, 'The Ulama of the British India and the Hijrat of 1920', *MAS*, 13, 1, (1979), pp. 48-57; Correspondence between Grant and the Viceroy, May-September 1920, Mss. EUR., D. 660/25, IOLR; C. W. Foster, 'My Years in the Indian Police 1905-1920', (unpublished manuscript in Foster papers), CSASC, pp. 43-45; Interview Shaukat Usmani, 20 December 1976, Oral Record Section, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi (henceforth NMML), pp. 2-12; Mian Akbar Shah, *Da Azadi Talash* (Peshawar, nd), 15-90; J. M. Ewart, E. B. Howell, *Story of the North-West Frontier Province* (Peshawar, 1930), p. 56; Shah, 'N-WFP and the Khilafat & Hijrat Movement', pp. 128-136.

Minor Muslim Organisations

Before discussing the KK movement and its impact on Pashtoon society, it is proper to mention the minor Muslim organisations of the FP, which provided a supporting base for Congress and the ML in the N-WFP. One of the earliest of such groups was the Majlis-i-Ahrar-i-Islam (or the Ahrars), an organisation established by some ex-Khilafatists at Lahore in 1929. A largely urban party, they drew support from the middle classes. They wished to safeguard the rights of Muslims, and to create an Islamic state based on the Sharia within the sub-continent. Viewing the colonial state as an 'evil force', they participated in the civil disobedience movement of 1930. The Frontier branch of the Ahrars was established on 2 February 1935 at Peshawar. The party programme of the provincial Ahrars remained much the same as that of the central organisation. However, criticism of the government's Waziristan policy provided a crucial provincial issue. In the Frontier, the Ahrars extended support to the KKs.[85]

Another splinter Muslim organisation, the Khaksars (established April 1931) also evoked the Sharia and emphasised 'service to society' and the promotion of equality. Unlike the Ahrars, however, they were communal and loyalist. The organisation was extended to the N-WFP in 1933. No exact information on membership details for the province is available. Peshawar city and parts of Hazara became the centre of Khaksar activity, and loyal urban Muslims joined the organisation. Due to their pro-British policies, the Khaksars received a cool response in the rural areas of the province.[86]

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[85]: 'Note on the Ahrar Movement', CID Diaries, F. Nos. 900, 904, 905, 907, 506 and 519, Special Branch Peshawar (hereafter SBP); D. Gilmartin, 'Religious Leadership and the Pakistan Movement in the Punjab', *MAS*, 13, 3, (1979), pp. 499-501; *Khyber Mail*, 18 June 1939; Interview Haji Mohammad Asim, Nowshera, 5 June 1987. For more details see J. Mirza, *Karavan-i-Ahrar* 2 vols., (Lahore, 1975, 1977); S. Kashmiri, *Pas-i-Diwar-i-Zindan* (Lahore, 1971); K. M. Hilali, *Turialey* (Peshawar, nd).

Like its parent organisation of the Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Hind (hereafter JUH), the Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Sarhad (henceforth JUS) supported the KKs on the provincial level, thus providing them with a religious basis and justifying the KKs' struggle against colonialism. A majority of the province's Ulema supported the KKs and were arrested during the civil disobedience movement. A minority of the Ulema opposed the Congress and issued *fatwas* against the Khan Brothers and their followers dubbing them *Kafirs*.[87] It is widely known that many Ulema became active members of the KKs, yet Banerjee overlooks this point completely. According to her, all maulvies were pro-establishment and opposed the KKs.[88] This may have been true of many other northern provinces (including Sindh and the Punjab) but was certainly not true of the Frontier. Many of the nationalist maulvis of the province had passed through the portals of the Deoband seminary.

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[86]: 'A Report on the Khaksar Organisation', by L. V. Deane, 12 April 1940, Notes on Khaksar Movement, Mss. EUR., Indian Police Collection, F. 161/164, IOLR, p. 4; *N-WFP Legislative Council Debates vol. IX, Official Report, Peshawar 1936* (Peshawar, 1936), p. 251; *Fourteen Points of Khaksar Tehreek*, 15 October 1937, issued by Bab al Ishaat, Khaksar Tehreek, Lahore, pp. 1-4; I. H. Malik, *Sikandar Hayat Khan (1892-1942) A Political Biography* (Islamabad, 1985), p. 64. For more details see: S. Salimi, *Khaksars Tehreek Ki Sola Sala Jaddo Jehad* (Lahore, nd); A. Malik, *Punjab Ki Siyasi Tehriken* (Lahore, 1971); M. A. Fariq, *Angrez: Sir Sikandar Aur Khaksars Tehreek* (Lahore, 1978); I. H. Malik, 'Identity Formation and Muslim Party Politics in the Punjab, 1897-1936: A Retrospective Analysis', *MAS*, 29, 2, (1995), pp. 293-323.

[87]: CID Diaries, F. Nos. 753, 929, 934, 935, 939, 944, SBP.

[88]: M. Banerjee, 'A Study of the Khudai Khidmatgar movement 1930-1947 N.W.F.P., British India' (unpublished Ph. D thesis, University of Oxford, 1994), pp. 94-97.

The Emergence of Khudai Khidmatgars

After the bitter experience and 'failure' of Hijrat, Abdul Ghaffar Khan concentrated on Pashtoon politics. He revived the old network of the Azad Madrassas and established a school at Khaloono, in Dir state. Fazal Mahmood Makhfi, a famous Pashto poet and a close associate of the former, was put in charge of the school. As it was the first of its kind in Dir state, ruled by the Nawab of Dir, the response from the people was tremendous. Within a few weeks the number of students exceeded four hundred. The growing popularity of the school alarmed the Nawab of Dir; he acted promptly. Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Makhfi were expelled from Dir and the school was demolished.[89] The individual efforts of Abdul Ghaffar Khan failed and he came to think that any reform movement without a proper organisation would be impossible. He resumed his social activities in the settled districts. He was joined by a group of educated Pashtoon patriots which included Mian Ahmad Shah, Abdul Akbar Khan, Mian Jaffar Shah, M. Abbas Khan, Mian Abdullah Shah, M. Akbar Khadim and Maulana M. Israel. They belonged to various social groups, though a majority of them were smaller Khans. Mian Ahmad Shah was a former student of the Aligarh University, who had left the University at the nationalist call during the non-co-operation movement. Some of them, like Khadim, were without any formal education but were initiated into religious knowledge. Creating awareness amongst the Pashtoons about modern education, freeing of Pashtoon society of evils like the blood-feuds and factionalism, and prevention of crime and the use of intoxicants were some of the concerns that brought these intellectuals together.

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[89] : Abdul Ghaffar, *Zama Zhwand Au Jaddo Jehad* (hereafter *Zama Zhwand*), (Kabul, 1983), pp. 178-179.

On 1 April 1921, the *Anjuman-i-Islah-ul-Afaghana* (Society for the Reformation of the Afghans) was formed with Abdul Ghaffar Khan as its President and Ahmad Shah as Secretary. The aims and objectives of the Anjuman included: the eradication of social evils, promotion of unity amongst the Pashtoons, prevention of lavish spending on social events, encouragement of Pashto language and literature and the creation of 'real love' for Islam among the Pashtoons.[90] The Anjuman engaged in a wide spectrum of activities. Its first step was to educate the Pashtoons. In April 1921 the first branch of Azad Islamia Madrassa was opened at Utmanzai, followed by other branches in different areas of Peshawar Valley. No accurate figures are available about the exact number of the 'Azad' schools, but their number is estimated at about 70. Most of the schools seem to have been in the Peshawar Valley as no evidence is available about any branch of the 'Azad' schools at any other locality in the province. The curriculum included teaching of the Holy Quran and Hadith, Fiqh, Islamic history, Pashto and mathematics. Some vocational skills like carpentry, weaving and tailoring were also taught. On 1 December 1923, the school was affiliated with Jamia Millia Islamia, Delhi. The students were prepared for the matriculation examination of the Punjab University; the main emphasis, however, remained on the promotion of Pashtoon culture. Some of the Anjuman's founder members, including Mian Ahmad Shah, Mian Maaruf Shah and Maulana M. Israel, volunteered to teach the children without any remuneration. Maqsood Jan of Bannu, who had left Islamia College during the non-co-operation days, became the first headmaster at the Utmanzai branch. The main source of funding of the 'Azad' schools was donations from the Anjuman members. Although no figures exists, we are told that they contributed generously to finance them[91]. Abdul Ghaffar Khan took the initiative by sending his own son, Abdul Wali Khan, to the school. He was followed by other Anjuman members. As the education was free and the schools were open to all communities without any prejudice of caste or religion, the Anjuman gained popularity within a short span of time. The number of students increased from 140 (April 1921-March 1922) to 221 (April 1922-March 1923); and from 264 (April 1923-March 1924) to 300 (April 1924-March 1925).[92] During late 1921, some members of the faction-ridden Provincial Khilafat Committee at Peshawar invited Abdul Ghaffar Khan to become its president which he accepted. The government, however, sought to restrain the activities of Abdul Ghaffar Khan. He was arrested on 17 December 1921 and sentenced to three years Rigorous Imprisonment under Section 40 of the FCR.[93] After his arrest the Anjuman leadership passed on to Abdul Akbar Khan. The 'Azad' system of schools, according to Rittenberg, 'shrank to no more than a few schools by the end of 1920s'.[94] The main reasons were lack of funds and qualified teachers.

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[90]: Abdul Akbar Khan, 'Autobiography' (unpublished), Abdul Akbar Khan Personal Collection, pp. 8-12.

Another important step of the Anjuman was to make trade and commerce respectable in the eyes of the Pashtoons. To improve the economic conditions of the Pashtoons and to save them from the 'high-handedness' of the 'middle-men', who in most cases were non-Muslims, Pashtoons were advised to sell their products directly instead of relying on someone else. In 1927 Abdul Ghaffar Khan started a *Gur Mandi* (sugar depot) at Utmanzai and urged other Pashtoons to join him in the business.[95] To revive Pashto and to promote Pashtoon culture, poetic contests were regularly arranged at the Anjuman's annual meetings.[96] The Pashtoon poets were encouraged, and eventually these encouraged a large number of Pashtoon nationalist poets including Makhfi, Abdul Akbar Khan, Khadim, Khaleeq, Abdul Ghani Khan and a host of others who contributed to the development of modern Pashto literature[97].

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[91] : *ibid.*

[92] : Abdul Akbar Khan, *Anjuman-i-Islah-ul-Afaghana: A Comprehensive Record,* Abdul Akbar Khan Personal Collection, pp. 40-48; Interview Abdul Wali Khan, Charssadda, 29 October 1994.

[93] : Abdul Ghaffar, *Zama Zhwand,* p. 190.

[94] : Rittenberg, 'Independence Movement', p. 66.

[95] : Khaleeq, *Azadi,* p. 41; Yusufi, *Meet the Frontier Gandhi* (Bombay, nd), pp. 11-12.

The Formation of Zalmo Jirga (Youth League)

Initially the Anjuman was a social reform movement but soon it developed into a political movement. Its members regarded British rule as the root cause of the pernicious poverty, backwardness, illiteracy and ignorance of the Pashtoons. The Pashtoons were urged to unite against alien rule and jointly struggle against social evils and put an end to their blood feuds. The Anjuman members undertook tours of various parts of the province and propagated the Pashtoon cause on the above lines. The Pashtoons were exhorted to join the Anjuman and resist the British imperialism and its supporters in the FP. As there was no political journal in Pashto the Anjuman decided to publish a socio-political journal in Pashto. The first issue of *Pakhtun* came out in May 1928.[98] It contained articles on a variety of subjects including Pashtoon patriotism, Pashto language and literature, political essays, dramas, religious writings, and official and non-official news. Initially the circulation was limited to 500 copies but in course of time it rose to 3,000.

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[96]: Akbar, 'Autobiography', pp. 8-12; Khaleeq, *Azadi*, pp. 42-43.

[97]: This trend was evident in many other provinces of India in the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century. In the Punjab, for instance, Singh Sabha ideologues attempted to expand and standardise the Punjabi language. See H. Obhroi, *The Construction of Religious Boundaries, Culture, Identity and Diversity in the Sikh Tradition* (Delhi, 1994), pp. 348-350. In Bengal the Swadeshi Movement of 1903-08 encouraged the use of the Bengali language and inspired considerable linguistic research. This was the period when the folklorists collected Bengali folk songs and brought them together in a popular publication entitled *Thakumar jhuli.*(Grandma's Tales). S. Sarkar, *The Swadeshi Movement in Bengal 1903-1908* (Delhi, 1973), pp. 495-498.

Events in neighbouring Afghanistan changed the outlook of the Frontier intelligentsia. Amanullah had been ousted from power and Habibullah (Bacha Saqao), a bandit Tajik, had occupied the throne. The Anjuman members were indignant over the overthrow of Amanullah whom they regarded as the 'ideal Pashtoon king'. They sensed a British conspiracy behind the troubles in Afghanistan. The main reason for the British dislike of Amanullah was the 'extraordinary progress of reforms in a neighbouring [Muslim] state would support the demand for similar institutions in the Frontier Province, a demand which it was the policy of the Government to resist'.[99] Anti-government demonstrations were organised by the Anjuman. It was decided to send a Medical Mission under the auspices of the Anjuman with Dr. Khan Sahib, the elder brother of Abdul Ghaffar Khan who recently had joined the nationalist cause as its leader, to help crisis-ridden Afghanistan. In March 1929 Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Jaffar Shah were deputed by the Anjuman to seek a formal invitation to the Mission from Amanullah, who was then residing at Qandahar. To their chagrin they were not allowed to proceed to Afghanistan and their entry into Baluchistan was banned. They came back to Peshawar and resumed their pro-Amanullah activities. The Anjuman members toured the province and made a fervent appeal to the intelligentsia and the masses to support Amanullah's cause against the 'bandit King'. Simple methods were adopted for propaganda purposes. Mosques served as platforms for the Anjuman members, then the traditional Pashtoon *Hujras* (meeting places of adults) were used. Kinship and ethnic connections were also utilised.[100] Before anything could be achieved by the efforts of the Anjuman members, a desperate Amanullah proceeded to Italy, and settled there permanently.

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[98] : It was first published from Rawalpindi, then from Amritsar and finally from Peshawar. Abdul Ghaffar Khan was the editor and Khadim was the co-editor. In 1931 the co-editorship was given to Khaleeq who voluntarily left it in April 1947 and then Nazim Sarfaraz Khan became the co-editor. The journal appeared and disappeared at several times. The main reasons were bans on its publication and circulation by the government and the arrest of Abdul Ghaffar Khan. Its appearance as a monthly magazine continued until April 1930, then it was banned; it reappeared in 1931 for a short period and again was banned in December 1931. In May 1938 it reappeared (three in a month) and then was banned in 1940. In 1945 it reappeared and was again banned in August 1947. Prominent contributors included Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Jaffar Shah, Ahmad Shah, Khadim, Abdul Akbar Khan, Syeda Bushra Begum, Fazal Rahim Saqi, Kiramat Shah Faulad, Abdul Malik Fida, Abdul Ghani Khan, Abdul Wali Khan, Qazi Ataullah and many others. No exact figure is available about the total of published copies; it is estimated that about 225 issues appeared.

[99] : 'The Organisation of Political Agitation in Charssadda', DIG Police Report, IB, Peshawar, nd, F. No. 77-A, SBP, p. 101; 'A Secret Note on the Situation in the N-WFP', E. B. Howell, 24 May 1930, F. No. 206/1930 [Home/Poll.], National Archives of India (hereafter NAI), Delhi, pp. 2-3.

Mian Akbar Shah, an active member of the Anjuman, a talented youth of Islamia College, Peshawar, who had gone as far as the Soviet Union 'in search of freedom'[101] proposed the formation of a youth league on the pattern of such organisations in Afghanistan, Turkey and Bukhara. A meeting was convened on 1 September 1929 at Utmanzai and the formation of the Zalmo Jirga with its temporary headquarters at Utmanzai was announced. Abdul Ghaffar Khan, president of the Reception Committee served as host. Abdul Akbar Khan became the president and Ahmad Shah its secretary.[102] No exact age limit was fixed for its membership but the name itself indicated the composition of the organisation. Its membership was open to 'every youth without any discrimination of caste, creed or religion, provided he is literate', and that he, 'should not participate in any form of communalism'. Pashto was announced to be the official language of the Jirga's proceeding. Other objectives included the 'attainment of independence for Hindustan by all peaceful means'.[103]

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[100] : Interview Mian Farooq Shah, Peshawar, 14 November 1994; Abdul Akbar Khan, 'Autobiography', p. 84; DIG Police Report, F. No. 77-A, SBP, p. 103; *Pakhtun*, November 1929, pp. 39-45.

[101] : Akbar Shah, *Da Azadi Talash*, pp. 1-15.

[102] : *Pakhtun*, October 1929, p. 14; Abdul Ghaffar, *Zama Zhwand*, p. 350.

[103] : *Pakhtun*, October 1929, pp. 14-16.

Elaborating on the need of the formation of the Jirga, Ahmad Shah commented that the N-WFP had no organisation of its own. Congress and the Khilafat Committee were 'Indian Parties'. During the period of the Khilafat and Hijrat movements the inhabitants of the FP contributed enormously. 'Yesterday Afghanistan was in turmoil and flames. The Pakhtuns suffered heavily. We begged from door to door for donation but no one in India has given us a *paisa* although they have taken thousands from us'. He accused the leaders of the above organisations of failing to support the introduction of reforms in the N-WFP and of demanding 'Dominion Status' for themselves.[104] The Zalmo Jirga published a booklet in Pashto reiterating their demand for complete independence from colonial rule by peaceful means, and arguing that to achieve this end they would try to bring about harmony between Hindus and Muslims and the political awakening of the youth of the FP.[105]

To accommodate the majority of the uneducated sympathisers of the Pashtoon nationalists and the aged members of the community, another organisation Khudai Khidmatgars (Servants of God) was formed in November. This new organisation superseded the former and later on become most popular and influential in the N-WFP. Sarfaraz Khan became its first president and Hijab Gul the secretary. The party appealed to Pashtoons to join the organisation and help them in the eradication of social evils from Pashtoon society, to forge unity among their rank and file and to struggle for the liberation of their homeland from the foreign yoke.[106] Both of the organisations were working for the promotion of the Pashto language and literature, and were struggling for the 'purification' of Pashtoon society and for the independe of the Pashtoon region which they viewed as their *Watan* (homeland). The leaders were almost the same. A member after joining one organisation automatically became a member of the other organisation. The same group of Pashtoon intellectuals who were guiding the Jirga were in the forefront of the KKs. Within a short period a network of the KK organisation was established in the Pashtoon dominated areas of the province. Its emphasis on Pashtoon identity and values had very little appeal to the non-Pashtoons. No accurate figures are available about the exact number of the KK workers and its branches. Both official and non-official sources are silent about it. However, after consulting various sources, it can be put between 1200 and 1500. The remarkable feature of the organisation was the solid support for it in the rural areas, which hitherto had been neglected by other political organisations. Many reasons contributed to the popularity of the KKs. Various sections of the Pashtoon society interpreted the KK programme in their own way. To the Pashtoon intelligentsia, it was a movement for the revival of Pashtoon culture with its distinct identity. To the smaller Khans, it was a movement that demanded political reforms for the province that would enfranchise them and give them a greater role in governance. Its anti-colonial stand suited the majority of the anti-establishment Ulema, who always regarded British rule in the sub-continent as a 'curse'. For the peasants and other poor classes it was against their economic oppressors, British imperialism and its agents — the pro-British Nawabs, K.B.s and big Khans.[107]

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[104]: *Pakhtun*, January 1930, pp. 25-33.

[105]: Extracts from the N-WFP Secret Abstracts, 22 February 1930, F. No. 75, SBP, p. 3.

[106]: 'An Appeal to the Khudai Khidmatgars', Hijab Gul, *Pakhtun*, November 1929, p. 38.

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[107]: Interviews Mian Akbar Shah, Badrashi (Nowshera), 8 September 1984; Haji Mohammad Asim, Nowshera; 30 October 1984; Fazal Rahim Saqi, Wardaga, (Charssadda), 17 November 1991; Warris Khan, Rashakai (Nowshera), 3 June 1987; Qadir Shah, Baffa, 1 March 1992; Mir Mehdi Shah, Wahid Garhi, (Peshawar), 4 February 1989; Sarfaraz Khan, Boobak (Charssadda), 17 November 1991; Fazal Karim, Pabbi (Nowshera), 10 November 1994; Kiramat Shah Faulad, Peshawar, 8 March 1992.

To imbue the KKs with the capability of self-discipline and self-rule, the leaders had put great emphasis on discipline. The volunteers were organised and drilled in military formation and were given military ranks. Before joining the movement members had to pledge[108] that they would abstain from the use of violence, intrigues, family feuds and other vices. The volunteers were trained to undertake long marches on foot. Because of the poverty of the people, any special uniform for the volunteers was not possible; therefore, they were advised to have their ordinary clothes dipped in brown or chocolate colour, which was cheap and easily available. They were called 'Red Shirts' in government communiqués, and the word became so popular that the movement itself was styled thereafter as the Red Shirt movement. The colonial government made extensive propaganda against the KKs by equating them with the Bolsheviks and dubbed them Russian agents,[109] a charge always refuted by the KKs.[110]

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[108]: The volunteers had to take the following pledge before getting enrolled in the organisation: (translation):
'I call on God as a witness, and solemnly declare on oath that I will abide by the following principles:
1: With sincerity and faith, I offer my name for Khudai Khidmatgarship.
2: I will sacrifice my wealth, comfort and self in the service of my nation and for the liberation of my country.
3: I will never have 'para jamba' (party feeling), enmity with or wilfully oppose anybody; and I shall help the oppressed against the oppressor.
4: I will not become a member of any other rival party nor will I give security or apologise during the fight.
5: I will always obey every lawful order of every officer of mine.
6: I will always abide by the principle of non-violence.
7: I will serve all human beings alike, and my goal will be the attainment of the freedom of my country and my religion.
8: I will always perform good and noble deeds.
9: All my efforts will be directed to seeking the will of God and not towards mere show or becoming an office-holder'. F. No. 224, SBP, pp. 9-11.

[109]: 'The name "Red Shirts" was purposely introduced by the North-West Frontier Province administration as a popular substitute for the name "Khudai Khidmatgaran" or "the Servants of God", remarked the Viceroy. 'We obviously could not have used the latter phrase in official references, as it would have implied some kind of admission that we were dealing with an association of the pious and godly. Although it may be true that the Red Shirt movement was not inspired by the Bolsheviks, there was a good deal of communistic doctrine (including the use of sickle and hammer badges) connected with it. So the "red shirt" was not entirely an inappropriate term and I think it served its practical purpose pretty successfully'. Viceroy to Secretary of State, 16 August 1930, Halifax Collection, Mss. EUR., C. 152, IOLR, p. 225.

[110]: 'The very name Khudai Khidmatgar', remarked Yusufi, 'is anti-Bolshevist. The one means the Servants of God, the others are up against God'. Yusufi, *The Frontier Tragedy* (Lahore, 1930; rep. Karachi, 1986), p. 14.

The most remarkable feature of the KKs was the adoption of non-violence as their creed and their strict adherence to it. The volunteers were taught not to resort to violence; they bore no arms and carried no weapons. Abdul Ghaffar Khan believed that 'it is the only form of force which can have a lasting effect on the life of society and man'.[111] Traditional Pashtoon society, like many other tribal societies, was notorious for factionalism and violence. The Pashtoon reformers' main emphasis was on the prevention of blood-feuds in Frontier society. Inspiration was provided by giving examples from the lives of the Holy Prophet and other prophets, including Jesus Christ, of how they faced humiliation and oppression boldly by non-violent means.[112] The accounts of the lives of the holy men had a great impact on the mind of Pashtoons. The Pashtoons were exhausted by recurrent blood-feuds amongst themselves and were keen to remedy this situation. In adopting non-violence they were giving up a tradition that had caused immense sufferings for so many of them.[113] Moreover, the government always had superior arms compared with the people of the

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[111]: Halide Edib, *Inside India* (London, 1937), p. 336. 'The supreme test for faith in anything, religious or otherwise, must be the willingness of a man to lay down his life' she further remarked, 'There were many Indians who have received baton charges or went to prison. Yet some of them must have adopted non-violence because of physical timidity and a temperamental dislike to radical changes. But on the Frontier in general, and in the case of Abdul-Gaffar Khan in particular, there was none of this. The suppression of civil disobedience on the Frontiers was quite different from that in India proper. Men did face death. There was no question of physical timidity, neither any excuse for inaction nor a desire to maintain the *status quo* in Abdul-Gaffar Khan's case'. *ibid.* p. 337.

[112]: 'Congress and Muslims', Speech of Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Mongri Maidan, Calcutta, 4 April 1931, S. No. 1, Tendulkar Papers, NMML, p. 6. The biographers of Abdul Ghaffar Khan, including Tendulkar, Desai, Easwaran, Lalpuri, Korejo and Zutshi have wrongly attributed it to the non-violence of Gandhi, and argue that Abdul Ghaffar Khan's non-violence was a variant of the doctrine preached by Gandhi at the all-India level. The emphasis of these authors is misplaced. Gandhian non-violence had very little effect on the Pashtoons. The number of Congress workers in the Frontier before its affiliation with the KKs was less than that formally required for a separate Congress Committee. For more details see D. G. Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan* (Bombay, 1967), pp. 93, 174; M. Desai, *Two Servants of God* (Delhi, 1935), pp. 90-91; E. Easwaran *A Man to Match His Mountains* (California, 1985), pp. 105-113; G. Lalpuri, *Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan* (Delhi, 1985), pp. 139-140; M. S. Korejo, *The Frontier Gandhi His Place in History* (Karachi, 1994), pp. 48-62; G. L. Zutshi, *Frontier Gandhi* (Delhi, 1970), pp. 13, 31-32, 64, 117-118; and, R. S. Nagina, *Gandhiji Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan Ki Nazar Men* (Delhi, nd), pp. 9-11, 31-39.

[113]: Many of my informants emphasised how people were desirous of ending endemic violence caused by incessant conflicts, particularly property disputes among the *tarburs* (cousins). Interviews with Abdul Ghani Khan, Charssadda, 13 November 1994; Abdul Wali Khan, Charssadda, 25 October 1994; Mehdi Shah, Peshawar, 4 February 1989; Sarfaraz Khan, Charssadda, 17 November 1991; Umra Khan, Adina (Swabi), 7 March 1992; and Fazal Karim, Pabbi, 14 November 1994.

N-WFP. Despite the proximity of the tribal territory to the settled districts of the Frontier, which provided an excellent opportunity for 'outlaws' to take refuge in the independent tribal area beyond government control, they could hardly match the government war machinery. Violence could be countered by more violence but in following non-violence the Pashtoons could hardly be defeated. This sense of pride in registering victories over the authorities gave the KKs enormous popularity in the province. As will be apparent from subsequent discussion, their active involvement in the civil disobedience movement is a case in point.

Civil Disobedience Movement (1930-193[illegible]) and the Khudai Khidmatgars

In December 1929, at Lahore, under the presidentship of J. Nehru, the Congress pledged itself to the attainment of complete independence for India.[114] About two hundred people, Congress members, social workers and volunteers from the N-WFP, including prominent KKs attended the Congress session at Lahore. The primary aim of the Frontier delegates was to attract the attention of Indian leaders to the 'cramped Frontier atmosphere, caused by the oppressive laws and the humiliation they suffered in consequence of their having been denied even the ordinary reforms'.[115] The Congress leaders were apprised of the latest Frontier situation and they promised to send a Committee to enquire into the grievances of the Frontiersmen. On its return from Lahore, a split was reported in the Provincial Khilafat Committee. The majority of members showed their interest in Congress policy, while the other group remained loyal to the Central Khilafat Committee:[116] later on, on the revived Frontier ML joined it.

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[114]: S. B. Pattabhi, *History of the Indian National Congress*, I (Bombay, 1946),(henceforth *History*) pp. 339-361.

[115]: Bombwal, *Turbaned Brother of the Frontier Pathans* (nd, np), p. 3.

Abdul Ghaffar Khan endorsed the Congress programme of 'complete independence' and non-payment of taxes and revenues. On his return from Lahore he started a whirlwind tour of the province and informed the sympathisers of the KKs of events in Lahore and urged them to organise themselves on the Congress pattern.[117] More attention was given to the organisation of the volunteers and the enrolment of new workers. No exact enumeration of the members is available; however, their number was estimated as between 800 and 1000. A network of Jirgas was established in most parts of the province, followed by committees for *tappas* (for a cluster of villages). Next came the tehsil and district committees and then the provincial Jirga. All were elected bodies. Abdul Ghaffar Khan at times acted as the Commander-in-Chief. In that capacity he had to nominate certain heads of various units.

In March 1930, Gandhi decided to launch his civil disobedience movement against the government. On 12 March, accompanied by 79 volunteers, he started from Ahmedabad to Dandi, a village some 200 miles away on the seaside, to offer civil disobedience through the violation of the Salt Law. On 21 March the Congress Working Committee (hereafter CWC) met at Ahmedabad and endorsed Gandhi's decision. It further hoped that 'the whole country will respond' to it and thus 'bring the campaign for Purna Swaraj to a speedy and successful issue'. It directed all the PCCs to undertake civil disobedience 'as to them may seem proper and in the manner that may appear to them to be most suitable'.[118]

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[116] : 'Important Events in the N-WFP', CID Reports, F. No. 206/1930, (Home/Poll.), NAI, p. 19.
[117] : 'Lahore Congress and Abdul Ghaffar Khan', Jan Mohammad, *Khyber Mail*, Peshawar, 26 March 1939.

A branch of N-WFP Congress had been in existence since 1922. Owing to a lack of the numbers required for a Congress Committee, it had been amalgamated with the Punjab PCC. Bombwal became the secretary of the Frontier wing. Other prominent members included Hakim Abdul Jalil, C. C. Gosh, Lal Badshah, Ali Gul Khan, A. B. Yusufi and Khan Mir Hilali, Peshawar based urban socio-political workers of the province. Most of them had dual membership of Congress and the Khilafat Committees. No attention was paid to the rural areas, and with the exception of Mian Hamid Gul (Ziarat Ka Ka Sahib), who became famous as a national worker during the non-co-operation days by renouncing his pension, no one extended the organisation to the N-WFP rural areas. The Punjab PCC had little time to give to Frontier Congress affairs, with the 'sad result that there has been no Congress work worth the name'.[119] The N-WFP was not the only province where the Congress organisation was weak. At this time Congress in India was passing through a difficult phase and its reorganisation was in process.[120] The Frontier Congressmen resented the neglect of the Punjab Congress and decided to form their own Committee. On 17 November, without the approval of the central organisation, a Frontier Province Congress Committee (hereafter FPCC) with Lal Badshah as president; Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Abdur Rahim, pleader (D.I.Khan) as vice presidents and Habibullah Khan (Bannu) as secretary was formed.[121] The Frontier Congress workers were advised by the

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[118]: 'Circular to Provincial Congress Committees', (hereafter PCC), J. Nehru, 12 March 1930, F. No. P-1 (1930), p. 83, All India Congress Committee Papers (hereafter AICC), NMML; *Civil and Military Gazette*, Lahore (henceforth *C&MG*) 14 March 1930-23 March 1930, 9 April 1930; Brown, *Gandhi and Civil Disobedience: The Mahatma in Indian Politics 1928-34* (Cambridge, 1977), pp. 99-116.

[119]: Paira Khan to J Nehru, 18 November 1928, F. No. G-86 (1928), AICC, NMML, pp. 11-12; Khaleeq, *Azadi*, p. 74; Bokhari, *Bacha Khan*, p. 80.

[120]: For more details on the organisational matters of the Congress during the second and third decades of twentieth century see G. Krishna, 'The Development of the India National Congress as a Mass Organisation, 1918-1923', *The Journal of Asian Studies*, vol. XXV, Number 3, May 1966, pp. 413-430.

[121]: Paira Khan to Nehru, 18 November 1928, F. No. G-86 (1928), AICC, NMML, pp. 11-12.

Congress high command to function for the time being under the Punjab Congress till 'they are able to stand on their own legs'.[122] The AICC treated the N-WFP along with Burma as a 'special province' and exempted it from the application of the ordinary quota rule. The CWC decided that the provincial Congress must have 2000 members before it could be formally recognised as a separate Congress Committee.[123] By June 1930 the Congress members in the N-WFP were 108. By the end of July the reported number was 567.[124]

As directed by its central organisation, the FPCC decided to observe 26 January 1930 as 'Independence Day'. It requested Abdul Ghaffar Khan to utilise his influence and control in the rural areas of the province and to give full support to the Congress' intended civil disobedience.[125] The Day was observed but 'little interest was shown in the proceedings by residents of rural areas', reported a CID informer, 'with the noteworthy exception of Utmanzai, and the support given from that direction is attributable to Abdul Ghaffar Khan'.[126] Until late March Abdul Ghaffar Khan was busy with the organisational affairs of the KKs. However, he made a two-week tour of the southern districts to inform the like-minded public of the Congress programme and of the intending visit of the promised Enquiry Committee by the Congress to investigate the notorious FCR and other 'obnoxious measures' of the government which 'have made the life of the ordinary citizen unbearable' and to devise means for their early abrogation.[127] Abdul Ghaffar Khan's main emphasis, however, remained on the independence of the country, by which he meant both the N-WFP and India, from the foreign yoke. According to him the province and the sub-continent were inextricably linked, and there was no better Jihad than to get rid of imperialism.[128]

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[122]: Nehru to C. C. Ghosh, 24 November 1928, F. No. G-86 (1928), AICC, NMML, p. 9; P. Sharma to Secretary AICC, 26 November 1928, *ibid*, pp. 3-4.

[123]: Supplement to the Congress Bulletin, 27 September 1929, F. No. P-30 [iii], (1929), AICC, NMML, p. 124.

[124]: Paira Khan to Secretary, AICC, 5 July 1929 and 26 July 1929, F. No. P-30 [ii], (1929), AICC, NMML, pp. 55, 151-152.

[125]: Paira Khan to Nehru, 14 March 1930, F. No. P-17 (1930), AICC, NMML, pp. 15-16; Congress-cum-Red Shirt Activities', Peshawar, F. No. 14, SBP, p. 145.

[126]: Summary of Political Situation in the N-WFP, 1 February 1930, CID Diaries, SBP, p. 153.

On 15 April the Frontier Congress workers brought special clay from Pabbi and manufactured salt. No arrests were made.[129] The next step was the picketing of liquor shops and 23 April was selected for that purpose. Their object was to invite arrests and thus stimulate public sympathy in favour of Congress.[130] The time coincided with the annual meeting of the Azad school, Utmanzai, held on 19-20 April 1930, attended by a representative gathering of members of Zalmo Jirga, the KKs, Khilafat Committee and FPCC. The participants were about 1200. After the deliberations of the meeting, they were invited to join the Congress' civil disobedience.[131] Meanwhile the members of the Congress Enquiry Committee were prevented from entering the N-WFP,[132] which aroused more feeling against the government. On the night of 23 April, leaders of the FPCC were arrested. Furthermore, to avoid 'unrest' in the rural areas of the province, it was decided that all the prominent members of the KKs should also be arrested.[133] However, Allah Bakhsh Barqi and Ghulam Rabbani, two prominent Congressmen from Peshawar city, avoided arrest at night and surrendered next morning. It worsened the already disturbed situation, and led to indiscriminate firing on unarmed Congress volunteers at Qissa Khwani Bazaar, resulting in the deaths of about two hundred on the spot.[134] Abdul Ghaffar Khan and other KK leaders were sentenced to three years imprisonment and were sent to Gujrat prison in the Punjab.[135]

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[127]: Dr. S. Mahmud, Dr. S. Kitchlew and Lala Duni Chand were the members of the Congress Enquiry Committee which was appointed by the Congress to inquire into the oppressive measures in the N-WFP. *C&MG*, 10 January 1930.

[128]: 'I belong to that party', Abdul Ghaffar Khan told the audience in Bannu, 'which intends to free the country from the clutches of the tyrant English people, who have not only ruined India but almost the whole Islamic world, who are responsible for the destruction of Afghanistan, and whose hands are still red with the blood of innocent Afghan martyrs... Oh Pakhtun brothers, what has happened to you? Your brethren and neighbours, the Wazirs, who live only ten miles away, have shed their blood in guarding their bare hills from foreign interference, yet you can do nothing for your fertile country. You should learn a lesson. There is no better 'Jihad' from the point of view of Islam than to free your own country from slavery and a foreign yoke'. Rittenberg, 'Independence Movement', p. 96.

[129]: Abdul Akbar Khan, 'Autobiography', p. 111.

[130]: Circular No 9, Nehru to Secretaries PCCs, 25 March 1930, F. No. P-1 (1930), AICC, NMML, p. 61.

[131]: Abdul Akbar Khan, 'Autobiography', pp. 110-117. More details can be seen in Ahmad, *Khudai Khidmatgar Tehreek* (Peshawar, 1991), pp. 182-193; Khaleeq, *Azadi*, pp. 63-65; Abdul Ghaffar, *Zama Zhwand*, pp. 354-356.

[132]: *C&MG*, 24 April 1930.

The Qissa Khwani Bazaar massacre was followed by a second shooting incident at Peshawar on 31 May, 12 persons being killed. On 16 May Utmanzai was ravaged by troops. On 25 May, Takkar, a village in Mardan was attacked by the troops and the sympathisers of the KKs were incarcerated. On 24 August a protest meeting at Hathi Khel (Bannu) was fired upon; 70 persons were killed. Frequent firings on non-violent KKs and lathi-charges became a routine. The KKs were beaten, their clothes were torn to pieces, their property was looted and houses set ablaze, the 'sanctity of four walls' was violated, many were stripped naked — the worst insult to a Pashtoon, and many more were handled roughly in their private parts. The KKs bore all the atrocities and the worst kinds of humiliation with forbearance, courage and boldness, and did not retaliate.[136] The Pashtoon majority areas, Peshawar Valley, Mardan, Bannu and some parts of Kohat were the worst affected areas, while in the D.I.Khan and especially in Hazara 'no disturbance in the proper sense of the word occurred'.[137] A ban was put on the KKs, Zalmo Jirga, FPCC and Naujawan Bharat Sabha (Frontier Branch). On 16 August Martial Law was declared in the province. For the time being the province was cut off from the rest of India; visits to and from the province were not allowed and communications were strictly censored. The government composed proclamations, dropping them by aeroplanes and distributing them among the Khans, Chiefs and other leading pro-government men in the Frontier through the *tehsildars* and *patwaris*, asking them to help the government, and in reward it 'will consider your demands and remedy your evils'.[138]

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[133] : O. Caroe, 'Spring of Enchantment' (unpublished manuscript), Caroe Papers, Mss. EUR., F. 203, IOLR, p. 239; Secret Report on the Situation in Peshawar, F. C. Isemonger, IGP, N-WFP, May 1931, F. No. 54, SBP, p. 16.

[134] : According to the official sources the number of casualties was 30 killed and 33 wounded (*C&MG* 9 July 1930; and Viceroy to Secretary of State, 27 April 1930, Mss. EUR., C. 152/11, IOLR, p. 102); while the Congress Enquiry Committee gave the number of killed as more than 125 and numerous wounded. *Report [With Evidence]of the Peshawar Enquiry Committee,*(appointed by the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress) (Allahabad, 1930), pp. 6-28. However, according to some indigenous and other sources the estimated deaths were about 200.

[135] : Arrest of Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Other Agitators of Charssadda Sub Division, Copy of a Report from AC, Charssadda to DC, Peshawar, 26 April 1930, F. No. 255/V, (Home/Poll.) (1930), Tendulkar Papers, NMML, pp. 1172-1173; *C&MG*, 28 April 1930.

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[136] : 'The caps were taken off, clothes were torn so much so that there were some persons who were made absolutely naked, and they had nothing even to hide [sic] their private parts. The Pathans did not retaliate with violence, but quietly bore all this insult with patience. The Frontier Pathans who regard a knife as an ordinary weapon and who have fire-arms in their houses and who are ready to kill even for a piece of bread remained non-violent in spite of such provocation and only shouted 'Inqilab Zindabad'. (Statement of Lok Nath, a dentist from Bannu, before *Peshawar Enquiry Committee*, p. 86. More details on the repression of the KKs can be seen in *The Frontier Tragedy* (Khilafat Committee Report, Lahore, 1930, rep. Karachi, 1986), pp. 1-57; Jaffar Shah, Abdullah Shah, *A Statement of Facts About the Present Situation in the N-WFP* (Lahore, 1930), pp. 1-12; Report of Devadas Gandhi on the N-WFProvince (1931), F. No. P-16 (1932), AICC Papers, NMML, pp. 165-199; Annual Report of Congress Working Committee, December 1931,F. No. 85 (1931), AICC Papers, NMML, pp. 11-13, 55-63 and 175; Mss. EUR. F. No. 203/80, IOLR, p. 89; Ahmad, *Khudai Khidmatgar Tehreek*, pp. 182-426; Abdul Wali Khan, *Bacha Khan Au Khudai Khidmatgari* (Peshawar, 1993), pp. 95-105; Warris Khan, *Da Azadi Tehreek* (Peshawar, 1988), pp. 82-84; G. L. Mallam, 'The Imperial Frontier' (unpublished manuscript, CSASC), pp. 88-156; L. Mallam, D. Day, 'A Pair of Chaplis and a Cassock' (unpublished manuscript, Mallam Papers, CSASC), p. 54; Interviews with Abdul Aziz, Shewa (Swabi), 7 March 1992; Qadir Shah, Baffa, 1 March 1992; Khaista Mir, Farmuli (Swabi), 7 March 1992; Nabat Khan, Yar Hussain (Swabi), 6 March 1992; Ajun Khan, Yaqoobi (Swabi), 6 March 1992; Ghazi Khan, Pabbi, 10 November 1994; Gul Rahman, Abdul Malik, Jalsai (Swabi), 7 June 1992; Mohabbat Shah, Jalsai, 7 June 1992; Muffarah Shah, Asim Khan, Maneri (Swabi), 5 June 1992; Azim Khan, Mehraban Shah, Naubat Khan, Dagai (Swabi), 5 June 1992; Fazl Hadi, Ismaila (Swabi), 6 June 1992; Amir Nawas, Shah Mansoor (Swabi), 6 June 1992 and Mohammad Arif, Marghuz (Swabi), 6 June 1992.

[137] : 'Report on the Causes of the Recent Disturbances in Peshawar and Other Districts of the N-WFP', Chief Commissioner to Foreign Secretary to Government of India, 13 February 1931, F. No. 22/37, KW (1931), NAI, pp. 1-14.

[138] : Following is the literal translation of the Chief Commissioner's proclamation:

'To Khans, Chiefs and the leading men of the District and the City:

You people have personally witnessed how the Congress has tried and is still trying to upset the system of established Government. If it becomes successful, though there is no hope of success, what would be the consequences? Is the Congress going to leave you with your landed property, Jagirs and Muafis? Is it going to protect your Frontiers? Will it maintain law and order amongst the people? Are you willing to come under the sway of Congress?

Khudai Khidmatgars' Affiliation With Congress

The government repression of the KKs added further to its popularity. Before 1930 the number of KKs was about one thousand but after the 'unscrupulous' attitude of the Frontier authorities their number exceeded twenty-five thousand.[139] The government was trying to prove a KK connection with the Bolsheviks. The KKs were accused of being Bolshevik agents, trained in Russia and sent back to the N-WFP 'to take advantage of the economic or other unrest in the Frontier'.[140] Jaffar Shah and Abdullah Shah, two underground members of the KKs, found their way to Gujrat jail, met Abdul Ghaffar Khan and other KK leaders, and apprised them of the latest Frontier situation. After prolonged discussion in secret, it was decided to affiliate the organisation with one of the national organisations of India. Jaffar Shah, being an old Khilafatist, had friends in the Punjab. He contacted Malik Lal Khan and through him Sir Fazl-i-Hussain, one of the prominent members of the Viceroy's Executive Council, and asked for his support. To the utter despair of the Frontier delegates they were refused support against the British government.[141] Their next choice was Congress. Congress, which had already been involved in Frontier affairs since the despatch of its earlier Committees to the N-WFP, welcomed the KKs as both were fighting against

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'I am sure that you do not want to be governed by the Congress Committees. Now it is high time for you to help the Government, which has ever been benevolent to you and has done justice towards you. What help can you render to the Government? You must prevent Congress volunteers wearing red jackets from entering into your villages.

'They called themselves 'Khudai Khidmatgars' (Servants of God), but in reality they are the servants of Gandhi. They wear the apparel of the Bolsheviks and they are no other than the Bolsheviks. They will create the same atmosphere of which you have heard in Bolshevik dominations.

'You can prevent meetings being held in your areas and can help your officials. Do this work at once. The Government as usual, will consider your demands and remedy your evils'. *C&MG*, 14 May 1930.

[139] : Yusufi, *Meet the Frontier Gandhi*, p. 58.

[140] : *C&MG*, 21 July 1930.

[141] : Mian Ata ud Din, 'Memoirs' (unpublished), pp. 17-18; Wali, *Bacha Khan*, p. 105; M. Yunus, *Frontier Speaks* (Lahore, nd), p. 158.

the imperialism and were undergoing government suppression.[142] It paid a tribute to Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his associates who were resisting imperialism in that part of the sub-continent and 'have borne in a spirit of patriotic non-violence all the repression to which they have been subjected'.[143] Abdul Ghaffar Khan and other KKs were released in March 1931 under the Gandhi-Irwin Pact.[144] The KK leaders were invited to the Congress' annual session at Karachi. On 30 March, Abdul Ghaffar Khan was asked to declare openly his association with Congress, which accordingly he did. On 9 August 1931 the Zalmo Jirga and the KK were formally federated with Congress, retaining their separate identity. Abdul Ghaffar Khan was made the leader of these organisations in the FP.[145]

Abdul Ghaffar Khan was criticised by a section of the Frontier Muslims for merging the KKs with the Hindu-dominated Congress. Some of his close associates, including Abdul Akbar Khan, Khadim and Ahmad Shah, saw the KKs losing their separate identity in the merger with Congress. Khadim was indignant over the 'influence of the non-Muslims' on the organisation.[146] Abdul Ghaffar Khan responded to the allegations and said that he did it as a last resort because the Pashtoons needed help from outside the province in view of the atrocities and imprisonment that they were subjected to by the colonial government. He could see no harm to Pashtoon interests in joining with Congress. He cited examples from the life of the Holy Prophet, who made certain alliances with Jews and Christians to safeguard the interests of Muslims. So, according to Abdul Ghaffar Khan, it was not sinful to join with Hindus and others in their joint struggle against the British imperialism.[147] The KKs, a regional organisation, became part of the national stream of politics after its merger with Congress. It gained popularity on an all-India level and its leader, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, due to his dedication to the cause of Indian freedom and his adoption of non-violence as a creed, was bestowed the title of 'Frontier Gandhi' by the like-minded Indian people.

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[142]: Jaffar Shah, Mian Abdullah Shah, *Statement of Facts*, pp. 11-12.

[143]: Working Committee Resolutions, Congress Bulletin No. 13, 27 August 1930, F. No. 1(1930), AICC, NMML, p. 11.

[144]: On 5 March a provisional settlement was reached between the government of India and the Congress known as the Gandhi-Irwin Pact. The government agreed to release the arrested Congress political prisoners arrested during the civil disobedience and to withdraw the Ordinances promulgated in connection with the Congress' movement. Congress agreed to stop the civil disobedience movement and end the boycott of British goods. For details see Annual Report of the CWC, December 1931, F. No. 85 (1931), AICC, NMML, pp. 11-19, 26-29; IAR, 1931, I, pp. 83-85; Brown, *Gandhi and Civil Disobedience*, pp. 153-241.

[145]: 'Frontier Congress Affairs', A Statement by the Secretary AICC, 10 August 1931, S No. 1, Tendulkar, NMML, pp. 71-73; Nehru to Abdul Ghaffar Khan, 2 October 1931, P-17(1931), AICC, NMML, pp. 159-166; Report of Devadas Gandhi on the N-WFProvince (1931), F. No. P-16 (1932), AICC, NMML, pp. 198-199; Report on Karachi Congress, F. No. 4, SBP, p. 209; Khaleeq, *Azadi*, pp. 100-101.

[146]: Press Statement of Abdul Akbar Khan and Mian Ahmad Shah, nd, S No. 3, Tendulkar, NMML, pp. 914-918. The following verse was recited by Khadim on that occasion:
Bacha Imam Za Muqtadi Wum
Gandhi Imam Sho Zaka Zan La Niyat Tarhama.
(When Bacha [Khan] was leading the prayers, I followed
Now Gandhi become the 'Imam' so I am offering my prayers separately).

During the second phase of the Congress civil disobedience (1931-1934), Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the Frontier remained at the forefront of the national struggle. In December 1931, after the failure of compromise talks between Gandhi and the British in the second Round Table Conference at London, there was a general crackdown on the KKs. The leaders were arrested and the rank and file of the KKs incarcerated. The Frontier Congress and the KK organisation were banned. On 24 December the government of India issued three Ordinances, applicable to the N-WFP — the Emergency Powers Ordinance, the Unlawful Association Ordinance and the Unlawful Instigation Ordinance. The Ordinances gave the Frontier authorities wide, and, to quote the KKs, 'unchecked' powers to exercise against the political workers opposing the government. They were empowered to arrest, detain or control people on suspicion.[148] Gandhi, on his arrival in India on 28 December, was informed of the arrest of Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his associates and of the firing on un-armed KKs. He regarded it as the 'Christmas presents' that Willingdon, the Viceroy, chose to send him on his return to India. [149] Gandhi, reiterating his solidarity with his Frontier comrades, declared

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[147]: Abdul Ghaffar Khan 'Za Au Congress', *Pakhtun*, June-July 1931, pp. 5-10; 1 August 1938, pp. 22-23.
[148]: Ordinances in the N-WFP, 24 December 1931, *IAR*, 1931, II, p. 30. 'If Government was satisfied', according to V. Elwin, 'that there were any reasonable grounds for believing that any person had acted, was

> Last year we faced lathis, but this time we must be prepared to face bullets. I do not wish that the Pathans in the Frontier alone should court bullets. If bullets are to be faced, Bombay and Gujrat also must take their share.[150]

Justifying the promulgation of Ordinances and the arrest of the KKs, the Viceroy was unwilling to discuss the Frontier affairs with Gandhi. 'No Government', according to the Viceroy, 'consistent with the discharge of their responsibility, can be subject to conditions sought to be imposed under the menace of unlawful action by any political organisation,...'.[151]

After the arrest of the KK leaders, the provincial authorities let loose the police and other law enforcing agencies to deal with the opponents of the government in 'their own way'. On minor pretexts the KKs were mercilessly beaten. The burning of houses, looting and destruction of property, forcible entry into houses, blockading of entire villages, looting of crops and marching of columns in rural areas were only a few of the many examples of the police excesses in Peshawar Valley. The volunteers

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acting or was about to act in a manner prejudicial to public safety he might be directed not to enter, reside or remain in any specified area. Penalty for disobedience was two years imprisonment, or fine or both. Officials were given powers to take possession of buildings, to control the supply of certain commodities of general use, to establish special courts and to outlaw any association which they might consider dangerous'. 'What is Happening in the North-West Frontier', Report of Father Verrier Elwin, [1932], F. No. 11 (1927), AICC, NMML, p. 8.

[149]: Speech at a Public Meeting, Bombay, 28 December 1931, *CWMG*, 48, (Ahmedabad, 1971), pp. 446-448.

[150]: *ibid.*

[151]: Telegram from Private Secretary to the Viceroy, 2 January 1932, *CWMG*, 48, p. 503.

were fired upon; in Kohat in one incident fifty KKs were killed. In Bannu the military was called to help the civil administration to restore order. In D.I.Khan the situation remained under the control of the police. In Hazara, however, no trouble was reported.[152] The provincial authorities accepted the responsibility for their brutal acts but felt they could not plunge into the question of enquiries into these matters. The police actions were defended by the Frontier Governor, as according to him they were 'faced with a supremely difficult task in dealing with the Red Shirt movement and it was vitally important to take no action which might undermine their morale'.[153] By 1933, with the exception of Peshawar Valley, the civil disobedience in the rest of the province had become ineffective. Spasmodic agitation continued until the movement was called off by Gandhi in April 1934.[154] While the Congress workers in the rest of India were released, astonishingly the Frontier Congressmen and the KKs were not released and the organisation in the N-WFP remained banned. Their release was demanded by the CWC[155] but it was informed by the government that keeping in view the past record of its activities, the government had no intention either of releasing the KKs or of withdrawing the ban on the organisation.[156] Later on a shift in government policy was perceptible. Though the ban was retained, the KKs, excluding the Khan

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[152] : These details are taken from a number of sources including: Report of Devadas Gandhi, p. 165; *Condition of India* (Report of the Delegation sent to India by India League in 1932), (London, 1933); 'What is Happening in the North-West Frontier', Elwin, p. 8; Correspondence between the Viceroy and Secretary of State, Mss. EUR., C 152, IOLR, pp. 285-286; correspondence between the Secretary of State and the Viceroy, Templewood Collection, Mss. EUR., E 240/11(a), IOLR, pp. 88-89; V. Elwin, *Truth About India: Can We Get It?* (London, 1932), p. 83; Ahmad, *Khudai Khidmatgar Tehreek*, pp. 557-625; Correspondence between Gandhi, Viceroy, Emerson, and with Abdul Ghaffar Khan, *CWMG*, 48; Brown, *Gandhi and Civil Disobedience*, p. 278; Special CID Diaries, March-May 1931, F. No. 23, SBP, pp. 40-49, 69-97; Circular No. 24/P1/2127, 311 August 1931, F. No. P-1(1931), AICC, NMML, p. 39; *Zamindar*, Lahore, 18 April 1931; *IAR*, 1931, I and II; M. N. Chaudhri, *The Congress in Power* (Lahore, 1947), p. 34 and R. J. Moore, *The Crisis of Indian Unity 1917-1940* (Oxford, 1947), p. 247.

[153] : C. H. Gidney to H. W. Emerson, 25 June 1932, F. No. 40/V 32, Poll. S No. 4 Tendulkar, NMML, pp. 1028-1029.

[154] : Moore, *The Crisis of Indian Unity*, p. 295.

[155] : J. Bajaj to Secretary Home Dept., 12 June 1934, *IAR*, 1934, I, p. 299.

[156] : Ban on the Khudai Khidmatgars, *IAR*, 1934, I, pp. 298-299.

Brothers, were released. By the end of 1934, Congress agreed to take part in the impending elections for the Central Assembly. Khan Sahib, then imprisoned in Hazari Bagh Jail, was nominated as the official Congress candidate.[157] The Khan Brothers were released from prison on 27 August but were not allowed to enter the N-WFP. Abdul Ghaffar Khan delivered a number of speeches, some of which were considered as 'anti-government and seditious', and was accused of inciting the public against the government. On 7 December, he was re-arrested, convicted under section 124 of Indian Penal Code (henceforth IPC) and sentenced to two years Rigorous Imprisonment.[158] On 1 August he was released but not allowed to enter the Punjab or the N-WFP until 29 November 1937.[159] By the time he was allowed to enter the Frontier, there was a significant change in the political atmosphere of the Indian sub-continent. The time of confrontation had gone, giving way to parliamentary politics and Congress' full participation in this process.

The most significant aspect of the whole civil disobedience on the Frontier was the strict adherence of the KKs to non-violence. Despite the worst kind of repression by the Frontier authorities against the KKs they remained non-violent, a fact confirmed by the members of the India League who visited India to collect correct information 'about the state of affairs' there.[160] According to them

> the severity of the repression [in the N-WFP] has produced something like a state of war on the Frontier. Yet, though the display of force on the British

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[157] : The provincial Congress had nominated Khan Sahib as a party candidate to contest the CLA elections held in November 1934. His opponents were Haider Zaman Khan (Hazara), a nominee of Sir A. Qaiyum, supported by pro-government Khans and Ram Das Bagai (Bannu), a Mahasabhite Hindu, assisted by M. C. Khanna. Khan Sahib, won the seat by defeating his rivals securing 2884 votes against 1519 and 1072 votes respectively. For details see, Shad Mohammad, 'Deed Wa Shuneed', II, (Peshawar, unpublished), pp. 22-31; Yusufi, *Jaddo Jehad*, pp. 662-665; Khaleeq, *Azadi*, pp. 123-124, and, Gandhi to Saadullah Khan, 22 November 1934, *CWMG*, 59, (Ahmedabad, 1974), p. 385.

[158] : *IAR*, 1934, II, p. 226.

[159] : *IAR*, 1936, II, pp. 187, 213; F. No. P-22 (1936), AICC, NMML, p. 3.

[160] : The members of India League (formerly the Commonwealth of India League) included: Bertrand Russell (Chairman), J. F. Horrabin, T. Williams, Anne C. Wilkinson, J. Marley and K. Menon. *Conditions of India*, pp. 521-522.

> side is overwhelming, no British official claimed that the movement had been crushed. That non-violence against the persons of British officials still remains the rigidly observed rule of the national movement in an area where arms are so readily obtainable, and in fact are openly and usually owned by the villagers, is a tribute to the sincerity with which the creed has been embraced.[161]

The same characteristic of the movement was also mentioned by AICC. They lauded the services of Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the KKs in the national cause and praised their strict adherence to non-violence; otherwise the FP, according to the Congress Bulletin, 'would by now had witnessed a wholesale massacre of the European population'.[162] The Pashtoons had ammunition in abundance in their houses. Only a few miles away, the arms factories in the tribal belt manufactured all sorts of arms which, if the Pashtoon had desired, they could easily have smuggled into the settled districts. It was the strict adherence to non-violence by the KKs that they remain non-violent in the whole civil disobedience movement.

Constitutional Developments

A review of government and politics as they developed in the province in the twentieth century would remain incomplete without any reference to constitutional developments. From the annexation of the Punjab in 1849 until 1901, the Pashto-speaking Frontier districts of Peshawar, Kohat, Bannu, Hazara, and D.I.Khan remained within the Punjab province. The Punjab government also held control over the adjoining border tracts of Malakand, Khyber, Kurram, North Waziristan and South Waziristan, styled as political agencies. Curzon, who had an extensive knowledge of the area, believed that the region could be effectively administered only if it was accorded the status of a province.[163] Consequently, as a result of Curzon's initiative, the North-West Frontier Province came into being in 1901(see above pp. 55-56).

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[161] : *Conditions of India*, p. 27.

[162] : Special Bulletin, AICC, No. 1, 30 March 1932, F. No. 12 (1932), AICC, NMML, p. 285.

Despite gaining a higher constitutional status and presumably greater autonomy, the new province was denied the benefits of the Morley-Minto reforms of 1909 and the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms of 1919. The government viewed the settled districts as inseparable from the tribal territories and firmly believed that it would be inexpedient, almost suicidal,[164] to offer representative institutions to the FP. In its opinion a large number of the crimes committed in the settled districts areas were the handiwork of tribesmen or of their accomplices in the settled areas, who after committing the crimes sought safety from the authorities in the tribal areas. The government regarded the entire region as unstable, as prone to crime, and as strategically located, hence unfit for any form of self-government, limited as the existing schemes of the time were in any case. As late as 1927, the Simon Commission (appointed that year to re-examine the constitutional development of India and the working of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms) made these arguments quite forcefully.[165]

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[163]: Curzon to Lord G. Hamilton, 9 March 1899, quoted in Baha, *N-WFP Administration*, p. 18.

[164]: The Government's view was shared by the minority community representatives in the N-WFP. 'In fact,' according to Khanna, their spokesman, 'we are dealing with a province which is mainly Pathan in constitution, where blood feud is endemic and where the people can be easily excited in extremes for weal and for woe'. 'I am of considered opinion', he added, 'that it will be a great political suicide to introduce in this province at this time any Reforms whether in the form of democratic institutions or otherwise'. Protecting and safeguarding the interests of his community in the British India, he inextricably linked the finances of the Frontier Province with the rest of India. 'The province is too small in size', remarked Khanna, 'and the revenue already cannot balance its expenditure. In case the reforms are introduced it will be a still further drain on the Indian exchequer. Why should the rest of India [predominantly Hindus] pay for Reforms in this Province which will make the state of Hindus here rather worse'. M. C. Khanna to J. Simon, 26 March 1928, Simon Collection, Mss. EUR. F No. 77/132, IORL, pp. 31-32.

The vast majority of the educated population of the province was anxious that they be treated the same as the other provinces of India on the question of constitutional reforms.[166] However, the Hindu minority, feeling insecure, looked for official protection. Not only did it oppose the introduction of constitutional reforms; it asked for further strengthening of the power and authority of the executive. Its leaders also advocated re-amalgamation of the Frontier with the Punjab.[167] By the 1920's the AIML was enthusiastically supporting the demand for reforms while Congress was indifferent to the debate. Many Frontier politicians persuasively and passionately argued the case for self-government. They declared that the government's attempts to withhold it from them were tantamount to its believing that the Frontier people were not Indians.[168] During the early 1930's the KKs mobilised a massive movement for the purpose. By now they had thrown their lot with Congress in the anti-imperialist struggle, with the result that by 1931 the latter too was demanding representative government and 'complete autonomy' for the province.[169] As a result of the pressure of the mass movement, the British conceded the status of a Governor's province to the N-WFP. On 18 April the Viceroy inaugurated the new Legislative Assembly.[170] Thus a long outstanding demand of the politically conscious people of the N-WFP was fulfilled. Henceforth, the FP would share the benefits of all future reforms enjoyed by the rest of India.

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[165] : *Report*, I, pp. 321-322. For more details see relevant files in the Simon Collection, Mss. EUR. F 77/16, (p. 111), F 77/130, (p. 3), F 77/132, (pp. 7-8, 19, 22, 25, 31-32, 54, 61, 98, 122, 104), F 77/133, (pp. 8-9, 231); *Report of the Indian Statutory Commission Volume II- Recommendations*, (London, 1930), pp. 101-104; *Report of the Indian Central Committee, 1928-1929*, (London, 1929), pp. 60-65, 180-181, 207, 354; and, *Report on the Indian Constitutional Reforms*, (Calcutta, 1918), pp. 1, 29-30, 129, 222.

[166] : 'Demands of the Muslim Delegates Presented Before the Simon Commission', *Report*, I, pp. 323-324. More details can be seen in G. Cunningham 'Reforms in the North-West Frontier Province of India', *Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society*, XXIV (I), January 1937, pp. 90-101.

[167] : Obhrai, *The Evolution*, p. 92. For more details see Bombwal, *Punjab Kesari*, p. 4. The debate on the re-amalgamation of the Frontier with the Punjab can also be seen in the *Punjab Legislative Council Debates, Volume IV, 2-3 August 1922*, (Lahore, 1923), pp. 135-197; Sir William Vincent's reply to Dr. Anand Pal, *Central Legislative Assembly Debates, 19 September 1921*, (Simla, 1922), pp. 426-427 and Extracts from *The Frontier Enquiry Committee Report*, F. No. 206, AFM, pp. 14(h)-14(i).

[168] : Liaquat Ali, *Resolutions of All-India Muslim League from May 1924 to December 1936* (Delhi, nd), pp. 1, 18, 48. Also see S. S. Pirzada, *Foundations of Pakistan*, II, (Karachi, 1969), p. 26. Sir A. Qaiyum, *CLAD*, 8 September 1925, pp. 978-980. Also see *ibid.*, pp. 1296-1318. While demanding reforms for the N-WFP, Sir A. Qaiyum asked the Government members '...can the Hon'ble Members occupying the opposite Benches say that we are not Indians' and 'that we are not part and parcel of India, that we have our sympathies more with the Afghans than with the peoples of these parts? Have we not fought against the Arabs? Have we not fought against the Turks? Have we not fought more than once against the Afghans themselves? Who defended the borders of India in 1919 and who has got the credit for it? In these circumstances will you not call me an Indian, even if I happen to oppose you? How many lives have we sacrificed for the purpose of defending the frontier of India? Are not the bones of my forefathers lying in the soil of Delhi? Are not the bones of thousand and one Pathans and other tribes lying in Delhi? Have not the Lodhis, Shershahis, Sherwanis and other tribes settled down in India? Then, why cannot a man coming from Peshawar be called an Indian if those people can be called Indians? ...I claim to be an Indian, and I claim my province to be a part and parcel of India. I have submitted to all your laws including the Indian Penal Code. All that I now ask is this. Why do you not apply another act to our province which is called the Government of India Act. What is there to prevent you from applying it to our province? You call this Act

Conclusion

This chapter has explained the emergence of the KKs and has analysed the reasons for their popularity. It has shown how early attempts at social reform in the Frontier culminated in the formation of a political party. The KK evolved ideas of non-violence on their own independently of Congress, and allied with the latter because their

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the Government of India Act. Why should you not extend it and apply it to the frontier when you can apply the Indian Penal Code to us?'. *ibid.*, p. 1310.

[169]: 'A Note on the Political Situation of the North-West Frontier Province', by H. W. Emerson, 26 May 1930, F. No. 206/1930 (Home/Poll), NAI, pp. 1-9. 'Memorandum from the Deputy Commissioner Peshawar to the Secretary of Chief Commissioner, NWFP', No. 976, dated 9 September 1930, F No. 22/37 KW 1931, *ibid.*, pp. 4 - 5. Also see 'Report on the Causes of Recent Disturbances in Peshawar and the Other Districts of the N-WFP', Confidential Letter from the Chief Commissioner, N-WFP to the Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, New Delhi, No. 602 PC, dated Peshawar 13 February 1931, F No. 22/37 KW 1931, NAI, p. 1; 'Record of a Meeting Between Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Emerson', 29 August 1931, S. No. 3, Part II, Tendulkar Papers, NMML, p. 876.

[170]: *IAR*, 1931, II, pp. 445-446 and *IAR*, 1932, I, p. 265. Also see *N-WFP Legislative Council Debates, 1932, I*, (Peshawar, 1933), pp. 1-2.

committed anti-imperialist politics. Not only did the KKs revitalise Pashtoon society and culture, but they also brought the Frontier to the centre-stage of nationalist politics. The KKs and the Congress worked together very closely, and during important political episodes 'merged' into each other. It can be said that while not all the Frontier Congressmen were members of the KK, all the KKs were seen as supporters, even members of Congress; yet the KKs never lost their separate identity. They were the prime movers of the alliance and Congress was able to register a presence in the province because of them. As the pre-eminent political formation of the Frontier, the KK-Congress alliance got its first chance to give political shape to its vision when it came to power in the province in 1937. The next chapter examines their performance in office.

CHAPTER THREE

THE FRONTIER CONGRESS IN OFFICE 1937-1939

This chapter analyses the elections of 1937 and examines the contest between various political groups and organisations for supremacy in the provincial assembly. It discusses the functioning of the 1937 Frontier Congress ministry. Further, it focuses on certain measures taken by the Congress ministry to relieve the majority of the peasants and the ordinary KKs from the burden of heavy taxation. Nevertheless in some areas like Ghalla Dher the authorities were seen as protecting the class interests of the big Khans. This provoked agrarian unrest which was curbed only with the help of the party's high command.

Elections of 1936-1937

The N-WFP, like the other Indian provinces, received a new constitution under the Government of India Act, 1935. One of the most important provisions of the Act was the grant of full provincial autonomy. The provinces were to have their own elected legislatures and cabinets were to be responsible to the legislatures. However, the vote was still based on property and minimum educational qualifications. Under the new Act, the Governor was to be the executive head of the province, administering the provincial affairs with the aid and advice of a Council of Ministers.[171] The government announced that the Act of 1935 would come into force on 1 April 1937.

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[171] : *Government of India Bill* (London, 1934), pp. 1-323; *IAR*, 1934, II, pp. 545-556 and *IAR*, 1935, I, pp. 501-512.

Lord Linlithgow, the Viceroy of India, described it as 'the first stage towards the completion of that constitutional structure whose natural crown and summit will be the All India Federation...'[172]. He assured the people of the non-interference of government in the intended elections.[173]

The Act aroused mixed feelings among the Indian public. Congress condemned it and rejected the proposed constitution. Its attitude to the Act was 'one of uncompromising hostility and a constant endeavour to end it'.[174] Congress demanded the election of a Constituent Assembly (henceforth CA) through adult franchise.[175] However, as a strategy in the 'game of political chess'[176] it decided to contest the elections to the new legislatures;[177] 'not to co-operate in any way with the Act but to combat it and seek to end it'.[178] The AIML termed the Act 'most reactionary, retrograde, injurious and fatal to the vital interests of India'.[179] However, like Congress, the League also advised the Muslims that the provincial scheme of the constitution 'be utilised for what it is worth...'.[180] To some extent these criticisms were political postures. Both parties made them because they saw themselves as contenders for the power which was now on offer in the provinces. The only party which whole-heartedly supported the Act of 1935 were the Liberals. They endorsed the government view of the Act and pleaded that it should be put into effect both at the centre and in the provinces.[181]

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[172]: First Broadcast of Lord Linlithgow, 18 April 936, *IAR*, 1936, I, pp. 95-96.
[173]: *ibid.*
[174]: Presidential Address of Jawaharlal Nehru, Lucknow, 12 April 1936, *IAR*, I, 1936, p. 271.
[175]: *ibid.* p. 272.
[176]: P.

In the N-WFP, the existing franchise was about 4% of the total population and 12% of the urban. The local government, as was envisaged in the report of`Indian Franchise Committee (June 1932), showed no desire in further increasing urban enfranchisement. However, it recommended that 10% of the rural population should be enfranchised.[182] Under the new arrangements, approximately 14% of the total population of the N-WFP, or a quarter of a million inhabitants of the province, were given the right to vote.[183]

On the AICC's decision to contest the elections, the Congress workers in the FP started their electioneering campaign. In the absence of Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Khan Sahib took over the Congress leadership in the province. He toured various parts of the N-WFP to reorganise the party. Abdul Ghaffar Khan guided him in his endeavours from prison.[184] As the FPCC was still 'illegal', in October 1935 Khan Sahib called for the formation of 'Parliamentary Boards' both on the district and provincial levels.[185] It was resolved to seek the sympathy and assistance of the Ulema in the province; other political organisations would also be approached and asked for their support and co-operation in the elections. It was also decided that no general appeal for election expenses would be made to the public, and that all the expenses would be borne by the nominated candidates themselves.[186] Apprehensive of N-WFP Muslims' support for the Congress, the provincial authorities promulgated Section 144 CPC, prohibiting demonstrations and processions and carrying of weapons within a radius of five miles of Peshawar city. Congress interpreted this as 'ridiculous' and 'direct interference' in election affairs.[187] The district administration was accused of 'repressive policy' and discrimination.[188] On the continued insistence of public opinion, meetings were allowed later but processions remain banned.[189]

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[181] : R. Coupland, *Indian Politics, 1936-1942*, (London, 1943), p. 7.

[182] : Report of the Franchise Committee, *IAR*, 1932, I, p. 457.

[183] : The qualifications for the electors of the N-WFP were:
(a) 'ownership of immovable property, not being land assessed to land-revenue, but including any building on such lands value Rs. 600 or over. (b) Tenancy of immovable property of annual rental value of not less than Rs. 48. (c) Payment of rate, cess, or tax to a District Board of not less than Rs. 50 per annum. (d) Assessment to any direct municipal or cantonment tax of not less than Rs. 50. (e) Income of Rs. 40 per mensem or over. (f) Ownership, or occupancy as occupancy tenant or tenant or lessee under a written lease for a period of not less than three years, of land assessed to land revenue of Rs. 10 per annum or above'. Obhrai, *Evolution*, p. 275.

[184] : Abdul Ghaffar Khan to Khan Sahib, 1 July 1935, A. Bakhtaney, (ed.), *Da Bacha Khan Leekoona* (Kabul, 1984), pp. 48-50.

[185] : The provincial parliamentary board was formed with M. Ramzan Khan (D.I.Khan) as president and Ram Singh (Bannu) as secretary. Other members included Khan Sahib (Peshawar); Amir M. Khan (Mardan) and Mehdi Zaman Khan (Hazara). CID Diaries, 5 November 1935, F. No. 82, SBP, p. 173.

Elections for a fifty-men provincial legislature (thirty-eight Muslims, nine Hindus and three Sikhs) were scheduled for February 1937. In all 135 candidates were nominated.[190] They represented various groups and classes, and in the main four political parties and Independents. The parties were the Congress, the Muslim Nationalists, the Hindu-Sikh Nationalist Party (hereafter HSNP), and the Muslim Independent Party (MIP).

The provincial Congress reproduced the election manifesto of the INC. Congress, according to its election manifesto, resolved firmly to continue its struggle for the independence of India. It promised immediate relief to a peasantry over-burdened by various taxes. Furthermore, it disapproved of communal politics at all levels.[191] The Frontier Congressmen observed 21 August as 'Abdul Ghaffar Day', demanding from the government permission for him to return to his province and take part in the forthcoming elections. The provincial government argued that, after his return, he might sabotage constitutional developments in the province.[192] Criticism of Nawabs, title-holders and big Khans was another important theme of the provincial Congress' election campaign. It also promised to serve the masses and repeal repressive laws including the Public Tranquillity Act.[193] Finally, it condemned the alleged anti-Congress interference of the bureaucracy in the elections.[194]

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[186] : CID Diaries, 30 June 1936, F. No. 29, SBP, pp. 141-143.
[187] : *ibid.*, 27 July 1936, F. No. 27, p. 187.
[188] : *Milap*, Lahore, 7 and 14 July 1936; *The Tribune*, Lahore, 12 July 1936; *AlJamiat* (Biweekly), Delhi, 20 July 1936.
[189] : *The Veer Bharat*, Lahore, 18 July 1936.
[190] : *Administration Report North-West Frontier Province 1936-37*, pp. ii-iii.
[191] : Congress Election Manifesto, *IAR*, 1936, II, pp. 181-191.

The parliamentary board formed a three member sub-committee of Khan Sahib, Qazi Ataullah and Ram Singh in November 1936 to allocate party tickets. They selected 37 candidates — 29 Muslim seats and 8 general. In the remaining 13 constituencies including the two 'landlord' and three 'Sikhs' constituencies Congress ran no candidate.[195] After the closure of nomination dates in December 1936, the party suspended its campaign for two more seats — the Hindu urban seat in Peshawar and the Muslim rural seat in Tank — leaving 35 active candidates[196]. It is of significance that the Congress high command did not interfere in the election campaign of the Frontier Congress and left it to approach the electorate in its 'own way'. However, in late November, the central organisation deputed V. Patel and B. Desai to help the FPCC in its electioneering. They arrived in Peshawar on 28 November 1936.[197] After finishing their tour of the Peshawar Valley, they left for the southern districts of the N-WFP, but were not allowed by the government to visit Kohat, Bannu and D.I.Khan.[198]

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[192]: Sitaramayya, *History*, II, p. 19; CID Diaries, 19 August 1936, F. No. 29, SBP, pp. 335-337, 355.

[193]: CID Diaries, 13 September 1936, F. No. 129, SBP, pp. 127-133 and 5 January 1937, F. No. 60, SBP, pp. 1-15. Full details can be seen in F Nos. 30, 32, 58, 129 and 130, SBP.

[194]: *Milap*, Lahore, 5 January 1937; *Prabhat*, Peshawar, 8 January 1937.

[195]: *IAR*, 1937, I, pp. 68(n)-68(o).

[196]: Rittenberg, 'Independence Movement', p. 211.

[197]: CID Diaries No. 48, 1 December 1936, F. No. 30, SBP, pp. 195-197.

[198]: *ibid.* p. 191; A.K. Gupta, *North-West Frontier Province Legislature and Freedom Struggle, 1932-47* (Delhi, 1976), p. 66.

The Muslim Nationalists with Sir A. Qaiyum as their leader were no match for the organised Congress. Though Sir A. Qaiyum had no formal party by this name during the elections, it was due to his personal influence that many retired servicemen and other title-holders like K.B. Kuli Khan and K.B. Saadullah Khan, when elected, gathered around him.[199] They had no formal party organisation or programme: their own stature in Frontier society earned them the legislative positions. Next came the HSNP, mainly consisting of bankers, businessmen and rich property owners who had all-India connections with the Hindu Mahasabha and the Akali Dal. They were against the 'domination of the majority community' in the legislature. They nominated candidates in eleven constituencies and reached an understanding with an Independent in a twelfth.[200] The MIP consisted of a few urban lawyers, prominent among them were Pir Bakhsh and Khuda Bakhsh. Their election campaign mainly revolved around promises of early resolution of local problems.[201] Finally there were the Independents. A large number of Khans stood as Independents. Their election campaign revolved around personal jealousies and factional considerations. The great number of the candidates from the Khanite 'party', sixty-six for thirty-five constituencies, itself spoke for the disunity of the Khans.

In addition to these parties and splinter groups, the AIML also tried to establish itself in the FP. Jinnah, the League president visited the province in October 1936. He stayed there for a week, trying to bring the various sections of the Frontier Muslims under the banner of the League, but did not succeed in getting a single nomination from the Frontier Muslims to stand on the League's ticket.

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[199] : E. Jansson, *India, Pakistan or Pakhtunistan* (Uppssala, 1981), pp. 68-69.
[200] : Rittenberg, 'Independence Movement', p. 215; Jansson, *Pakhtunistan*, p. 70.
[201] : Shad, 'Deed', II, pp. 109-161; CID Diaries, F. No. 60, SBP, p. 9; Jansson, *Pakhtunistan*, p. 70.

The elections were held in the first week of February 1937. 72.8% of the registered electorate cast their votes. While the Congress won 19 seats, the HSNP took 7, the Independent Hindus 1, MIP 2 and Nationalist Muslims 21.[202] The Congress emerged as the largest party with 19 members in the assembly. In the Pashtoon-dominated areas, mostly the Congress did well. In Peshawar Valley it proved itself to be the most popular political organisation. In the rest of the province, the party managed to get one seat each in Kohat, Bannu and D.I.Khan. In Hazara, unexpectedly it won two seats.

Sir A. Qaiyum's Ministry: A Brief Interlude

After the polling was over, and the results giving no party a clear majority were announced, a scramble for power in the provincial assembly commenced. Though the provincial Congress, pending the decision of the INC on the acceptance of ministries, remained out of the power game, others took an active part in it. On 27 February, a meeting of the elected Khans was held at Peshawar and they formed the United Muslims Nationalist Party (henceforth UMNP), with Sir A. Qaiyum as the party leader. The Muslim MLAs from Hazara formed their own Hazara Democratic Party (hereafter HDP).[203] The formation of the new ministry became a 'serious problem'.[204] The new party position in the provincial assembly was: Congress 19; UMNP 9; HSNP 8; HDP 6; MIP 2 and Independent Muslims 6.

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[202]: *N-WFP Administration Report, 1936-37*, p. iii. ; *Khyber Mail*, 21 February 1937.

[203]: CID Diaries, 2 March 1937, F. No. 821, SBP, p. 21.

[204]: *Khyber Mail*, 28 February 1937.

In the absence of any single strong group, on 16 March, Sir George Cunningham, the N-WFP Governor, invited Sir A. Qaiyum to form a ministry.[205] Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the FPCC were unhappy over this. They considered Sir A. Qaiyum to be the 'spokesman of British imperialism',[206] and maintained that any ministry which Sir A. Qaiyum might be able to form would not last for a long time as he lacked popular support in the assembly.[207] Cunningham was also doubtful of the popularity and strength of the ministry from the beginning, but justified his support on the grounds that the Congress was still refusing office and he was left with no other option but to invite Sir A. Qaiyum to form his ministry.[208] Cunningham persuaded the non-Congress MLAs to support Sir A. Qaiyum. He summoned Attai Khan, an HDP member, and asked him to muster support for Sir A. Qaiyum.[209] But to the chagrin of the Governor, the HDP members made it abundantly clear that they would only support Sir A. Qaiyum if he took one of them into the cabinet.[210] Then Cunningham focused his attention on the non-Muslims and succeeded in bringing them to the ministerial party;[211] on 29 March, the HSNP conditionally joined Sir A. Qaiyum.[212]

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[205] : *Khyber Mail*, 18 March 1937; CID Diaries, 22 March 1937, F. No. 821, SBP, p. 39.

[206] : Abdul Ghaffar Khan in *Bombay Chronicler*, Bombay, 20 March 1937.

[207] : CID Diaries, F. No. 8, SBP, p. 97.

[208] : N-WFP Governor's Situation Report (henceforth GR), 17 April 1937, Mss. EUR., D. 670/14, IOLR, pp. 3-4; Cunningham to Linlithgow, 26 May 1937, P. N. Chopra (ed.), *Towards Freedom, 1937-47*, vol. I, (Delhi, 1985), p. 600.

[209] : Cunningham Diaries (hereafter CD), 13 March 1937, Mss. EUR., Cunningham Collection, D. 670/3, IOLR, p. 5.

[210] : CID Diaries, 22 March 1937, F. No. 821, SBP, p. 37.

[211] : Summary of Events in N-WFP, 1937-46, (March 1937-September 1937), Mss. EUR., D. 670/17, IOLR, p. 8.

[212] : CD, 29 March 1937, Mss. EUR., D. 670/3, IOLR, p. 9. The conditions on which the alliance was made included, the withdrawal of Hindi-Gurmukhi Circular (in 1935 an administrative circular made Urdu or English as mandatory language for instruction in government-aided schools; not complying with this would result in forfeiture of the grants. The non-Muslims interpretted it as an attack on their religion and culture since it prevented education in Hindi and Gurmukhi); inclusion of one member in the cabinet as minister and another as parliamentary secretary; 25% quota in admissions and stipends in educational institutions and the same 25% to the non-Muslims in to their appointments to the public services. M. H. Gazder to Jinnah, 10 July 1937, Quaid-i-Azam Papers (hereafter QAP) National Archives of Pakistan (henceforth NAP), Islamabad, F. No. 261, p. 8.

On 1 April 1937, a ministry including of Sir A. Qaiyum as Chief Minister, who also held the portfolios of Home Affairs, Education, Public Works and Irrigation, was sworn in.[213] The first session of the Frontier assembly was summoned on 14 April at Peshawar.[214] Khuda Bakhsh was unanimously elected as the Speaker of the House, and M. Sarwar, (HDP), the opposition nominee, defeated M. R. Kiyani of the ministerial party by getting 29 against 19 votes, becoming the Deputy Speaker.[215] As anticipated, the weakness of Sir A. Qaiyum's ministry was evident from the first day of its formation. Khan Sahib wanted to move a no- confidence motion against the ministry, but the speaker did not allow him to do so.[216] The House was then prorogued, so the ministry was saved, at least for the time being.

Two important measures of the ministry were the cancellation of a Circular that made Urdu or English as mandatory for instruction in government-aided schools, and the lifting of the ban on Congress and its affiliated organisations, thus enabling Abdul Ghaffar Khan to enter the FP. After an absence of about 7 years, Abdul Ghaffar Khan was allowed to enter the N-WFP on 26 August 1937.[217] As the ministry had 'neither time nor opportunity', reported Cunningham, to do more 'constructive'[218] work, it lost its credibility and popularity among the majority of Frontier Muslims. Congress, until the end of the summer 1937, remained busy with its manoeuvres against the ministry.[219] The anti-ministerial activities of the opposition led many to believe that the fall of the ministry was inevitable and it seemed to be a matter of only a few weeks.

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[213] : Other members of the cabinet included K.B. Saadullah Khan as Minister for Agriculture (Public Health, Jails, Industries and Commerce) and R.B. M. C. Khanna as Finance Minister (Revenue and Local Self Government). *Khyber Mail*, 4 April 1937; CD, 1 April 1937, Mss. EUR., D. 670/3, IOLR, p. 10.

[214] : *Khyber Mail*, 11 April 1937.

[215] : *Khyber Mail*, 2 May 1937; GR, 17 April 1937, Mss. EUR., D. 670/14, IOLR, pp. 1-2; CID Diaries, 22 April 1937, F. No. 32, SBP, pp. 156-161.

[216] : Adjournment motions discussed on 15 April 1937, *PLAD*, pp. 7-8; *Khyber Mail*, 25 April 1937.

[217] : GR, 23 August 1937, Mss. EUR., D. 670/14, IOLR, p. 3. For more details see *Madina*, Bijnore, 1 September 1937; *Khyber Mail*, 29 August 1937 and CID Diaries, 27 August 1937, F. No. 32, SBP, pp. 293-301.

[218] : Summary of Events in the N-WFP 1937-46, (March 1937-September 1937), Mss. EUR., D. 670/17, IOLR, p. 9.

The Congress success in the elections in the rest of India[220] made the question of the acceptance of the office urgent, although Congress had shelved the issue since 1936. The Governors invited the leaders of the majority party to assist them in forming ministries. The Congress wanted an undertaking from the Governors that they would not use the special powers vested in them by section 93 of the India Act of 1935. Furthermore, the Governors were required to seek the advice of their ministers on important issues. No such undertaking was given, and Congress refused to accept office. On 21 June, the Viceroy assured Congress that under provincial autonomy, in all matters falling within the ministerial field, the Governor 'will ordinarily be guided by the advice of his Ministers' and that those ministers 'will be responsible' not to the British parliament but to the provincial legislatures.[221] After the formal assurances of the Viceroy were received, the AICC authorised the acceptance of offices in those provinces in which the Congress party was in an absolute majority.[222] Congress ministries were formed in six provinces: Bombay, Madras, UP, CP, Bihar and Orissa.[223] After the formation of ministries in other Congress majority provinces, the Frontier Congressmen intensified their pressure for the formation of a ministry in the N-WFP. They succeeded in winning over eight non-Congress members to their side.

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[219] : GR, 9 June 1937, Mss. EUR., D. 670/14, IOLR, p. 2.

[220] : Congress succeeded in becoming a majority party in five provinces, namely Madras, UP, CP, Orissa and Bihar; in Bombay it won nearly half of the total seats and became the largest single party in Bengal, Assam and the N-WFP.

[221] : 'The Viceroy 's Message to India', *Speeches by the Marquess of Linlithgow* (Simla, 1940), I, pp. 217-234; *IAR*, 1937, I, pp. 44,47; J. Glendevon, *The Viceroy at Bay* (London, 1971), pp. 56-68 and Sitaramayya, *History*, II, pp. 44-61.

[222] : *IAR*, 1937, I, p. 47; Sitaramayya, *History*, II, pp. 51-53.

[223] : Sitaramayya, *History*, II, pp. 52-53.

Congressmen showed their willingness to have Abbas Khan of the HDP as one of its ministers, and to retain another member, Sarwar, as the deputy speaker. Khuda Bakhsh was assured of Congress support to retain his speakership; Chimanlal of the HSNP was promised a parliamentary secretaryship; two more were won over by similar methods. Thus altogether eight members of the Frontier assembly finally decided to give their support to Congress in forming the ministry.[224]

Sir A. Qaiyum met the Governor in the first week of July and informed him of his intended resignation, but Cunningham insisted that he should continue.[225] On 20 August, Cunningham received a letter signed by 25 members, informing him of the moving of a motion of no-confidence against the ministry.[226] Sir A. Qaiyum made last minute efforts and met some KKs and reminded them of his past services for the welfare of the Pashtoons, trying to dissuade them from moving a vote of no-confidence. To his utter disappointment they simply followed the party line and were not prepared to violate party discipline in any circumstances.[227]

Formation of Khan Sahib's First Congress Ministry

The provincial assembly met on 1 September in Abbottabad. On 3 September 1937, the Khan Sahib's motion of no-confidence in the ministry was passed by 27 votes to 22. The 27 comprised 19 Congressmen, 4 Democrats, 2 Independents and 2 members of the minority community who recently had resigned from the HSNP. The 22 included Sahibzada's followers, the remaining members of HSNP and some

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[224] : Gupta, *Freedom Struggle*, pp. 76-77.
[225] : GR, 26 July 1937, Mss. EUR., D. 670/14, IOLR, p. 1.
[226] : CD, 20 August 1937, Mss. EUR., D. 670/3, IOLR, p. 25.
[227] : Akbar, 'Autobiography', pp. 246-247.

Independents.[228] Apart from the mover and Sir A. Qaiyum no one spoke on the resolution. The speeches,* as reported by the Governor, were 'restrained in tone, and there was no unpleasantness...'.[229] Khan Sahib accused the ministers of following the old autocratic system. 'The democratic institutions and instruments', he added, 'are not the only thing but it is the way to handle the spirit of democracy which counts; and I still further take the courage to say that we have to promote unity of aim and solidarity of sentiments which will help individuals to sink personal as well as group advantages for the common good of the motherland...'.[230] Sir A. Qaiyum, while defending his ministry pointed out that despite the many obstacles in their way and the want of funds at their disposal, they did what was possible under the circumstances. He bemoaned the KKs affiliation with the Congress: 'I for one cannot reconcile myself to the idea of taking any cue from people outside the Province and for that reason I wish that the organisation which is now to guide the destinies of this Province had been indigenous and of local growth'.[231]

On 6 September, the Governor, N-WFP, invited Khan Sahib, the leader of the Congress party in the assembly, to form his own cabinet. On 7 September, the new ministers, four in number, were sworn in.[232] The opposition mainly consisted of the Qaiyum party and the HSNP. Sir A. Qaiyum died on 4 December 1937.[233] His death

* For speeches see Appendix One.

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[228] : *PLAD*, 3 September 1937, pp. 93-98; *IAR*, 1937, II, pp. 277-278; *Khyber Mail*, 5 September 1937; *Madina*, Bijnore, 9 September 1937; CD, *ibid.*, 3 September 1937, p. 26.

[229] : GR, 6 September 1937, Mss. EUR., D. 670/14, IOLR.

[230] : Khan Sahib's speech, *PLAD*, 3 September 1937, pp. 93-94

[231] : Sir A. Qaiyum's speech, *ibid.* pp. 95-97.

[232] : Khan Sahib became the Chief Minister and took charge of Political, Home, Public Health and Public Works; Qazi Ataullah as Minister for Education, Local-Self Government and Revenue; Bhanju Ram Gandhi as Finance Minister and Abbas Khan Minister for Industries and Forests. The former three were Congressites while the fourth belonged to the HDP. CD, 7 September 1937, Mss. EUR., D. 670/3, IOLR, p. 27.

[233] : *Khyber Mail*, 5 December 1937.

was regarded 'a great loss' to the people of the N-WFP in general and the Khans in particular, who acknowledged him as their natural leader.[234] His death left the Congress the 'virtual masters of the province'.[235]

After the death of Sir A. Qaiyum, most of the members of his party joined the newly formed Muslim League, electing Sardar Aurangzeb Khan as its party leader in the assembly. The Khans and the urban politicians were at logger-heads in the assembly. The HSNP was divided on the question of supporting Congress thus giving an advantage to the latter. Until its resignation in November 1939, Congress had twenty four members in the provincial assembly.

The Performance of the Ministry: Issues in the Assembly: Social and Agrarian Issues

Having assumed office in the N-WFP, the provincial Congress started the programme of economic and social uplift which it had publicised during its election campaign. Following the directives of CWC, the salaries of the ministers were fixed[236]. Travel allowances in various departments were reduced. Two departments, the Directorate of Agriculture and a Publicity Department were abolished. These steps of the ministry resulted in savings of several lakhs of rupees and led to a surplus in the annual budget.

Agrarian unrest was an important issue in politics both at the provincial and at the all-India level during mid-1938. One of the most important issues for Congress was to improve the dire condition of the peasants. To Congress, the 'final solution' of the problem was 'the removal of British imperialistic exploitation and thorough change of the land tenure and revenue systems and a recognition by the state of its duty to provide work for the rural unemployed masses'.[237] As the agrarian conditions and land revenue system were different in every province, it directed the PCCs to help them in planning a full-fledged future agrarian programme for the sub-continent.[238] Congress formulated its agrarian policy and confirmed that it stood for a reform of the system of tenure and revenue and rent, and an equitable adjustment of the burden on agricultural land, giving immediate relief to the smaller peasantry by a substantial reduction of agricultural rent and revenue paid by them. It demanded tax exemption on uneconomic holding. It called for a radical change in the existing land revenue system which they considered as an 'intolerable' burden on the peasantry.[239]

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[234]: CD, 4 December 1937, Mss. EUR., D. 670/3, IOLR, pp. 35-36.

[235]: *Khyber Mail*, 5 December 1937.

[236]: According to the CWC (Delhi 15-22 March 1937), apart from free government provisions for residence and conveyance, the salaries of Congress ministers, speakers and Advocates-General should not exceed rupees five hundred per month. Sitaramayya, *History*, II, p. 52.

During its election campaign, the N-WFP Congress had approached the peasantry and sought their help and support. It had promised to reduce the revenue rates and to give the peasants *takavi* money, which should not be repaid but be utilised by the peasants.

To improve the condition of the poor agriculturists, the Agriculturists Debtors' Relief Bill was introduced by the ministry in March 1938.[240] According to official estimates, the agricultural indebtedness of the rural population of India was about

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[237]: Proceedings of the 49th session of INC, Lukcnow, 12-14 April 1936, *IAR*, 1936, I, p. 250.

[238]: *ibid.*

[239]: Resolutions Passed by the 50th session of the INC, Faizpur, December 1936, G- 85 (II) 1936, AICC, NMML, pp. 17-17a.

[240]: An agriculturists was defined in the Act 'as a person who holds land as proprietor, under-proprietor, occupancy tenant, tenant-at-will, lessee, mortgagee or is holding any other interest in the land'. The total number of agriculturists in the FP, according to official estimate, were 640781. Out of them 632253 were Muslims, 8202 Hindus, 324 Sikhs and 2 Christians. Qazi Ataullah to Khanna, 22 November 1938, *PLAD*, p. 1107.

Rs. 900 crores, out of which Rs. 9 crores worth was sustained in the FP. The rural classes of N-WFP were annually paying Rs. 1 crore as interest, amounting to about six times the land revenue which they were paying to the government. 'This state of affairs', remarked Qazi Ataullah, the proposer, 'is undoubtedly most unsatisfactory and calls for immediate redress and relief'. Elaborating on the pitiable condition of the peasants in the province, he informed the House that the exploitation of the peasants was by 'those who are a little more literate or more intelligent and while they all are fed by him, he [the peasant] himself remains starving, half-naked and steeped in ignorance. Under such circumstances the additional burden of agricultural indebtedness on him is so pressing that it is the duty of a civilised Government to come to his rescue and do something for him'.[241]

Along with the Agriculturists Debtor's Relief Bill, another bill of the same nature, the N-WFP Agricultural Produce Market Bill, was introduced on 18 March by Abbas Khan. This Bill was aimed at protecting the peasants and small zamindars from the high-handedness of the 'middle-men', mostly the *mahajans* (money-lenders), who dominated the markets. They habitually used all kinds of fraud to deprive the producers of their hard-earned money. There were certain deductions from the produce in markets. The mahajans 'take off a portion of the produce as the allowance of the weighman, another portion as dues of the *chaukidar* and still another as a cut for *Dharamsala*, Mosque or *Patshala*', remarked Abbas Khan. The producers were left with no other option but to accept the meagre amount offered by the mahajans, or else they were advised to take away their produce to another market and face its unknown vagaries. Thus the producers were compelled to dispose of their produce at the price proposed by the mahajan.[242]

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[241] : Qazi Ataullah on Agriculturists Debtor's Relief Bill, 18 March 1938, *PLAD*, pp. 737-38.

The Bills had communal implications. The minority community members of the House regarded it as an attack on the minorities in the province, though they were 'less in number but otherwise well-off in many respects'. Khanna, Ajit Singh, Hukam Chand, Ishar Das and Bhagai, the 'communalists' in the House, felt horrified by the Bills and came out openly in defence of the interests of the mahajans, the majority of whom were Hindus.[243] The Muslim members of the House, including Aurangzeb, the opposition leader, Saadullah, representative of the landlords in the assembly, and Pir Bakhsh supported the movers and fully endorsed their views on the bills. The strong support from the opposition Muslim MLAs enabled the ministers to implement their decisions, the Bills were passed on 21 November 1938 and 5 April 1939 respectively, providing relief to the peasants in the FP.[244]

On 3 March 1938, M. Afzal Khan, moved the Teri Dues Regulations Repealing Bill. He protested over the imposition of 'inhuman and unjustifiable' taxes in Teri: *Tirni*, *Bua* and *Haq Taluqdari*[245] by Nawab Baz M. Khan of Teri, himself sitting on the opposition benches in the House. The Jagir of Teri was conferred by the British on Khwaja M. Khan, the grandfather of Baz M. Khan, in recognition of his services to the Raj during the crucial days of 1857 and the Afghan Wars.[246] Baz M. Khan, according to the mover, had no documentary evidence to support his claim as the owner of Teri; thus he had no right to impose taxes on the Khattaks inhabiting the area.[247] This aroused controversy in the House. Aurangzeb believed the Bill aimed 'at the deprival of private property'.[248] Saadullah believed it be 'merely interference in vested rights to say that these dues should not in future be realised by the khans'. Syed Jalal and Nawab Zafar Khan expressed similar feelings and supported Baz M. Khan.[249] Justifying the taxes, Baz M. Khan cited their services to the Crown since the advent of the British Raj in the sub-continent. To him, the 'Bill has been brought on account of pure malice and is intended to punish the Khan'.[250] Nishtar, endorsing the views of Afzal Khan, pointed out that that the law which gave the possession of Teri to the Nawab was 'not the law of the land', but it was the law of the landlord, and, 'now the time has arrived that we should pass laws which are laws of the land; laws whereby the interests of the people are to be safeguarded and not the people be sacrificed [sic] for the sake of one or two individuals'.[251] The Bill was put to the vote. The majority of the members gave their verdict against the Nawab, and it was passed.[252] Cunningham, to whom the Bill was sent for his assent, regarded it as 'the Ministry's attack on the khans' and believed that its 'passage has caused a considerable impression among all classes and that the Congress are using it as propaganda to show that the British can no longer guarantee the assistance to their supporters which they had enjoyed in the past'.[253] A prolonged debate began between the Governor and his ministers on whether the taxes, already mentioned, were 'part of the Nawab's *jagir*, in which case their abolition was *ultra vires* of the provincial assembly, or if they were some other form of due'.[254] Cunningham, giving vent to his feeling in support of the pro-government Khans, decided finally to withhold his assent to the Bill. For Khan Sahib this matter was so significant that he threatened to resign.[255] However, a compromise was reached and the Governor returned the Bill to the assembly to repeal the Teri Dues Regulations 'with the request that *haq taluqdari* be omitted from the purview of the Bill, for the reason that it represents certain rights of superior ownership and is an integral part of land revenue'.[256] The assembly acceded to the 'request' of the Governor; Baz M. Khan was allowed to retain the *haq taluqdari* and relinquish his privileges in respect of *bua* and *tirni*. Thus a 'satisfactory solution' of a 'difficult case' was reached.[257]

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[242]: M. Abbas Khan on the N-WFP Agricultural Produce Market Bill, *PLAD*, 18 March 1938, pp. 85-87 and 119.

[243]: For details see *PLAD*, pp. 742, 1097-1152. Also see GRs 22 and 23, 21 November 1938 and 9 December 1938, Mss. EUR., D. 670/14, IOLR.

[244]: *PLAD*, 5 April 1939, p. 1448.

[245]: *Tirni* imposed on cattle-grazing, *Bua*, a house tax from non-agriculturists and *Taluqdari* dues, a right by which a first class owner receives a sum of money at a fixed percentage of the land revenue assessed on cultivated land. *PLAD*, 3 March 1938, pp. 174-175.

[246]: H. Edwards to Financial Commissioner, 3 February 1855, Peshawar, Mallam Papers, I, CSASC, pp. 1-4, 8.

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[247] : M. Afzal Khan on Teri Dues Regulations Repealing Bill, *PLAD,* 5 March 1938, pp. 139-144.
[248] : Aurangzeb, *ibid.* pp. 168,245.
[249] : *ibid.* pp. 183,185,236 and 237.
[250] : Nawab Baz M.Khan, *ibid.* pp. 247-252.
[251] : Nishtar, *ibid.* pp. 256-57.
[252] : *PLAD,* 5 March 1938, p. 259.
[253] : GR, 10 March 1938, Mss. EUR., D. 670/14, IOLR.

Unrest in Ghalla Dher and Muftiabad

The non-Congress Khans, threatened by the pro-peasant policies of the Frontier ministry, viewed these steps as a direct threat to their prestige and position in the province. Moreover, the rent relief provisions passed by the ministry gave a financial blow to the big Khans. The peasants, on the other hand, took it for granted. The Congress election promises were taken as their last words by the peasants, and led the tenants to believe that once in power, they would no longer have to pay rent.

The Frontier Congress soon found itself in a baffling situation. As it was the Government, it had to protect and sustain law and order, while on the other hand as a self-proclaimed representative of the peasants it could not be expected to harm their interests. In the N-WFP, as in Bihar and the UP, it had to face exasperated Congress workers who were out in the streets against their own governments, demanding that they should fulfil the election promises by giving relief to the workers and the peasants.[258] The Frontier Congress ministry, which earlier advocated the case of the tenants, became sceptical of helping their cause when they prevented collection of revenues. By September, collections were four lakh below normal and in Peshawar alone the outstanding revenue and water rates were 60%. The ministers' attitude changed towards the tenants, and in order to avoid a financial crisis they were compelled to favour stern actions against them in realisation of the revenue arrears.[259]

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[254] : Jansson, *Pakhtunistan*, p. 81.
[255] : Telegram Cunningham to Linlithgow, 6 May, 1938, Jansson, *Pakhtunistan*, p. 82.
[256] : GR, 7 July 1938, Mss. EUR., D. 670/14, IOLR.
[257] : *ibid.*, 21 November 1938.

The most serious agrarian problem which the ministry faced was in Ghalla Dher — a small village in Mardan district. It had a population of about two thousand. The residents were mostly Muslim peasants with a small number of Hindu zamindars.[260] Most of the lands in Ghalla Dher belonged to Nawab Hamidullah Khan of Toru, who used to collect heavy rents and some 'illegal' taxes[261] from the peasants. After the death of Hamidullah, his belongings and wealth including his land in Ghalla Dher was divided among his four sons. Azimullah Khan, the western educated youngest son of the late Nawab, appointed some of the local men as his agents to look after the estate. In the spring of 1938, Azimullah, whom Cunningham had termed as a 'notoriously bad landlord' had developed problems[262] with his tenants in Ghalla Dher.[263] The Nawab imposed fines on the whole village. The Ghalla Dheris, politically conscious since their participation in the KK movement, already had their complaints about Azimullah. Protesting over the high rates of revenue that they had to pay, they refused to pay the fines.[264] In June, the Nawab obtained eviction orders from the civil court but failed in the execution of those orders. The tenants resisted the evictions, and after being evicted returned and cultivated some of the resumed lands.[265] On 13 June, the district administration, supporting the Nawab, arrested the ringleaders of the peasants. More arrests were made on 15 June.[266]

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[258] : Coupland, *Indian Politics*, pp. 126-141. For more details see B. B. Chaudri, 'Agrarian Movements in Bengal and Bihar, 1919-39' in A. R. Desai (ed.), *Peasant Struggles in India* (Bombay, 1979), pp. 337-374; P. Chatterji, 'Agrarian Relations and Communalism in Bengal, 1926-1935' in R. Guha (ed.), *Subaltern Studies* I (Delhi, 1994), pp. 9-38. Selective readings on agrarian history and of the peasant studies include N. G. Ranga, *The Modern Indian Peasant* (Madras, 1936); N. Charlesworth, *Peasants and Imperial Rule* (Cambridge, 1985); E. Stokes, *The Peasant Armed* (Oxford, 1986); R. Guha, *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India* (Delhi, 1992); D. Washbrook, *The Emergence of Provincial Politics: The Madras Presidency* (Cambridge, 1976); T. Sarkar, *Bengal 1928-1934 The Politics of Protest* (Delhi, 1987); I. Ali, *The Punjab Under Imperialism* (Princeton, 1988) and T. Hashmi, *Pakistan as a Peasant Utopia* (Colorado, 1992).

[259] : Rittenberg, 'Independence Movement', p. 244.

[260] : Gurudasmal, a wealthy zamindar of Ghalla Dher became prominent by helping the police in restoring law and order in the area. For his services, he was issued licences for keeping fire-arms. His eldest son Jamuna Das, entered politics, joined the Congress and became an MLA on the Congress ticket. Hari Kishan, second of the nine sons of Gurudasmal joined Naujawan Bharat Sabha. On 23 December 1930, he fired on the Governor of the Punjab, at the convocation of Punjab University, Lahore, who escaped death. However, the firing resulted in the killing of Chanan Singh, a sub inspector of police on the spot and injuring Budh Singh, a CID inspector and Miss Dermitt of Lady Hardinge Women's College, Lahore. Hari Kishan was arrested, tried and sentenced to death. On 10 June 1931, Hari Kishan was hanged in Mianwali jail. The third son, Bhagat Ram started his political carrier by joining the KKs and became prominent in escorting Subhas Chandra Bose from Peshawar to Kabul on his escape from India. The remaining six brothers, before partition had confined themselves to getting education. Bhagat Ram Talwar, *The Talwars of Pathan Land and Subhas Chandra's Great Escape* (Delhi, 1976),pp. 3-35; Interviews with Ishar Das Talwar and Manohar Lal Talwar, New Delhi, 24 January 1995.

Before going into further details, a brief note is essential on the quality of leadership, the support from the political parties and the initial successes of the movement against the Nawab. We can clearly classify the leaders of the movement into two groups: those who personally suffered because of the socio-economic system, and those who came as members of the Frontier Congress Socialist Party (hereafter FCSP, formed in 1935 at Peshawar) to uphold the peasant cause without any personal interest. At the initial stages it was the local leadership that was more effective. The leaders of the latter group assumed a bigger role as the movement developed and gained momentum.

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[261] : It was a common practice in the area that after the harvest, the crops were divided into two parts: share of the landlord and of the peasant. The agents of the Nawab, abusing their authority, tended to demand as much as possible out of the peasant share in the name of the *patwaris* and other related revenue officers. Then the peasant had to provide for the guests of the Nawab and for the cattle of the Nawab, and likewise many other deductions were made from his share. Another tax called *Tora* was levied on both the bride and the bridegroom, irrespective of their social status, on the occasion of their marriage and it was to be given to the Nawab; *bigar* (forced labour without any wages) too existed; and in cases of disputes and quarrels among the tillers, the Nawab usually exercised his judicial powers, imposing fines and sometimes physical punishments, thus adding to his treasury and striking terror among the peasants. For more details see Warris, *Azadi Tehreek*; R. S. Nagina, *Surkhposh Kisan or Tehreek Ghalla Dher* (Peshawar, 1939) and B. Ram, *The Talwars of Pathan Land*.

[262] : A bullock belonging to one Gulzada trespassed into the fields of another tiller in Ghalla Dher. The matter was reported to Azimullah Khan who fined Gulzada Rs. 40. As he had no other means to pay, to recover the fine Gulzada's bullock was carried away by the Nawab's men and was sold. This aggravated Gulzada, who uprooted the newly planted orchard of the Nawab and threw the plants into the river. The exasperated Nawab fined the entire village of Ghalla Dher. This created a stir among the peasants and sparked off the agitation against the Nawab. B. Ram, *The Talwars of Pathan Land*, p. 50.

[263] : GR, 8 August 1938, Mss. EUR., D 670/14, IOLR.

[264] : *Tribune*, 30 June 1938.

[265] : GR, 8 August 1938, Mss. EUR., D. 670/14, IOLR.

[266] : Nagina, *Surkhposh Kisan*, pp. 23-25.

Local leaders of the FCSP including Akbar Shah, Mian Mukarram Shah, Mian Mohammad Shah and Ajun Khan, were approached by the Ghalla Dheris and were asked to help the peasants against the 'tyrannies' of the landlords. They agreed to support the 'just cause' of the tillers. Under the presidentship of Sahib Shah, president Ghalla Dher CC, a meeting was convened attended by most of the villagers of Ghalla Dher. It was resolved to resist the evictions. Copies of the resolutions were sent to Khan Sahib, Ghulam M. Khan, president PCC; Amir M. Khan, local MLA and to some leading newspapers of the province.[267] However, no reply was received from the PCC. Amir M. Khan, the Congress MLA, argued for a peaceful settlement between the Nawab and the tenants. He was opposed by one Amir Khan, secretary, Ghalla Dher CC and was accused of protecting his own class interests against the poor peasants.[268] Warris Khan, an active participant of the movement, was empowered by the local Congress Committee to enlist the volunteers to carry on the *Satyagraha* against the high-handedness of the Nawab and on the apathy of provincial

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[267]: B. Ram to G. M. Khan, 27 July 1938, Nagina, *Surkhposh Kisan*, pp. 22-23.
[268]: Warris, *Azadi Tehreek*, pp. 170-171.

Congress leaders. A 'War Council' was formed and a whirlwind tour of the adjacent areas was made.[269]

The movement intensified in August 1938, and the Congress Socialists were in the forefront of the demonstrations. The Congress government was facing a complex situation. The Premier, as a custodian of the law, had to prevent any breakdown of order resulting from the agitation, and at the same time had to safeguard the interest of his party workers. Perturbed over the interference of the Socialists, he paid an impromptu visit to Ghalla Dher. The peasants nominated Akbar Shah, Bhagat Ram and Faqir Mohammad, pleader, to negotiate on their behalf with the Premier. They met Khan Sahib and demanded from him a complete ban on *bigar*; withdrawal of *Tora*; a ban on the eviction policy of the Nawab; abolition of *malba* (tax for supporting the guests of the Nawab); restrictions on giving *khar dhari* (tax collected for the donkeys, horses and other livestock of the Nawab); a complete restriction on illegal fines and physical harassment of the peasants. The negotiations failed to have any positive results.[270]

The KKs were in an awkward situation. The high command accused the Congress Socialists of creating class hatred, thus weakening the Congress organisation in the province. Their views were endorsed by the Frontier officials. The Governor also confirmed the role of the Socialists in the movement and expressed his displeasure over the alarming situation.[271] The Mardan DCC convened a special meeting to discuss the issue. After condemning all those who had taken part in the 'disorders' at Ghalla Dher, it appealed to the Socialists not to create any friction between the landlords and the peasants, for it might lead to endless and dangerous blood feuds, disturbing the 'peaceful atmosphere' of the province. The DCC further warned them of dire consequences if they continued to support the agitation[272] i,e expulsion from the Congress organisation. The FPCC, at its meeting, held at Abbottabad, instructed the Congressmen and KKs not to take part in the 'Socialists Satyagraha'[273] against the landlords of Ghalla Dher.[274] The Congress rank and file, appalled at the behaviour of the ministry towards the peasants, supported the Ghalla Dheris. When most of the tillers in Ghalla Dher were arrested and their crops left unattended, the KKs of the adjoining areas came and cultivated the lands of the arrested peasants, giving a moral boost to the peasants' case against the landlords.[275]

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[269]: The members of the 'War Council' included the prominent members of FCSP, local leaders of the movement and Maulana Abdur Rahim Popalzai (Peshawar). Warris, *Azadi Tehreek*, p. 177; Nagina, *Surkhposh Kisan*, p. 19.

[270]: Nagina, *Surkhposh Kisan*, pp. 35-36.

[271]: GR, 23 August 1938, Mss. EUR., D 670/14, IOLR.

The Frontier government could not remain a silent spectator for long. It was advised by certain newspaper editorials in the local press that to delay action would be dangerous for the peace and tranquillity of Mardan and the whole of the N-WFP.[276] It struck at the root of the peasant movement, arrested the ring-leaders and promulgated section 144 in the Mardan district and the adjoining areas.[277] On their refusal to furnish security, the arrested leaders were sentenced to from 6 months to 2 years Rigorous Imprisonment, and sent to Peshawar, D.I.Khan and Haripur jails.[278] On 30 August, the Nawab, with the help of the law enforcing agencies, made another attempt to seize the land and hand it over to new tenants, brought from other parts of the province. The old tenants present on the occasion offered resistance but were arrested. Their arrest was followed by the Satyagraha of the females; their wives, sisters and mothers — about a hundred in number, with red flags in their hands and Holy Qurans on their heads — came out abusing the Nawab. They resisted the forcible entry of the Nawab's men by throwing themselves in front of the plough-cattle. To 'preserve the peace', the desperate police resorted to lathi charges, causing injuries to twenty women and children. The infuriated 'invaders', having failed to gain possession of the land, fell on the standing crop and destroyed it.[279]

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[272]: *Tribune*, 12 August 1938; CID Diaries, Mardan, 26 August 1938, F. No. 132, SBP, p. 159.

[273]: An author who used the nomenclature 'One who knows' commented that 'it is a pity that under the advice of their Socialist friends, who, in their search for cheap notoriety and leadership, are ever eager to fish in troubled waters and draw their inspirations from the works of Lenin and Marx instead of looking to their immediate surroundings, they decided to resort to extra-constitutional methods and according, launched upon a campaign of civil disobedience. Several of them have forced the hands of the authorities to arrest them because of their active interference with the lawful and peaceful activity of those of their fellow tenants who would not make common cause with them'. *Khyber Mail*, 9 September 1938.

[274]: *Khyber Mail*, 21 August 1938.

[275]: *ibid.*

[276]: Abdul Khaliq Qureshi 'Agrarian Trouble in Mardan', *Khyber Mail*, 28 August 1938.

[277]: The arrested include Akbar Shah, Abdur Rahim Popalzai, Bhagat Ram, Sahib Shah, Achraj Ram, Indar Gul, Ram Saran Nagina, Warris, Umar Khan, Mukkaram Shah, Amin ul Haq and Khanzada. Warris, *Azadi Tehreek*, p. 181; *Khyber Mail*, 31 July and 4 September 1938.

On 5 September, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, accompanied by Arbab Ghafoor, Baz M. Khan, Saif-ul-Muluk and Samin Jan, visited Ghalla Dher. He met the peasants and inquired about their grievances. The peasants refused to talk to them until their arrested comrades were released.[280]

When the news of the Ghalla Dher incidents and the conviction of the political prisoners became known, the supporters of the peasants[281] came out to champion the cause of the arrested Congress workers, noted KKs and Socialists, accusing the ministry of insolence towards them. Some moderate local Congress leaders offered their services in negotiating an honourable accord between the 'warring parties'. Meanwhile, Bakhshi Faqir Chand, one of the ringleaders of the movement, managed to reach Delhi. He appeared before the Political Prisoners Conference, held on 23 September, which was attended by the Congress Premiers, including Khan Sahib. In an acrimonious manner he told whole story of the happenings in Ghalla Dher and the insolent behaviour of the Frontier ministry towards the peasants there. His speech created a stir among the members, some of whom[282] accused the Frontier ministry of high-handedness. Khan Sahib, denouncing the 'organisers of the agrarian trouble at Ghalla Dher, asserted that the basic principles of the law must be sustained'.[283]

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[278] : 'The Socialists are making propaganda out of the incident', commented Cunningham, 'to the effect that Dr. Khan Sahib, the representative of the poor, is imprisoning those who endeavour to improve the lot of the peasant' and that 'Present indications are that the Chief Minister will succeed in securing the support of his party for the action taken, but there is no doubt that the Socialists are trying to disaffect some of the Congress rank and file...'. GR, 3 September 1938, Mss. EUR., D. 670/14, IOLR. Interviews with Akbar Shah, Badrashi, 8 September 1984; Haji Mohammad Asim, Nowshera, 30 October 1984; Warris Khan, Rashakai, 3 June 1987; *Khyber Mail*, 28 August and 25 September 1938; *Tribune*, 25 August 1938.

[279] : 'Press Communiqué issued by the Provincial Government on Lathi Charge on the Women', *Khyber Mail*, 18 September 1938; Khan Sahib's reply to Jamuna Das, *PLAD*, 5 November 1938, pp. 240-268; Warris, *Azadi Tehreek*, p. 190; Nagina, *Surkhposh Kisan*, pp. 64-65.

[280] : Nagina, *Surkhposh Kisan*, p. 68; *Pakhtun*, 11 September 1938.

[281] : Hazara CC; Peshawar Naujawan Sabha; Sweepers Union, Bannu; Kohat CC; Rawalpindi Congress Socialist Party; Municipal Employees Union, Rawalpindi; Socialist Party, Lahore; Socialist Party Amritsar and Kisan Sabha Bihar were few among those who demanded from the Congress high command to give their special attention to Ghalla Dher. The Socialists from D.I.Khan, Khanpur, Rawalpindi, Amritsar, Patna, and many other parts of the country resolved to send volunteers to participate in the movement. Nagina, *Surkhposh Kisan*, pp. 71-72; *Khyber Mail*, 4 September 1938.

The All-India Socialist Party deputed N. Dev, Munshi Ahmad Din and M. R. Masani to inquire into the grievances of the peasantry against the Congress ministry in the N-WFP and to work out a solution. In October, the delegation arrived at Peshawar and met Khan Sahib who assured them that the problems would be solved within a few days.[284] However, they were not allowed to visit Ghalla Dher, as the Frontier Premier was against 'outside interference'.[285] In November 1938, all the convicted persons in the Ghalla Dher agitation were released unconditionally.[286] Khan Sahib put a ban on the illegal taxes levied by the Nawab, and promised to improve the general conditions of the peasantry in due course.

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[282]: Those who condemned the behaviour of Frontier ministry towards the Kisans included A. N. Dev, Munshi A. Din, H. Butt, Yameen, J. Bokhari, Sher Jang, B. P. L. Bedi, M. L. Saskina, B. Chatterji and Sampooranand. Nagina, *Surkhposh Kisan*, pp. 82-87.

[283]: *Khyber Mail*, 2 October 1938; GR, 7 October 1938, Mss. EUR., D. 670/14, IOLR.

[284]: Nagina, *Surkhposh Kisan*, p. 88; Gupta, *Freedom Struggle*, p. 96.

[285]: Khan Sahib's reply to Khanna, 16 November 1938, *PLAD*, pp. 797-798.

[286]: Gandhi to M R Masani, 9 November 1938, *CWMG*, 68, p. 109; *Khyber Mail*, 30 October 1938.

The movement had some remarkable characteristics. The peasants adhered totally to non-violence. Furthermore, despite the fact that the communal card was used, it did not involve Hindu-Muslim division, and religion was kept completely out of the picture. Forcible evictions of peasants were stopped. Finally, most of the Ulema, who belonged to the KKs, supported the peasant movement and used Islamic and Pashtoon symbols without making it a communal issue: this was in strong contrast to contemporary Bengal.[287] In fact there was no scope for giving this peasant agitation a communal colour because both peasants and the landholding groups were almost exclusively Muslims.

Another case of agrarian unrest, though not on as large a scale as in Ghalla Dher, occurred in the summer of 1939, in Muftiabad, a village in Charssadda. Land measuring about 650 *jaribs* (Bighas) belonged to the Muftis of Peshawar (K.S. Mufti M. Yaqub Khan and Mufti Taj M. Khan) who leased it to one Zardad, a Mohmand, at Rs. 12/- per *jarib*. For some time the lessee was regular in payment, but later on defaulted and eventually refused to pay anything. The owners, who were absentee landlords, secured ejectment orders from the court, and with the help of police ejected Zardad from their houses and land. Under the court order the house was locked up.[288] Ubaidullah, the eldest son of Khan Sahib, appeared at this stage and after breaking the locks urged Zardad to reoccupy the house, which he did.

Khan Sahib, himself in charge of Law and Order, took stern action against Ubaidullah and his associates. Ubaidullah was charged with obstructing government officials in carrying out ejectment orders against a certain tenant.[289] He was arrested and tried under section 454/186 IP Code and was sentenced to eighteen months Rigorous Imprisonment.[290] His arrest was followed by a general crackdown on his sympathisers and friends, most of whom were Socialists. The number of arrests exceeded two hundred.[291]

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[287]: J. Chatterji, *Bengal divided Hindu communalism and partition, 1932-1947* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 55-102, 105-107, 150-155, and 173-190.

[288]: *Khyber Mail*, 2 July 1939.

[289]: *The Bombay Chronicler*, 23 May 1939.

The KKs were directed by the organisation to remain aloof from the agitation sponsored by the 'anti-Congress elements' in the province. It was decided to oust every member from the organisation who joined the agitation against the party directives.[292] Ubaidullah was accused of helping the Mohmand peasants for personal motives — to further his aspiration to leadership.[293] Abdul Ghaffar Khan denounced Ubaidullah and his group and held them responsible for creating disunity among the KKs.[294] The PML initially supported the agitation and endorsed Ubaidullah's views.[295] But it 'soon became apparent', reported the Governor that 'as landlords they cannot afford to encourage disrespect for law among tenants',[296] and they withdrew their support. As there was no ideological basis for it, the aspirations of the people cooled down, and in this way the movement came to an end. On 14 July, about two hundred and fifty prisoners arrested during the agitation were released followed by the release of their leaders a few days after.[297]

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[290] : 'Frontier Premier Son Jailed', Text of Judgement, *Khyber Mail*, 18 June 1939.

[291] : GR No. 11, 9 June 1939, Mss. EUR., D. 670/15, IOLR; CID Diaries File No. 48, 'Muftiabad Agitation', June 1939, SBP, pp. 401-409; Khaleeq, *Azadi*, pp. 139-140.

[292] : CID Diaries, 5 June 1939, F Nos. 48, 49, SBP, pp. 403-407 and 23.

[293] : *ibid.* 26 June 1939, F. No. 49, pp. 49-55; Interview Abdul Ghani Khan, Charsadda, 1 February 1987 and 3 February 1989.

[294] : *Pakhtun*, 21 July 1939, pp. 5-9.

[295] : CID Diaries, 3 June 1939, F. No. 770, SBP, p. 135.

[296] : GR No 11, 9 June 1939, Mss. EUR., D. 670/15, IOLR.

[297] : *Pakhtun*, 21 July 1939, p. 17.

Curtailing the Privileges of the Notables

The next target of the Congress ministry was the curtailment of certain privileges 'misused' by the notables[298] in the N-WFP. Its first target was the abolition of the institution of the Honorary Magistrates. In the FP their number was about 300, and in most cases, they were big Khans, K.B.s, title-holders and Jagirdars, authorised by the colonial government to exercise judicial powers on its behalf. It was a hereditary post; the only requirement being 'service' to the Raj. In September 1937, Arbab Ghafoor, Congress member from Peshawar, moved a resolution in the assembly demanding the abolition of the institution of Hon. Magistrates. His argument was that in most cases they were ignorant of law. With no formal court premises, they were unable to pay much attention to cases and were preoccupied with their own domestic problems. Moreover, as the institution became hereditary, personal likes and dislikes and party feeling were always rampant.[299] The resolution created mixed feelings. Nawab M. Zafar Khan, an opposition member, himself a Hon. Magistrate, in refuting the allegations of Arbab Ghafoor remarked that 'We serve the people more than those who have orderlies at their doors', and that 'when the question of justice comes in we do justice'.[300] Mian Zia-ud-Din, and Aurangzeb, two other opposition members, representatives of the Muslim intelligentsia, supported the resolution and regarded the system as having 'outgrown' its utility.[301] Nishtar also vehemently criticised it and declared that 'this system cannot be mended, and, therefore, it should be ended'.[302]

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[298]: For a detailed discussion of notables and their relationship to the colonial state see C. A. Bally 'Local Control in Indian Towns — the Case of Allahabad 1880-1920', *MAS*, 5, 4 (1971), pp. 289-311.
[299]: Arbab Ghafoor, 18 September 1937, *PLAD*, pp. 137-140.
[300]: Nawab Zafar Khan, *ibid*, pp. 142-43.
[301]: *PLAD*, pp. 144-150.
[302]: Nishtar, *ibid*. pp. 152-155.

The motion was carried in the assembly and the Hon. Magistrates ceased to function from 7 October.[303] Cunningham considered it as a 'direct blow at the khans— in fact against the very khans who had opposed them [Congressites] in the Red Shirt agitation of 1930-31'.[304] He anticipated 'a good deal of heart-burning among some of those who have been most loyal to the Government in the past'.[305] However, he was convinced of the merit of the case and claimed the ministry's move was 'right'.[306]

Another measure of the Congress ministry which added to its popularity was the abolition of the *Zaildari* and *Lambardari* system. The duties of *zaildars* included helping officials in the collection of revenue, and assisting and supervising the *lambardars*, the semi-hereditary official revenue collectors. Besides performing their duties as tax and revenue collectors, in some cases the *lambardars* also performed police duties and acted as village head-men, extracting 5% of the land revenue and 3% of the water rate as payment.[307] According to the revenue minister the number of *lambardars* were 7425.[308] Cunningham was not happy with the abolition of the *lambardars*, whom he considered active supporters of the government. Apart from the collection of revenue, the services of the *lambardars* were utilised by the government in the suppression of the KKs in the 1930s. In February 1938, Cunningham reported that the Congressites were planning to throw the whole system of *lambardari* open to elections. 'This would probably mean', noted the Governor, 'the disappearance of several thousands of these village headmen, whose office is largely hereditary, in favour of people who in many cases would probably have little influence in the village either for the collection of revenue (their chief duty) or for the prevention of crime'.[309] He was determined to save these allies of the British Crown. 'Such an upheaval might will cause widespread tumult, and would probably attract my special responsibility'[310]. The *zaildari* system was abolished; but the *lambardari* could not be removed for the time being, as the Governor N-WFP put every possible obstacle in the way of the ministry, and side-tracked the issue whenever it came to discussion until the ministry had resigned.

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[303] : *ibid*, p. 158; *Khyber Mail*, 10 October 1937.
[304] : Summary of Events, Mss. EUR., D.670/17, IOLR, p. 10.
[305] : GR, 9 October, 1937, Mss. EUR., D 670/14, IOLR.
[306] : Summary of Events, Mss. EUR., D 670/17, IOLR, p. 10.
[307] : Rittenberg, 'Independence Movement', p. 239.
[308] : Qazi Ataullah, *PLAD*, 28 March 1939, p. 851.

Next to go were the *Inamkhors*. The *Inamkhors* were appointed under the Punjab Revenue Act of 1887, and were remunerated in the form of an assignment either in cash or land under the *inam* scheme. In March 1938, a Bill recommending the forfeiture of the Jagirs and *inams* of big Khans was moved by the treasury benches. In the N-WFP, the total number of such *inams* was about 700. They were granted for 'good services' to the Crown — helping the government in times of 'crisis', and associated with trans-border affairs. The duties of the *inamkhor* included assistance in the district administration; at some times they performed the duties of *zaildars*.[311] The Governor, though not pleased with the abolition of the *inams*, especially in the trans-border regions, reluctantly allowed the passage of the Bill in March 1938.[312] After the abolition of the above institutions, the ministry relieved the villagers of their unpaid duties of *naubati chaukidari*. Under this system, introduced under the FCR, the villagers were required to serve as night watchmen in rotation, and of course, without any remuneration. It had become unpopular among the villagers, as the Khan's, and, at certain places, the police and other officials were exploiting their position and misusing their authority. 'The main reasons put forward in support of its abolition are that it is abused by the police and other officials in the punishment of villagers for failure in the performance of duty and, secondly, that agriculturists who have worked all day cannot be expected to perform watch duty by night', remarked Cunningham.[313]

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[309] : GR, 9 February 1938, Mss. EUR., D. 670/14, IOLR.

[310] : *ibid.*

[311] : Qazi Ataullah, 9 March 1938, *PLAD*, pp. 433-434.

[312] : Forfeiture of Inams and Jagirs, F. No. 59, SBP, pp. 59-61; *Pakhtun*, 11 October 1938, pp. 8-9.

The ministry also suspended the practice of nominating sons and near relatives of the Khans to important administrative jobs, and stressed that all government posts in the future would be filled by competition. The PML took it as a blow to the prestige of the Khans and other influential Muslims and criticised the orders of the Congress government. The orders, according to Mian Zia-ud-Din, would result in the majority of posts being given to Hindus, who were better educated than the average Frontier Muslim.[314]

These steps of the Frontier Congress government aroused ambivalent reactions in political circles. While most of its supporters inside and outside the legislature welcomed them and viewed them as a great achievement by a popular ministry, it was condemned in several quarters. By abolishing the office of the Hon. Magistrates, the Congress government was accused of depriving itself and the district officials of the active support and help of local dignitaries in the suppression of crime. Moreover, *zaildars* had been used to help the police in the maintenance of law and order, and they had helped the revenue collectors in the collection of revenue from certain localities. By abolishing the institution of *zaildari*, the Congress government 'over burdened' the civil authorities. Moreover, after the abolition of Jagirs, and forfeiture of *inams*, the Jagirdars and *inamkhors* were not morally bound to help the government at any time. The ministry was accused of being 'too rash, hasty, and idealistic in its reforms'.[315] The PML, having recently re-appeared on the political scene of the N-WFP, was the main beneficiary. It capitalised on the grievances of the Khans against the ministry; every anti-Khan step of the ministry was exploited by the Leaguers. The ministry, which, according to Cunningham, 'had no difficulty in finding the vulnerable points in the khans armour',[316] was accused of being an anti-Muslim and an anti-Khan ministry. The Khans considered the ML to be the only bulwark against the attacks of Congress. They joined the League in large numbers, thus providing a base, for their future manoeuvres against Congress and the nationalists.

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[313]: GR, 10 January 1938, Mss. EUR., D. 670/14, IOLR; *Pakhtun*, 11 October 1938, pp. 6-9.
[314]: CID Diaries, 10 January 1938, F. No. 766, SBP, p. 21.

Educational Reforms

Aware of the educational backwardness of the Frontier Muslims, the ministry paid due attention to education. In September 1937, a debate initiated by Jaffar Shah on the introduction of Pashto as medium of instruction in primary schools took place. Jaffar Shah highlighted the importance of primary education in one's mother tongue and not in an unfamiliar language — the 'study of which entails so much waste of their time'. He compared the N-WFP with other provinces of the sub-continent such as Bengal, Sindh and Gujrat, where the children were educated in their mother tongues.[317] Amir M. Khan, after supporting the views of the mover, demanded that Urdu should not be enforced in schools where only 3 students out of 80 spoke Urdu.[318] Surprisingly Aurangzeb also supported the resolution and said: 'What a peculiar position it is that you have to ask a Pushtu-speaking infant to start learning

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[315]: G. Rai on 'Civil Administration in Frontier Province', *Tribune*, 25 August 1939.
[316]: GR, 24 June 1938, Mss. EUR., D 670/14, IOLR.
[317]: Jaffar Shah, 28 September 1938, *PLAD*, pp. 604-605; *Pakhtun*, 1 May 1938, pp. 5-9.
[318]: Amir M. Khan, *PLAD*, pp. 604-605.

Urdu first and then learn mathematics or geography through a language which he himself does not know'.[319] Mian Zia-ud-Din advised the non-Pashtoons to learn Pashto. 'Those who want to live with us', he declared, 'must learn our language. We cannot go into a country and expect that the country will change its language for us'.[320] This emphasis on the need for primary education in Pashto was part of the nationalists' efforts in promoting the use of various provincial languages. Sarwar (Hazara), Ishar Das (Hazara) and Khanna (Peshawar Urban) opposed the resolution and urged the government not to enforce Pashto on non-Pashto speaking people. They demanded that it should be left to the option of the people and not be enforced as a compulsory subject or medium of instruction. Khan Sahib and Qazi Ataullah opined that it should be introduced in those areas which 'are predominantly Pashtu speaking'.[321]

The ministry intended to introduce compulsory primary education, and allocated funds in the 1938-39 budget for 50 new primary schools for boys, and 10 new schools for girls.[322] Communal schools were discouraged and it was decided to have one school in each village, under the direct supervision of the education ministry, open to all the three communities of the area.[323]

Another step, which the PML regarded as a disservice to Islam and against the interests of the Frontier Muslims was the discontinuation of *Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam*[324] books in the schools by the Frontier government. The books were introduced by the education department in 1936 on the recommendation of the Text Book Committee.[325] The books contained the details of the life of the Holy Prophet and other Muslim celebrities, and, therefore were objected to by the Hindus and Sikhs on religious grounds. A representative delegation of the minorities met Khan Sahib during his visit to the southern districts and demanded their withdrawal from the District Board Schools, to which the Premier agreed. The ministry notified teachers that they should not enforce these books on non-Muslims, and thus provided 'an excellent opportunity for propaganda' to the PML.[326] This step, it was alleged, would injure the feelings of the whole Muslim community.[327] The local Leaguers organised public meetings and protested at the exclusion of the *Anjuman* books from the schools.[328] Qazi Ataullah made it clear that they 'should be replaced by the other books of the *Anjuman*' and they 'can be taught where there are no Hindu or Sikh boys'.[329]

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[319] : Aurangzeb, *ibid.* 28 September 1937, pp. 606-608.

[320] : Mian Zia-ud-Din, *ibid.* pp. 619-620.

[321] : For more details see *PLAD*, pp. 605-614,621-622; *Khyber Mail*, 21 November 1937.

[322] : *ibid.* 2 March 1938, *PLAD*, p. 61.

[323] : *Khyber Mail*, 8 May 1938; Qazi Ataullah, 8 March 1938, *PLAD*, pp. 417-418.

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[324]: In 1884, in Lahore, some notable Muslims established the *Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam* (Society of the Supporters of Islam) to promote the modern education among the Punjab Muslims. As the FP was then a part of Punjab, the activities of the *Anjuman* were also extended to the FP. They prescribed certain books carrying details of the life history of the Holy Prophet and other Muslim divines for the inclusion into the curriculum of the primary education. I. H. Malik, 'Identity Formation and Muslim Party Politics in the Punjab, 1897-1936: A Retrospective Analysis', *MAS*, 29, 2 (1995), pp. 293-323.

[325]: Qazi Ataullah, 14 November 1938, *PLAD*, p. 646.

[326]: GR No. 12, 24 June 1938, Mss. EUR., D. 670/14, IOLR.

[327]: Saadullah, 3 November 1938, *PLAD*, p. 101.

[328]: *Khyber Mail*, 26 March 1938.

[329]: Qazi Ataullah, 27 March 1938, *PLAD*, p. 725.

Introduction of 'Goondas Bill'

During the Congress ministry in the Frontier, there was an increase in the growth of crime. There were 664 cases of murder during 1937; 702 murders in 1938 and 491 till August 1939 as compared with 558 in 1936; 576 in 1935 and 514 in 1934.[330] Kidnapping, looting and arson combined to have a very high incidence, especially in the southern districts of the FP. The sufferers in most cases were members of the minority community;[331] however, in some cases Muslims also could not escape.[332] Most of the cases were attributed to the forward policy of the central government in Waziristan.[333] Nehru condemned government frontier policy and regarded it as a complete failure. 'It is ultimately one of advancing and occupying more territory' remarked Nehru, 'so as to remove the theatre of war a little further away from their present base'. Congress, according to Nehru, had repeatedly declared that it had no quarrels with its neighbours and that it desired to cultivate friendly and co-operative relations with them. He was sure that if the people of the tribal belt were approached in a humane way, they would fully cooperate in maintaining law and order rather than challenging it.[334]

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[330] : *PLAD*, 20 September 1939, p. 422; *Pakhtun*, 21 May 1938, pp. 5-8.

[331] : Bhanju Ram to Asaf Ali, 5 May 1937, P-16 (i) 1937, AICC, NMML, pp. 32-33.

[332] : Khanna, in a debate on constituting an Inquiry Committee on increase of crime in the province informed the House that how three Muslims, Jamal, Jamshed and Adil Mir resisted the offensive on Nizam Bazaar, Bannu. Adil Mir was shot dead in a cold blood and Jamal and Jamshed were sent outside the province by the authorities to escape death. *PLAD*, 20 September 1939, p. 477.

[333] : Details on Government's Waziristan policy can be seen in R. I. Bruce, *The Forward Policy and Its Results* (London, 1900); T. L. Pennel, *Among the Wild Tribes of Afghan Frontier* (Karachi, 1975); Laiq Shah, *Waziristan* (Lahore, 1993); Andrews, *The Challenge of the North-West Frontier*; Davies, *The Problems of the North-West Frontier*; L. Shah, *Mullah Powindah* (Lahore, 1994); Gul Ayub Saifi, *Bannu Au Da Waziristan Tarikh* (Bannu, 1969); Swinson, *North-West Frontier*.

During his Bannu visit in August 1938, Abdul Ghaffar Khan also criticised the policy of the central government towards Waziristan and the Frontier tribes. He was of the firm opinion that the tribal raids were organised with the connivance of the government officials in order to defame the 'national government' and to provide grounds for their continuing with the forward policy on the Frontier. To win over the sympathies of right wing Hindu leaders in the assembly and to mould public opinion in their favour, the central government itself, according to Abdul Ghaffar Khan, organised the raids on Bannu and D.I.Khan.[335] The Frontier officials, according to Abdul Ghaffar Khan, were telling subordinates to follow their instructions and not those of the Congress ministers, who had held office for a very brief period.[336] The Asaf Ali Commission, appointed by the Congress to probe into the riots of the southern districts, also suspected the latent hostility of certain executive officers against the Congress ministry.[337] Cunningham, reported that at the inception of the Congress ministry there was a general fear of victimisation among the bureaucrats. As they had showed favouritism to anti-Congress circles, they were afraid of reprisals by the Congress ministers, but Khan Sahib assured the officials of their co-operation and friendly behaviour.[338] Towards the end of the Congress ministry those apprehensions disappeared, and, to the satisfaction of the Governor, no case was reported to him 'in which the ministry tried to victimise an official unjustly, or take action against anyone who was doing his work honestly and efficiently'.[339] The tour of Abdul Ghaffar Khan to the southern districts had restored a good deal of confidence amongst the minority communities. After assurances were given to them by the KK leaders, a significant number of the rural population who had migrated to the big cities returned to their areas.[340]

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[334]: 'Bombing and Kidnapping on the Frontier', J Nehru, Allahabad, 22 June 1937, P-16 (i) 1937, AICC, NMML, pp. 1-5.

[335]: 'Bannu Raids and the Responsibility of the Government', Abdul Ghaffar Khan, *Pakhtun*, 11 September 1938, pp. 12-16.

[336]: Abdul Ghaffar Khan on non-co-operation of the officials with the Congress ministers, *Pakhtun*, 21 November 1938 and 'Alleged Non Co-operation of officials with the Ministry', *PLAD*, 17 March 1938, pp. 14-15 and 23.

[337]: Gupta, *Freedom Struggle*, p. 105.

[338]: GRs No. 11, 24 September 1937, No. 15, 23 November 1937, Mss. EUR., D. 670/14, IOLR.

However, the raids were soon resumed and the issue came up for discussion in the provincial assembly. The non- Muslim MLAs asked the government to give priority to the matter as the lives and properties of non- Muslims in the southern districts were threatened by tribal 'raiders'. Khan Sahib, after accepting the responsibility of the Congress government to redress the sufferings of the minority communities in the Frontier, informed the House of the various steps the government was taking for the protection of their life and property.[341] Khan Sahib's personal interest on the matter was regarded as 'reasonable'. His frequent visits to the southern areas and his advice to the local people to assist the police in the maintenance of law and order had restored confidence in the border villages.[342]

But Khan Sahib was himself not satisfied with the steps taken by the ministry in that regard. Eventually, on 25 September 1939, the Frontier Congress ministry 'very reluctantly' decided to introduce 'a special piece of legislation' known as the 'Goondas Bill'.[343] It was meant to deal with those undesirable and recalcitrant elements who were a threat to the peace and tranquillity of the province. It empowered the government to intern or expel any 'miscreant' person, without giving any reason, and it provided no opportunity for the accused to seek redress in a court of law. Under the bill the trials were to be held in *camera*; the accused was not given any chance to be represent by a counsel; the names of the witnesses against the accused were not to be disclosed so that there would be no cross examination. The Bill aroused mixed feelings in the assembly. Khanna termed it a 'black law', aimed at the opponents of the government.[344] To Saadullah the aims and objectives of the Bill were to curb the activities of the opposition members.[345] Nishtar, after condemning the Bill, accused Khan Sahib of following in the footsteps of British imperialism and pursuing its 'hated traditions' of ruling through repressive laws.[346] The PML, according to the Governor N-WFP, 'have taken strong exception to this measure and are said to be organising some form of civil disobedience in protest'.[347] To the Leaguers, the act, although meant for the *badmash*, would be used to stifle the opposition.[348] Despite the opposition of the Hindu communalists, the Leaguers and some Independents, the Bill was carried on 25 September 1939. To the great satisfaction of the PML, the Governor withheld his consent. The *Khyber Mail* appreciated the action of the Governor and welcomed it as a gesture of good will by the administration towards the Frontier public.[349]

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[339] : Summary of Events in N-WFP, (September 1937-November 1939),D. 670/17, IOLR, p. 12.

[340] : *The Free Press Journal*, 11 December 1937, Rawalpindi, S No. 1, Tendulkar Papers, NMML, pp. 173-175.

[341] : For details see Debate on Committee of Inquiry into Increase in Crime in North-West Frontier Province, *PLAD*, 20 September 1939, pp. 475-504.

[342] : GR No. 14, 9 November 1937, Mss. EUR., D 670/14, IOLR.

[343] : Khan Sahib, *PLAD*, 14 September 1939, p. 112.

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[344] : Khanna, 28 September 1939, *PLAD*, p. 671.
[345] : Saadullah, *ibid.* p. 684.
[346] : Nishtar quoted in Gupta, *Freedom Struggle*, p. 102.
[347] : GR, 9 October 1939, Mss. EUR., D. 670/15, IOLR. On 25 September, the day of its passage in the assembly, the local Leaguers organised an 'absolutely peaceful' demonstration against 'the most obnoxious and retrogressive piece of legislation passed by any assembly', outside the assembly hall. The demonstrators were dispersed by the police and 10 Leaguers were arrested. The arrested persons were released unconditionally by the Congress ministry during the first week of November 1939. Mian Zia-ud-Din to secretary AIML, 3 November 1939, F. No. 206, AFM, pp. 68-69. CID Diaries, 28 September 1939, F. No. 771, SBP, pp. 221-237; *Khyber Mail*, 5 November 1939; *Pakhtun*, 21 November 1939, p. 15.
[348] : *ibid.*
[349] : *Khyber Mail*, 10 December 1939.

Constitutional and Electoral Issues

The question of 'Federation' was another issue which attracted the attention of the provincial Congress ministry during its tenure of office. In March 1938, a resolution was moved by C. C. Ghosh against the 'imposition of the Federal Scheme upon India' considering it as a 'bulwark against India's freedom'.[350] He criticised the active participation of the Princes and the Federating States who had no democratic institutions in their states. It was pre-planned, remarked Ghosh, 'to have a conservative element in the Central Legislature which would be well established by means of more numerical representation of the States in the Federal Assembly'.[351] The important role of the Governor-General then came under criticism. The special powers of the Governor-General and his influence over financial matters were considered 'as to over-ride the popular wishes'.[352] Nishtar, endorsing the views of Ghosh, proposed to the central government that 'nothing less than a federation of free India comprised of democratic units with adequate safeguards for all minorities can satisfy them'.[353] There was no controversy and the resolution was passed unanimously.[354]

Another controversial matter brought before the House was the introduction of joint electorates in the elections to the local bodies in the N-WFP. The ministry decided to introduce this with the reservation of seats for the minorities in the elections. The act of the ministry was termed as an 'outstanding achievement' and was regarded 'well ahead of the rest of India'.[355] The Leaguers in the assembly were perturbed over the new developments taking place in the Frontier. They condemned the Frontier ministry for infringing the Communal Award, thus acting against the interests of Indian Muslims. Aurangzeb insisted that any decision on such a vital issue should be discussed between the Muslims and the Hindu representative bodies — AIML and the INC.[356] But Qazi Ataullah bluntly refuted Aurangzeb's verbosity about the League's status as the 'true representative of the Mussalmans' or the Congress as merely a 'Hindu body'.[357] The PML exploited the 'wrong steps' taken by the Congress ministry giving the latter a religious colour, and tried to incite public feeling against the 'anti-Muslim' measures of the Frontier Congress and thereby 'breed bitterness'.[358]

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[350] : C. C. Ghosh, 9 March 1938, *PLAD*, p. 466.
[351] : *ibid.* p. 467.
[352] : *ibid.* p. 468.
[353] : Nishtar, *ibid.* p. 469.
[354] : *PLAD*, 9 March 1938, pp. 466-497; CID Diaries, 10 March 1939 and 21 March 1939, F. No. 34, SBP, pp. 207,221-239; Gupta, *Freedom Struggle*, p. 84.

Resignation of the Ministry

On 3 September 1939 Britain declared war on Germany[359] and asked her Dominions to follow her. The Dominion Parliaments met and endorsed the decision. In India, the Viceroy, without consulting Indian public opinion, declared that India too was at war with Germany. It was at this stage that Congress demanded constitutional concessions in return for assistance in the war on the British side. On their part the British refused any concessions to the Congress demands and asked for unconditional support, which Congress rejected. On 22 September Congress called upon its ministers to resign.[360]

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[355] : *Khyber Mail*, 30 October 1938, 21 November 1938 and 29 January 1939.
[356] : Aurangzeb, 14 November 1938, *PLAD*, p. 648.
[357] : Qazi Ataullah, quoted in Gupta, *Freedom Struggle*, p. 89.
[358] : Arbab Ghafoor, ibid. p. 209; *IAR*, 1938, I, p. 210; *Khyber Mail*, 6 November 1938.
[359] : *IAR*, 1939, II, p. 21; *Gazette of India*, September 3, 1939.
[360] : Sitaramayya, *History*, II, pp. 124-144.

The CWC advised its ministry in the N-WFP to follow the rest of the Congress ministries and tender its resignation.[361] The ministry called a special session of the assembly on 6 November and introduced the war resolution in it. Khan Sahib, the mover, protested at the declaration of war by the British government without consulting the peoples' representatives in the country. He demanded that the British should treat India as an independent nation entitled to frame its own constitution.[362] Jaffar Shah moved an amendment declaring the disassociation of the ministry from British war aims.[363] Aurangzeb, on behalf of the PML, urged the British government not to make any commitment concerning a future constitution 'without the approval and consent of the All-India Muslim League which alone represents and can speak on behalf of the Mussulmans of India...'.[364] The League leader repudiated the charges against the AIML of being opposed to the independence of India. 'All-India Muslim League is as much anxious as you are for a free India', he added, 'but I am certainly not for a free India in which I am to continue as a slave'.[365] The Congress claim to represent the entire country was challenged by Aurangzeb as, according to him, it did not represent the Muslims, 'untouchables' and a sizeable number of Hindus and Sikhs. He was of the opinion that the interests of Muslims could not be safe in Congress hands.[366] In the League's opinion it was improper for Congress to bargain with the

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[361] : Congress Working Committee Resolution, 22 October 1939, *IAR*, 1939, II, p. 237.

[362] : Resolution moved by Khan Sahib, 6 November 1939, *PLAD*, pp. 4-7.

[363] : Jaffar Shah, 6 November 1939, *PLAD*, pp. 8-13.

[364] : Aurangzeb, *ibid.* pp. 14-21.

[365] : *ibid.*

[366] : Raja Abdur Rahman, 7 November 1939, *PLAD*, pp. 82-83. To inquire into the Muslim grievances in the Congress majority provinces, the AIML appointed three Committees. The first one was *The Report of the Inquiry Committee appointed by the Council of All-India Muslim League to inquire into Muslim grievances in Congress Provinces*. The report, also known as the Pir Pur Report after its chairman Raja Syed Mohammad Mahdi of Pir Pur, was published at the end of 1938. The Report includes a summary of injustices meted out to the Muslims in all Congress majority provinces excluding the N-WFP. Second one was the *Report of the Enquiry Committee appointed by the Working Committee of the Bihar Provincial Muslim League to enquire into some grievances of Muslims in Bihar*, published in March 1939 was also known as Shareef Report after the name of its draftsmen S. M. Shareef. It explains in detail the atrocities perpetrated by Hindus in various places in Bihar. The third one was about the allegation of Fazl-ul-Haq,

British at such a critical time when they were engaged in a war of life and death.[367] Apart from the PML, the Hindu communalists and Sikhs in the N-WFP also supported the British stand. Khanna advised his community to give their whole-hearted support to the British and regarded it as the duty of Indian people to fight for the Crown.[368] Ishar Das and Ajit Singh endorsed the views of Khanna and urged the Congress to help Britain in time of war, which would put Britain under obligation which it would be bound to honour at the end of the war.[369]

The Congress MLAs criticised the League's pro-British role. They denounced and challenged the Leaguers' claim to be the only Muslim representative organisation in the sub-continent. Jamiat-ul-Ulema, the Ahrars, the Khaksars, apart from the nationalist Muslims, according to them, were all out of the League fold, thus proving its claims of Muslim representation on an all-India level to be spurious.[370] The debate resulted in the passing of the Congress resolution. On 7 November 1939 Khan Sahib's Congress ministry resigned.[371] On 11 November, Cunningham, seeing no possibility of an alternative ministry in the Frontier, assumed full administrative and legislative powers under section 93 of the Government of India Act, 1935, and prorogued the assembly indefinitely.[372]

On the resignation of the Congress ministry, the provincial League, following the directives of its president Jinnah, celebrated 22 December 1939 as a 'day of

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known as *Muslim Sufferings Under Congress Rule*, published in December 1939. It also accused the Congressites of suppressing the Muslims in the Congress majority provinces. For more details see Coupland, *Indian Politics*, pp. 185-189; J. Ahmad, *Historic Documents of the Muslim Freedom Movement* (Lahore, 1970), pp. 258-332.

[367]: Sardar Bahadur Khan, 7 November 1939, *PLAD*, p. 106.

[368]: Khanna, 6 November 1939, *ibid.* p. 27.

[369]: Ishar Das, 7 November 1939, *ibid.* p. 116.

[370]: Qazi Ataullah, Arbab Ghafoor, 7 November 1939, *ibid.* pp. 103, 133.

[371]: *IAR*, 1939, II, p. 40; *Pakhtun*, 11 November 1939, p. 11; *Pakhtun*, 11 February 1940, p. 7.

[372]: Notification of Gazette Extraordinary quoted *in Khyber Mail*, 12 November 1939; GR, 24 November 1939, D. 670/15, IOLR.

deliverance and thanksgiving as a mark of relief that the Congress regime at last ceased to function'.[373] The League celebrations had embittered communal feelings locally. The Hindu-Sikh Nationalist party, reported Cunningham, 'has countered the scheme by submitting a resolution for consideration at the Hindu Mahasabha Conference, proposing that a committee should tour India to enquire into the difficulties and injustices from which Hindus have suffered as the result of the pro-Muslim policy of the Congress and non-Congress Ministries'.[374]

Conclusion

After analysing in detail various measures of the Congress ministry and its influence on the Frontier politics, a mention must be made of the reaction of various political circles to the resignation of the Frontier Congress ministry. The resignation provided a chance for the British government to manage its war affairs through the Governor N-WFP without the slightest hindrance to legislative control or disturbance from any quarter. The PML hoped that the resignation of the Congress ministry would mean that they would be able to rise to power.

Eventually the KKs came to consider their own ministry as inimical to their interests since it had curbed their radical politics. They felt that the time was now ripe to revive those politics. With the resignation of the ministry, Congress abandoned the 'constitutional' path which it had adopted since 1934, and once again plunged into politics of protest. Before moving on to an examination of wartime politics, the next chapter reviews the revival of the ML in the N-WFP and the efforts of its central organisation to establish the League organisation on a firm footing in the province, thus justifying its claim to be the true representative of the Indian Muslims.

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[373] : M. H. Sayyid, *M A Jinnah (A Political Study)* (Lahore, 1945), p. 655; *Khyber Mail*, 24 December 1939; CID Diaries No. 51, 22 December 1939, F Nos. 792, pp. 179-185 and F. No. 772, pp. 211-217, SBP.

[374] : GR, 9 December 1939, Mss. EUR., D. 670/15, IOLR.

CHAPTER FOUR

REVIVAL OF THE FRONTIER MUSLIM LEAGUE

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the revival of the ML in the N-WFP. It has been argued that, although Jinnah was able to establish some contact with sections of the Muslim intelligentsia and other elite groups of the province, at that time the party enjoyed only limited support. During his visit to the province in 1936, Jinnah failed to elicit mass support for the League. Consequently the League was unable to field even a single candidate in the 1937 elections. However, since some of the big Khans lent support to the ML after the death of Sir A. Qaiyum, it registered some success in the by-elections of 1938. In the popular perception, the League was viewed as a party of the elite — of K.B.s, Jagirdars, various other title-holders, some big Khans — and as pro-British in its politics. Therefore, the party was never able to gather mass support in this period. The League members carried out 'communal' propaganda against the KKs and the Congress. Its leaders sought to mobilise the people with tales of 'Hindu atrocities', but failed because there was no sense of 'Islam in danger' in the N-WFP. The majority of the FP Muslims were not interested in the communal ideology of the League, as their foremost concern was to get rid of British imperialism.

On the announcement of the elections to the provincial assemblies, like other political leaders, Jinnah, the newly elected president of the AIML, initiated an election campaign.[375] He transformed a practically 'dead organisation' into an organised body. Jinnah was authorised by the League to organise the election boards at the central and provincial levels.[376] The main task before Jinnah was to unite and bring together heterogeneous Muslim political organisations on one platform. He started from the Punjab, one of the Muslim strongholds in the sub-continent. Though he knew that Sir Fazl-i-Hussain and Sikandar Hayat, who dominated the political scene in the Punjab, were opposing the AIML, he invited Sir Fazl-i-Hussain to preside over the League's annual session.[377] The 'Grand Old Man of Unionism' opposed the ML and warned Jinnah to 'keep his finger out of the Punjab pie' as he would get nothing by using the name of the ML there.[378] In contrast with the Punjab, the AIML found a favourable situation in Bengal. After the elections the AIML played a key role in the ministry-making game and became the back-bone of the Fazlul Haq ministry.[379] In Sind and the N-WFP the ML failed to perform well.[380] The following is a discussion of Jinnah's efforts to organise the ML in the FP.

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[375]: K. Chandra, *Tragedy of Jinnah* (Lahore, 1941), p.133.

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[376]: Muslim League Election Manifesto, *IAR*, 1936, I, pp. 299-301.

[377]: '...at this moment', Jinnah wrote to Fazl-i-Hussain, 'no one can give a better lead to the Mussalmans of India than yourself....We want a man of your calibre and experience, and nobody can well, at this critical moment as far as I can see, perform that duty and render that service to the community as you would be able to'. Jinnah to Fazl-i-Hussain, 5 January 1936, Hussain Collection, Mss. EUR., E. 352/17, IOLR, pp. 23-24.

[378]: A. Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman, the Muslim League and the demand for Pakistan* (Cambridge, 1994), p. 21; and A. Hussain, *Sir Fazl-i-Hussain, A Political Biography* (Bombay, 1946), pp. 297-321. 'Why Jinnah has not done' remarked Fazl-i-Hussain, 'what any ordinary practical man would have done — revive the Provincial League and give it a good start and stress the need of opening its branches in all the districts. He has done seemingly nothing except talk and talk and talk. He apparently believed that he was so clever that he will get people to agree to become his nominees and serve on the Central Board and then they will be responsible for running the elections in the province. So the scheme is purely a paper one'. Fazl-i-Hussain to Sikandar Hayat, 6 May 1936, Mss. EUR., E. 352/16, IOLR, pp. 43-44. For more details see I. Talbot, *Provincial Politics and the Pakistan Movement* (Karachi, 1988), pp. 86-87, and, A. Jalal and A. Seal, 'Alternatives to Partition: Muslim Politics Between the Wars', *MAS*, 15, 3, (1981), pp. 432-454.

[379]: Jalal, *Sole Spokesman*, pp. 23-27; Chatterji, *Bengal Divided*, pp. 103-104.

[380]: For a detailed discussion of ML's failure in Sind see S. Ansari, *Sufi Saints and State Power*, pp. 115-117.

Jinnah's First Frontier Visit (1936)

Jinnah was eager to learn more about the N-WFP — the only Muslim majority province that had very strong connections with the INC. He contacted Yusufi, an old Khilafatist of Peshawar about general conditions in that province.[381] He also informed Sir A. Qaiyum of his impending visit to the FP and asked him for his help and support in that regard.[382] As a government servant, Sir A. Qaiyum could not send a formal invitation to a politician. However, he introduced Jinnah to prominent members of the MIP, including Lal Badshah, Pir Bakhsh and Khuda Bakhsh. Moreover, Sir A. Qaiyum offered his residence for Jinnah's stay in Peshawar, which he accepted.[383] The MIP leaders sent a formal invitation to Jinnah, then staying at Lahore.[384]

While discussing Jinnah's Frontier visit, mention must be made of the rivalries of local Peshawar urban politicians. Nishtar, and Pir Bakhsh, both lawyers, nursed a considerable hostility towards each other. The main reasons were personal: the aspiration for leadership. When Nishtar was informed that his rival had invited Jinnah to visit the province, he felt this would benefit the election campaign of Pir Bakhsh and his group. Nishtar sent Yusufi, one of his close associates, whom Jinnah knew, and Rahim Bakhsh, to dissuade him from his Frontier visit. The local leaders, according to Nishtar, were at loggerheads with each other and would definitely pay no heed to Jinnah, and thus his mission to the FP would fail.[385] But Jinnah refused their advice and remained insistent on visiting the Frontier.[386] Nishtar tried again, met Jinnah at Nowshera railway station on his way to Peshawar, and urged him to postpone his visit, at least for the time being. But Jinnah remained adamant, and told Nishtar that his visit to the FP was part of the reorganisation of the ML in that province for the forthcoming elections.

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[381] : Jinnah to Yusufi , 12 September 1936, Yusufi Personal Collection, Karachi.

[382] : Shad, 'Deed', II, p. 77.

[383] : *ibid.* pp. 77-78.

[384] : M. Anwar Khan, 'Quaid-i-Azam's First Visit to Peshawar in 1936', in A. H. Dani (ed.) *World Scholars on Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah* (Islamabad, 1979), p. 316.

[385] : S. M. H. Shah, *Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar: A Political Biography* (Lahore, 1985), p. 73; A. R. Nishtar, *Azadi Ki Kahani Meri Zubani* (Karachi, 1977).p.66.

Political circles in the N-WFP were looking forward to Jinnah's Frontier visit with great excitement and interest. On 9 October 1936, at a meeting of Congress workers, it was resolved to meet Jinnah at the railway station, and request him not to deliver speeches against the KKs in the FP as it would certainly lead to an unpleasant situation.[387]

Jinnah arrived at Peshawar railway station on 18 October, and was greeted by prominent leaders of the MIP and other Muslim notables including Sir A. Qaiyum.[388] He was taken in a procession through the city to the residence of Sir A. Qaiyum in Yakatut.[389] That evening Jinnah met some prominent Congress members of the N-WFP. Under the leadership of Ghosh, the team included Khan Sahib, Qaim Shah and Qaiyum. They remained with Jinnah for an hour, but nothing is known of their talks.[390]

On 19 October, under the auspices of the MIP, Jinnah addressed a political meeting at Shahi Bagh, attended by about 1000 persons. The meeting was presided over by Lal Badshah, and Pir Bakhsh acted as the secretary. He translated Jinnah's speech from English to Urdu. The general tone of Jinnah's speech was chiefly confined to the organisation and party programme of the AIML. However, he briefly stated the changes that would take place in the administration on the introduction of the new constitution and advised the Muslims to organise themselves under a strong party, the AIML — representing the Muslims in the sub-continent.[391] On the same day, addressing the students of Edwardes' College, Peshawar, Jinnah elaborated on the policy and programme of the AIML,[392] and, he advised the students to advance themselves politically and educationally.[393]

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[386] : Yusufi, *Siyasiyat Sarhad Key Irtaqai Manazil* (Karachi, 1972), pp. 72-73.
[387] : CID Diaries on Jinnah's Frontier Visit, 12 October 1936, F. No. 30, SBP, p. 41.
[388] : For more details see Shad, 'Deed', II, pp. 83-87; Anwar, 'First Visit', pp. 316-317.
[389] : Shad, 'Deed', II, pp. 86-87.
[390] : *ibid.* p. 87.

On 20 October, Jinnah visited the Islamia College, Peshawar (henceforth ICP), and made a 'stirring' speech at the Khyber Union. His main emphasis was on the unity of Muslims. 'Today your province', said Jinnah, 'is in the grip of outside influences and internal divisions, and it is an irony of fate that those who opposed the progress and constitutional advance of your province are still able to exercise sufficient influence and to prevent the creation of solidarity of Mussalmans in your province'.' Islam expects every Muslim to do his duty', added Jinnah. 'You, my young friends, show the way by your own example, lead your province and go forward united on a single platform, under one flag and to speak with one voice'.[394]

During his Peshawar stay Jinnah was permitted by the authorities to visit Landi Kotal and Torkham. This was a deliberate 'concession' to Jinnah, as in the past political activities of every kind in the tribal territory, including the visits of politicians, were strictly forbidden, and no one, not even Abdul Ghaffar Khan, had been allowed to go there. A delegation of leading tribal chiefs met Jinnah and apprised him of the injustices of the government, particularly the snatching of Khajuri Maidan in 1930 as a punishment of their taking sides with the Congress civil disobedience movement, and other humiliations. They asked Jinnah to raise his voice in their favour on the all-India level, to which Jinnah agreed.[395]

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[391] : CID Diaries, 27 October 1936, F. No. 765, SBP , p. 27.

[392] : *ibid.*

[393] : Anwar, 'First Visit', p. 318.

[394] : *Khyber Mail*, 28 July 1936.

On 23 October, Jinnah held a private meeting with certain local political figures. They included Sir A. Qaiyum, Hakim Abdul Jalil, Kuli Khan and Abdur Rahim. No further details of the meeting are available. It is probable that they discussed the formation of the ML in the FP.[396] On Jinnah's suggestion a branch of the ML with Khuda Bakhsh as president; Pir Bakhsh as secretary and Hakim Abdul Jalil, Lal Badshah, Rahim Bakhsh, Syed Ali Shah and Abdul Latif as members of the executive council was formed.[397] On the evening of 24 October 1936, Jinnah left Peshawar by train for Lahore. He was seen off at the railway station by MIP workers including the members of his newly formed ML.[398] According to the *Khyber Mail,* Jinnah was entirely satisfied with his Frontier visit and 'cherished strong hopes of a bright future'.[399] But S. Sabir conjectures that Jinnah's mission to the FP was a failure.[400] Yusufi, a contemporary of Jinnah, had held the same view.[401] Shad regarded the personal infighting of the urban Muslim political leaders of Peshawar as the main cause of the failure of Jinnah's Frontier visit.[402]

As is evident from the candidates' list, and the subsequent results of the elections of 1937, no member of AIML took part in the elections to the utter disappointment of the League's high command. The faction-ridden groups of Peshawar Muslims either fought the elections in their individual capacity or associated themselves with Sir A. Qaiyum's party. This was considered a setback to the ML, who were claiming themselves to be the genuine representatives of the Muslims with not even a single member in the Muslim majority province of the N-W Frontier. Thus initially Jinnah failed to get the required support of the Frontier Muslims in reorganising the AIML in the N-WFP. The main reasons were the lack of interest on the part of Frontier Muslims in the 'communal' ideology of the League. Moreover, local issues were given priority in the election campaign, limiting the contest mainly to the indigenous parties and splinter groups.

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[395]: Shad, 'Deed', II, pp. 91-92.
[396]: CID Diaries, F. No. 30, SBP, p.382
[397]: *ibid.*
[398]: Shad, 'Deed', II, p. 93.
[399]: *Khyber Mail,* 25 October 1936.
[400]: M. S. Sabir, *Quaid-i-Azam Aur Soobah Sarhad* (Peshawar, 1986), p. 66.
[401]: Yusufi, *Siyasiyat Sarhad,* pp. 72-73.
[402]: Shad, 'Deed', II, p. 96.

Re-Organisation of ML in the Frontier Province

As a party the ML had been non-existent in the FP for more than two decades. Its earlier organisers, Abdul Wali, Aziz, Bokhari and Mir Ahmad, were either in exile, or no more on the political scene. During the election campaign of 1936-37, there was no official League candidate in the contest. After Jinnah's failure to re-organise the ML in the FP, an attempt was made in February 1937 by Muzaffar Ali, of Peshawar Cantonment, to start a branch in the FP. He asked the secretary of the Punjab ML to send him a copy of the rules and regulations of the AIML. He invited prominent League leaders from the Punjab to come to the N-WFP and deliver the message of ML.[403] There is no further information concerning what happened to this request.

The first organised attempt to start a branch of the ML in the N-WFP was made in May 1937 by a few educated Muslims of Nowshera. It was unanimously resolved to affiliate the nascent branch with the AIML and to open other branches in the rural areas of the province. Tila Mohammad, a prominent social worker of Nowshera, became the president, Abdul Wahid, advocate, a former Congress activist, took over as the secretary and Ali Ahmad Khan, another social worker, as the treasurer. Abdul Wahid was the 'moving spirit of this branch of the League' and his jubilation at the formation of this branch of the AIML was regarded by the CID as 'possibly caused by the fact that Congress refused to accept him as a candidate for the recent Assembly elections'.[404] The N-WFP Muslims were urged to support the party programme of AIML, and to join it in large numbers.[405]

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[403]: CID Diaries, 23 February 1937, Peshawar, F. No. 745, SBP, pp. 43, 47.

On 25 August, a number of politically-minded anti-Congress Muslims of Peshawar met and discussed the formation of another branch of the ML. Their main object was to 'safeguard the rights' of the Muslims of the N-WFP, and to counteract the propaganda of the KKs. It was proposed to start branches of the AIML in Peshawar, Bannu and Abbottabad. On 29 August, another meeting was convened at Abbottabad for the same purpose.[406] A conference of PML, attended by about 1000 pro-League Muslims from Rawalpindi, Mardan, Peshawar, Nowshera and Abbottabad with Maulana M. Ishaq in the chair, was held at Abbottabad. Several resolutions were passed on the occasion, including condemnation of the Government's forward policy in Waziristan; a declaration of no confidence in Khan Sahib's Ministry; a request to the government to enforce the Shariat; support for the Communal Award; appeal to the Frontier assembly to take measures to reduce the land revenue in order to give some relief to the zamindars of the province; a demand for the restoration of Shahid Ganj Mosque to the Muslims; a protest against the partition of Palestine; and an expression of full confidence in the leadership of Jinnah.[407]

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[404]: *Ibid.* 7 June 1937, F. No. 765, p. 65.

[405]: Before the 'discovery' of this two page hand-written letter of Abdul Wahid Khan, addressed to the president AIML, in the QAP, and the CID Diaries dated 7 June 1937, all previous writings on the area including Rittenberg, 'Independence Movement', p. 255, Jansson, *Pakhtunistan*, p.108 and Talbot, *Provincial Politics*, p.10 seems to be misinformed on the matter. All of them are of the opinion that the first branch of the PML was started in Abbottabad in September 1937. But as is evident from these documents the first branch of PML was the one started in Nowshera on 16 May 1937. Abdul Wahid to President AIML, 16 May 1937, F. No. 865, QAP, pp. 64-65.

[406]: CID Diaries, 30 August 1937, F. No. 765, SBP, p. 79.

The Ulema played a key role in the formation of the ML at Abbottabad. Maulana Shakirullah, president, JUS, presided over the session and Maulana M. Shuaib (Mardan), its secretary, was made the president of the nascent ML.[408] The activities of the Abbottabad branch of the ML were confined to a limited area. It was considered more a district than a provincial organisation, as it failed to keep full contacts with other Muslims in Peshawar and other parts of the FP.[409] In December, a branch of the ML was formed at Bannu with K. B. Ghulam Haider Khan as president and Nasrullah Khan as general secretary.[410] During the first week of March 1938, a branch of the ML was opened at D.I.Khan with Sardar Haq Nawaz, Municipal Commissioner, as president and Maula Dad as secretary.[411] On 4 March, the ML Kohat with Pir Saeed Shah as president and Ghulam Haider Akhtar as secretary was formed.[412]

Subsequent to the organisation of the district branches of the League, a meeting, attended by only 80 persons, a majority of whom, according to the CID reporter, were 'Chief Khans' of the N-WFP, was held at Nowshera on 10 March. They elected the office-bearers of the PML,[413] but did not have any grass roots level organisation. Until 1945 the League was to remain without any mass support.

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[407] : *ibid.*, 7 September 1937, F. No. 750, p. 39.

[408] : Jansson, *Pakhtunistan*, p. 108.

[409] : *Khyber Mail*, 24, 27 and 31 October 1937; CID Diaries, Peshawar, 29 October 1937, SBP, F No 765, p. 107.

[410] : CID Diaries, Bannu, 4 December 1937, 7 February 1937, SBP, F. No. 787, pp. 11, 41.

[411] : Maula Dad Khan , *Dera Ki Kahani* (D.I.Khan, nd), pp. 44-45.

[412] : *Ehsan*, Lahore, 10 March 1938; CID Diaries, 10 March 1938, SBP, F. No. 799, p. 3.

Sir A. Qaiyum was succeeded by Aurangzeb as the Leader of the Opposition in the Frontier assembly. The big Khans were divided amongst themselves. Always engaged in faction-fighting, they found very little time to organise themselves as a political body. Alarmed by the anti-Khan measures of the Congress ministry in the Frontier, in the absence of any strong bulwark to combat Congress attacks, they rallied around the banner of the ML, which they had earlier regarded as an organisation of a few 'uninfluential people'.[414] Perturbed by the anti-Khan measures of Khan Sahib's ministry, the Khans looked to the Governor to safeguard their interests.[415] They blamed him for doing nothing to help them and 'for failing, as they put it, to break the Congress'.[416] Probably, they were unaware of certain restrictions under the Government of India Act, 1935, on the powers of a Governor. It was neither wise nor 'tactful', remarked Cunningham, 'to remind them that their own class is largely to blame, through allowing their own private jealousies to ruin their prospects at the elections'.[417]

During the first week of April 1938, a deputation of the 'influential' Khans of Charsadda, under the leadership of Saadullah, met Cunningham and apprised him of their grievances against the Congress party. They were perturbed by the introduction of the Agriculturist Debtor's Relief Bill, especially its two clauses dealing with the cancellation of *Inams* and of tenant debts. They appealed to the Governor to interfere in the matter and save them from the 'tyrannies' of Congress.[418] Clearly, the Governor could hardly conceal his pleasure and satisfaction at their united front. 'The Khans now appreciate the necessity for united action to protect their position', remarked the jubilant Governor, 'There are concrete examples of feuds having been settled and of Khans, who have hitherto failed to realise their responsibilities, taking a prominent part in public life'.[419] Cunningham warned the British officers then employed in various administrative units of the provincial administration that in no way should they undermine the prestige of the Khans. 'It is most important to remove from the minds of Khans', advised the Governor, 'any feeling that we no longer consider them of any importance....We cannot afford to neglect a class of people who still have a strong sentimental loyalty to the British Crown'.[420]

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[413]: The office-bearers were Maulana M. Shuaib as president; Mian Zia-ud-Din, vice president; M. Ismail, general secretary, Abdul Wahid, secretary; Sajjad Ahmad Jan, assistant secretary; Arbab Shamsuddin, treasurer and Qazi Abdul Hakim as propaganda secretary. CID Diaries, 18 March 1938, F. No. 750, SBP, p. 65; *Khyber Mail*, 13 March 1938.

[414]: CID Diaries, 1 November 1937, F. No. 765, SBP, p. 117.

[415]: According to Reeves, in UP, like the N-WFP, it was the collaboration of the landlords with the provincial and district administration which provided the essential basis for local political control after the 1860's. For details see Reeves, *Landlords and Governments*, pp. 1-3; *Presidential Address of Maulana Abdur Rahim Popalzai at District Kisan Conference 25-26 February 1939 Mansehra* (Peshawar, 1939), pp. 10-19.

[416]: GR, 9 February 1938, Mss. EUR., D. 670/14, IOLR.

[417]: *ibid.*

After the death of Sir A. Qaiyum, the big Khans found themselves vulnerable to Congress attacks. They were left with no other choice but to join the League. 'The old-fashioned Khans', reported Cunningham, 'who had hardly heard the name of the League six months ago, now refer to it freely as an ordinary topic of conversation...'.[421] Some former members of the UMNP announced in the Frontier assembly their support for the League cause.[422] Apart from the members of the UMNP, a few Independents, some members of HDP, a large number of Khans and deserters from Congress also found it a very useful alternative platform from which to express their feelings and grievances against the Congress. Their joining of the League was not because of their sympathy with its all- India ideals i,e, to safeguard the Muslim interest, which in any case was something of an issue only in the minority provinces and in the centre, but because this was the only political platform which offered them protection.[423]

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[418]: *ibid.* 9 April 1938.
[419]: *ibid.* 23 August 1938.
[420]: *ibid.* 9 May 1939, D. 670/15.
[421]: *ibid.* 23 October 1937, D. 670/14.
[422]: Shad, 'Deed', II, pp. 243-252.

The adherence of the big Khans had given a stimulus to the PML. The Khans, according to Rittenberg, brought with them their 'core group of personal retainers and traditional factional followers', which was an additional source of League power in the province. Furthermore, in Hazara, the majority of non-Pashtoons saw it as anti-Pashtoon party. It was rumoured that Khan Sahib's ministry was favouring the Pashtoon dominated rural areas of the N-WFP — the stronghold of the KKs.[424] The Leaguers succeeded in winning over public opinion in Hazara and exploited every opportunity to dub the Congress ministry a pro-Pashtoon ministry, championing the cause of their own community at the expense of the non-Pashtoons of the province. The development of ethnic tension in Hazara can best be seen in the results of the subsequent elections, which culminated in the success of the League candidates and provided a base for the organisation of the Pakistan movement.

The joining of the big Khans in large numbers gave rise to mixed feelings in League circles. While many welcomed it and regarded it as the best course for counteracting the Congressite activities, some felt alienated. Nishtar was about to leave for Calcutta to participate in the League's annual session, to be held in December 1937, when he heard that Aurangzeb and Saadullah, who had recently joined the League, had left Peshawar to take part in the same session. Nishtar considered them as pro-Government men, whose activities were 'neither in the interests of Muslims nor the

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[423] : Talbot, *Provincial Politics*, p.10.

[424] : Rittenberg, 'Independence Movement', pp. 259-60.

Muslim League'.[425] As a matter of protest, he cancelled his visit, declaring that it was because of such people that the incipient FP League was said to be a party created by the British government and the Leaguers there were regarded as British agents and self-seeking politicians.[426] The Leaguers were accused of being responsible for the perpetuation of colonial rule in that part of South Asia.[427] The big Khans used to travel in motor cars. Such a large number of big Khans with their motor cars earned for the organisation the title 'Motor League',[428] and it was often referred to as the 'drawing-room organisation of some important Muslims'.[429] The main task of the leaders seemed to be 'travelling by car to the places where the meetings are convened, taking tea, and returning to their houses'.[430]

The League tried its best to gain support from the Muslim intelligentsia in the Frontier. To contact directly the majority in the countryside was a difficult task, as the concept of the League in their minds was that of a party of the K.B.s, pro-British Khans, and toadies. Soon the rift in the organisation resurfaced. Maulana Shuaib, president of the PML, informed Jinnah of the indignation of the 'educated Muslims' at the growing influence of the big Khans, — actually the representatives of the feudal class — in the PML. The Ulema, according to Shuaib, were neglected, a fact resented by the Frontier Muslims. He requested Jinnah to include some prominent Ulema in the council of the AIML, or else be ready to witness the downfall of the ML in the N-WFP.[431] The rural-urban tussle went on. The Khans, with their rural support and background, and the urban educated Muslims, with their greater political experience, were at loggerheads for control of the leadership of the provincial organisation. The Khans were numerically strong and were in a better position to use their influence in League affairs by every 'possible means', while their counterparts, the urban educated Muslims, though few in number, possessed experience in modern politics, which could not be easily ignored. 'Strong objection has been taken', reported the Governor N-WFP, 'to the tendency to make the League exclusively representative of the khans and of rural interests, whereas the urban followers have worked hard, particularly in Peshawar City, to popularise the movement'.[432]

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[425]: Nishtar to Jinnah, 22 June 1938, Nishtar Collection, AFM, vol. I, pp. 34-38.
[426]: Nishtar, *Azadi Ki Kahani*, pp. 52-53.
[427]: Interview Haji Mohammad Asim, Nowshera, 30 October 1984.
[428]: Yusufi, *Siyasiyat Sarhad Key Irtaqai Manazil*, pp. 80-81; Asim, *ibid.*
[429]: Mian Zia-ud-Din, *The Memoirs of a Pakistani Diplomat* (Peshawar, 1976), p. 39.
[430]: GR, 26 May 1938, Mss. EUR., D. 670/14, IOLR.
[431]: Maulana M. Shuaib to Jinnah, 22 May 1938, F. No. 867, QAP, p. 197.

This rift continued for some time, resulting in the resignation of Shuaib from the presidency of the PML in November 1938. In a lengthy press statement the following month, the exasperated Maulana gave the main reason for his resignation as the pro-British attitude and behaviour of the ML, and the goading influence of the K.B.s and the 'toadies' in the League organisation. 'I cannot allow myself', said Maulana Shuaib, 'to be associated with a political party which has any connection with the [Muslim] community's enemies'. 'When the League was formed in the Frontier last year', added Shuaib, 'I asked the members to do their best for the cause of the freedom of India, and for this purpose to establish cordial relations with Congress. It is regrettable that some members have lost sight of this objective. The result is that the inside League today is a "toady company" has been formed whose sole aim desire [sic] is to further British Imperialist aims and interests. I tried my best to reform them but without success....'.[433]

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[432]: GR, 9 December 1938, Mss. EUR., D. 670/14, IOLR.

[433]: 'Why I Resigned Presidentship', a statement of Maulana M. Shuaib, *Khyber Mail,* 11 December 1938; *Tribune,* 6 December 1938; CID Diaries, F. No. 751, SBP, p. 309 and 315.

After the resignation of Maulana Shuaib from the organisation, a meeting of the PML for the selection of new office-bearers was convened on 20 November.[434] After a few days the differences within the party became so acute that some of the recently elected office-bearers and members of the ML council, including Ghulam Hussain, Yusufi, and Rahim Bakhsh, all from Peshawar, tendered their resignations, protesting against 'the capture of the Muslim League by the Khans'.[435] The 'deliberate attempt of the Khanite Party to overshadow its deliberations and not allow poor Muslims and especially urban interests to work for the League properly', commented the *Khyber Mail*, caused the resentment of the urban Leaguers. It highlighted the tensions accruing for the 'tendency of some members to make the League exclusively representative of the khans or rural interests although urban workers since its inception have striven hard to popularise it and make it a living force'.[436] Despite the pressures and the criticism of many League workers, no further organisational changes occurred in the party. Saadullah remained the president of the PML, and Aurangzeb, despite strong opposition from the Khanite class, performed his duties as the leader of the opposition in the Provincial Legislative Assembly.

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[434]: The new League office-holders included: Saadullah, president; Mian Zia-ud-Din, vice president and M. Ismail as the general secretary. Members of the Executive Committee district wise were as under:
K.B. Mir Alam Khan (Peshawar); Fateh M. Khan pleader (Nowshera); Arbab Madad Khan (Peshawar); Yusufi (Peshawar); Hamidullah Khan, Bahram Khan pleader and Fida M. Khan pleader (Mardan); Syed Jalal (Kohat); Ghulam Haider Khan (Bannu); Faqira Khan, Abdul Rashid Khan, Abdul Majid Khan (Hazara). Aurangzeb, Yusufi and Badshah Sahib of Bamkhel were nominated as the members of the working Committee. CID Diaries, 25 November 1938, F. No. 751, SBP, p. 305.

[435]: CID Diaries, 5 December 1938, F. No. 745, SBP, p. 365.

[436]: *Khyber Mail*, 11 December 1938.

Ideology and Party Programme of the PML

The formal affiliation of PML with its central organisation took place on 17 April 1938 at the Calcutta session of the AIML.[437] A resolution, moved by Zia-ud-Din, was passed urging upon the Muslims of India 'to take special steps to combat the Congress Anti- Muslim activities in the Frontier Province'.[438] A large number of prominent pro-League Muslims of the FP participated in the Calcutta meeting of the AIML. Jinnah advised them to take the League propaganda to the rural areas and to intensify it in the name of religion. He promised active support from the central organisation in that connection.[439]

The Frontier delegates on their return from the Calcutta session started a vigorous propaganda campaign for the popularisation of the League in the N-WFP. In May 1938, Mir Alam Khan informed Jinnah of the intensification of League propaganda in the N-WFP. 'Since our return to our province', said Mir Alam, 'we have set ourselves tooth and nail to the propagation of the Muslim League and gradually its radiant rays are going to shine upon the darkness of Congress and remove its effects from the minds of the Muslims altogether'.[440] In a long letter to Liaquat, Saadullah gave details of their visit to Peshawar and Mardan districts in connection with the League's organisational work. According to Saadullah, they enrolled hundreds of new members, a figure still to be confirmed, and established rural committees. In Hazara, they reorganised the ML and decided to hold a district political conference at Abbottabad to popularise the ideology and party programme of the AIML.[441] Jinnah expressed his satisfaction over the work of Frontier League and said that he was very glad that they 'are meeting with success everywhere and the work is going on well in support of the Muslim League'.[442]

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[437]: Calcutta Session of AIML, F. No. 206, AFM, p. 91.

[438]: Liaquat Ali, *Resolutions of the AIML From October 1937 to December 1938* (Delhi, 1944), p. 26.

[439]: CID Diaries, F. No. 745, SBP, pp. 63-73.

[440]: Mir Alam Khan to Jinnah, 11 May 1938, F. No. 867, QAP, pp. 133-135.

[441]: Saadullah to Liaquat Ali, 25 August 1938, F. No. 206, AFM, p. 52.

As there was no fear of 'Islam in danger' in the N-WFP, initially the League failed in mobilising the majority of Muslims to its fold. In the Frontier, it lacked a specific ideology and programme and came into existence in reaction against the Congress ministry; it benefited from the so-called wrong steps of the ministry and exploited every move of the ministers in its own interests. The PML was critical of the Frontier Congress ministry for following the policies of the AINC and repeated their allegations against them of suppressing the Muslims and acting against the interests of the Muslim community to please their Hindu friends. Every step of the Congress Ministry which could be given a communal colour was exploited by the Leaguers,[443] and whenever the Ministry took a step to suppress 'communalism' in the Frontier, it was regarded as the Ministry's pro-Hindu leanings. The Muslims of the N-WFP were reminded time and again that they 'should receive their orders from Madina and not from Wardha'.[444] The Congressites were accused of denigrating the 'Muslim turban which was the sign of the Holy Prophet' and of replacing it with a Gandhi cap.[445] Abdul Ghaffar Khan was accused of introducing the Congress flag with its *charkha*, to replace the Islamic flag with the 'Crescent and Star'.[446] Furthermore, to prove their allegations against Abdul Ghaffar Khan of leaning towards Hinduism, photographs of him were shown to the people in which he was sitting with the members of the CWC at Wardha taking food in 'Hindu utensils' and in what was constructed as their manner.[447] Time and again the Leaguers gave their clarion call to defend the 'bastion of Islam' — the FP — which they considered to be at stake because of the collaboration of the Khan Brothers with the Hindu-dominated Congress. They appealed to the ministers to work according to the wishes of Frontier Muslims and not to act under the dictates of the down country Hindu leaders.

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[442]: Jinnah to Zia-ud-Din, -- August 1938, quoted in M Haneef Shahid (ed.), *Quaid-i-Azam MA Jinnah (Speeches, Statements, Writings, Letters etc.)* (Lahore, 1976), p. 178.

[443]: GR, 24 June 1938, Mss. EUR., D. 670/14, IOLR.

[444]: Maulana Zafar Ali Khan's speech, 14 March 1938, CID Diaries (Peshawar), 15 March 1938, F. No. 766, SBP, p. 223.

[445]: Maulana M. Shuaib speech at Pabbi, 3 April 1938, CID Diaries, 5 April 1938, F. No. 765, SBP, pp. 243-245.

[446]: *ibid.*, 8 February 1938, F. No. 791, p. 791.

As noted, a group of prominent Muslims in the PML, including its founder president, Maulana Shuaib, was against the domination of the organisation by the pro-government Khans. The ML, according to Maulana Shuaib, was fighting the British for the freedom of their country and those within the ML who were opposing it were the friends of British imperialism.[448] This anti-British propaganda on the ML side was 'surprising but it did not really reflect any anti-British sentiments in the Muslim League leadership'.[449] Privately, leading Leaguers met Cunningham and told him that 'this is done purely for propaganda purposes' and 'that such sentiments are not in accord with the creed of the League but are essential to attract public attention' in the N-WFP.[450] To Cunningham, the most popular method of attracting public attention in the FP was to deliver anti-British speeches, but on the part of the ML, he was confident that 'a large portion of this abuse is only surface propaganda, and that below the surface the real force behind the League movement is anti-Hindu feeling'.[451]

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[447] : CID Diaries, 12 August 1938, F. No. 766, SBP, p. 765.
[448] : *ibid.*, pp. 247-249.
[449] : Jansson, *Pakhtunistan*, p. 114.
[450] : GR, 26 May 1938, Mss. EUR., D. 670/14, IOLR.
[451] : *ibid.*, 3 September 1938.

Probably, the importance of the FP to the ML was due to the fact that it was the only Muslim majority province which had a Congress Ministry. The Governor N-WFP confirmed this. 'The N-WFP provides the only evidence', said Cunningham, 'that the Congress can adduce in support of their contention that they represent Muslims as well as Hindus'.[452] This fact was disturbing for the ML: despite a 93% Muslim majority, the N-WFP stood firm behind Congress in its struggle for independence of the country from colonial rule, rather than with their co-religionists of the ML, who claimed to be the only representatives of the Muslims in India. They continued their propaganda and missed no opportunity of dubbing the Khan Brothers the 'agents' of Gandhi and Congress, who were bent upon the enslaving of the Pashtoons.

The importance of the FP to the League has already been stated. The ML high command was interested in establishing a firm hold in the N-WFP to refute the Congress claim of representing the Muslims as well as the Hindus. It was considered essential that steps should be taken to increase the strength of the party's propaganda in the FP. The FML, on the occasion of the Calcutta session in 1938, had requested Jinnah to pay a visit to the N-WFP or send some prominent League leaders there. Jinnah was unable to go there in person and promised to send Maulana Shaukat Ali and Maulana Zafar Ali in the near future.[453] In June 1938, Zafar Ali and Shaukat Ali were directed by the League high command to go to the FP to propagate the League's ideology and party programme there.[454]

Shaukat Ali and Zafar Ali were both highly respected in the FP. The former and his younger brother Maulana Mohammad Ali had been known in the Frontier since early in the second decade of the twentieth century. Their active participation in the pan-

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[452] : GR, 24 June 1938, Mss. EUR., D. 670/14, IOLR.
[453] : CID Diaries, 27 April 1938, F. No. 745, SBP, p. 71.
[454] : Liaquat, *Resolutions*, p. 32.

Islamic movements had earned them reverence and popularity in the FP. Zafar Ali's *Zamindar* was one of the few popular newspapers in the N-WFP. To send these two to the FP was probably good thinking by the central League leadership. It was not difficult for such noted orators to appeal to Frontier Muslims on religious grounds. Shaukat Ali, accompanied by Abdul Hamid, MLA (Central), and Habib Ahmad, his private secretary, reached Peshawar on 1 July.[455] He remained in the province for three weeks, visited most parts of the N-WFP in connection with the propaganda for the League, but was not allowed to go to Bannu and D.I.Khan owing to the 'disturbed' conditions there.[456] The object of his visit was to 'awaken' the Muslims against Hindu domination. He condemned the KKs for their alliance with the 'Hindu Congress'.[457] If the Khan Brothers, according to Shaukat Ali, were to sever their connections with Congress and 'to form a Muslim party in this province', the ML would be first to support them.[458]

Shaukat Ali's efforts resulted in a slight increase in the number of ML members. However, in the Doaba (Charssadda), it caused an adverse effect — an increase in the number of the KKs.[459] The outcome of Shaukat Ali's speeches, according to Cunningham, 'is likely to be the acerbation of communal relations. In every speech he stressed vehemently the communal aspects of the present position in the Province...'.[460] In contrast with the situation in the rest of India, due to the peculiar conditions in the N-WFP, Hindu-Muslim relations there were cordial, and there was no harm to the interests of any community in the Pashtoon dominated Muslim majority province on India's North-West Frontier. The very name of the KKs (Servants of God), accentuated its relations with Islam. Since the inception of the movement, the Ulema had taken an important part in it, so on religious grounds, at least for the time being, the PML failed to mobilise the Muslims against the Frontier Congress. The League circles, however, were satisfied with the visit. Aurangzeb, the PML leader, requested Jinnah to send more missions to their province to bolster the League organisation.[461]

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[455] : CID Diaries, Peshawar, 15 July 1938, F. No. 745, SBP, p 210.
[456] : *ibid.*, 16 August 1938, p. 359.
[457] : *ibid.* p. 223.
[458] : CID Diaries, Peshawar, 22 July 1938, F. No. 766, SBP, p. 653.
[459] : CID Diaries, Peshawar, 20 August 1938, F. No. 745, SBP, p. 339.
[460] : GR, 23 July 1938, Mss. EUR., D. 670/14, IOLR.

After Shaukat Ali's 'successful' visit to the province, the PML decided to hold a League conference on 10-11 September at Abbottabad. It was the first major gathering of the PML. Besides all noted leaders of the PML, it was attended by twelve prominent[462] ML leaders from 'down country'. The audience present, as reported by the CID, was between nine and ten thousand. Most of the people, according to the same source, came from outside the district to hear the speakers with an all-India reputation. The proceedings of the conference were 'strongly anti-Congress and anti-Hindu'; although references were made to the anti-Muslim policy of the British in Palestine and in Waziristan.[463] Chaudhry Khaliquzzaman, in his presidential address, pointed out that the FP was governed from Wardha and that the Muslims of the FP were being misled by their own Congress leaders.[464] Zafar Ali, another League orator, highlighting the importance of the FP, said that it was a province on which the eyes of India had been centred and hoped that this province would turn to the Muslim League.[465]

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[461]: CID Diaries, Peshawar, 16 August 1938, F. No. 745, SBP, pp. 213-215.

[462]: They included Ch. Khaliquzzaman (UP); Raja M. Mehdi of Pir Pur (UP); Maulana Abdul Hamid Badayuni (UP); Jamal Mian of Firangi Mahal (UP); Hakim M. Akram Jalis (UP); Maulana Zafar Ali Khan (Punjab); Prof. Inayatullah Khan (Punjab); M. Maula Bakhsh (Punjab); Mustafa Shah Gilani (Punjab); M. Ishaq (Punjab); Nafis Khalili (Punjab) and Maulana Abdul Majid (Sind). F. No. 794, SBP, p. 217.

[463]: ML Political Conference, Abbottabad, 10-11 September 1938, CID Diaries, F. No. 794, SBP, pp. 221-243.

[464]: *Presidential Address of Ch. Khaliquzzaman at Hazara Muslim League Conference, Abbottabad, 10 September 1938* (Lucknow, 1938), pp. 1-24.

The Abbottabad conference was followed by another one of its kind in Ziarat Ka Ka Sahib [Nowshera]. The Conference was held on 16 September 1938, with Abdul Majid Sindhi in the chair.[466] He warned the audience of falling into the 'trap' of Congress, whose real aim, according to Sindhi, was the establishment of 'Hindu Raj' in India. To counter the activities of the Hindus he advised them to open branches of the ML and strengthen it by joining it in large numbers.[467] Another conference was arranged on 22 October 1938 at Mardan. The prominent participants from outside the province included Abdul Hamid, Inayatullah Khan, Ghulam Mustafa Shah and Maula Bakhsh.[468] The tone of speeches delivered at the occasion remained the same. Fateh M. Khan, President of the reception committee, reminded that the Pashtoons had come into the field to remove the shackles of slavery from the whole of India, but the charmer of Wardha [Gandhi] had captivated the hearts of their simple-minded brother Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his KKs, and he with his comrades had taken shelter under the Hindu organisation — Congress. It was really shameful for a Pashtoon, remarked Fateh, to 'believe in Gita instead of Quran'.[469] Zafar Ali, in his presidential address argued that there were cultural and religious differences between the Muslims and the Hindus. The Muslims wanted to lead a free life, added Zafar Ali Khan, and for that purpose they needed a freer atmosphere, independent from the domination of Hindus. The freedom of India, said the Maulana, was also their objective and they would surely free it by force but not in a manner that Hindus should form the majority and the Muslims be wiped out.[470]

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[465] : Maulana Zafar Ali Khan's Speech, 10 September 1938, Abbottabad , F. No. 794, SBP, p. 227.

[466] Other prominent speakers included Aurangzeb, Mian Zia-ud-Din, Mir Alam Khan, Arbab Madad Khan, Rahim Bakhsh, Arbab Shamsuddin Khan, Yusufi, K.B. Mian Aftab Gul, Hidayatullah Khan, Saadullah and Mian Ahmad Shah. Interview Mian Ahmad Shah, Ziarat Ka Ka Sahib, 16 July 1985.

[467] : ML Conference at Ziarat Ka Ka Sahib, CID Diaries, 19 September 1938, F. No. 767, SBP, pp. 99-121.

[468] : ML Conference at Mardan, CID Diaries, F. No. 791, SBP, p. 305.

[469] : Presidential Address of Fateh M. Khan at District Political ML Conference, Mardan, 22 October 1938, F. No. 791, SBP, p. 301.

In May 1939, the AIML sent a high level League deputation[471] to the N-WFP. The main objective of the deputation was to inform the Frontier Muslims of the Hindu atrocities against the Muslims in the Congress governments.[472] Unlike the previous visits of the ML delegations to the Frontier, the visit seemed to 'have been a failure' as reported by the CID authorities. The only exception was Mardan, where it was 'enthusiastically' received.[473] The delegation created some adverse effects on Hindu-Muslims relation in the FP. Dangerous appeals to religious fanaticism were made by violently anti-Hindu speeches describing communal incidents 'down country'. 'Such speeches', reported the CID, 'are particularly dangerous because the local public have no knowledge to refute what are probably wild exaggerations' and that, coming to the positive side of the delegation's tour, no reference was made to any constructive policy, other than the blatant promises of Muslim ascendancy in all matters.[474]

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[470] : CID Diaries, 25 October 1938, F. No. 791, SBP, pp. 345-361.

[471] : They were Nawab Sadiq Ali Khan, MLA Central [Nagpur]; Mufti Burhan ul Haq, president district ML [Jubbulpore]; Mohammad Asghar Vakil, president ML Burhanpur [CP]; Ch. Akhtar Hussain, MLC, Lucknow, [UP]; Prof. M. Inayatullah [Punjab]; Zakir Ali Barrister [Agra]; Haji Karam Ali [UP]; Maulana Mazhar Imam [Patna]; Maulvi Qamar ud Din [Patna]; Nawab M. Ismail [Patna] and Maulvi Hussain Mian [Patna]. F. No. 745, SBP, p. 407.

[472] : CID Diaries, F. No. 745, SBP, pp. 407-435. The accounts of the *zulm* on the Muslims in the Hindu majority provinces as given by the deputation members included : the Muslim children were asked to respect he Congress flag and to recite *Bande Mataram* - seen widely as a Hindu song; on the birthday of Gandhi [2 October] they were asked to worship the photo of Gandhi; on two occasions in Nagpur pork [forbidden in Islam] was thrown into the mosques. (Taken from Sadiq Ali's Speech at Bannu on 22 May 1939, CID Diaries, 26 May 1939, F. No. 745, SBP, p. 601). In Bihar, according to Mazhar Imam, when the INC gained power, it prevented Muslims from giving *Azan* (Call to the Prayers); the slaughter of cows had been stopped; their homes were burnt and their children had become orphans. In Talokari village, said the speaker, a Muslim brought five seers of beef for his daughter's marriage, which was objected to by the Hindus who put pork into his mouth, shaved his moustache and then poured urine into his mouth.(Maulana Mazhar Imam's speech at Kohat on 21 May 1939, CID Diaries, 27 May 1939, F. No. 745, SBP, pp. 625-631). The details of Hindu-Muslims riots at Tanda [UP] were narrated and the Frontier Muslims were informed how helpless the Muslims were. (Inayatullah's speech at Shabqadar, 18 May 1939, CID Diaries, 26 May 1939, F. No. 745, SBP, pp. 575-597).

[473] : For details see CID Diaries on Peshawar, Mardan, Kohat, Bannu and D.I.Khan, F. No. 745, SBP, pp. 621-623; 721; 723; 755 and 759.

[474] : CID Diaries, 26 May 1939, F. No. 745, SBP, pp. 621-623.

Before concluding this discussion of the ideology and party programme of the Frontier League during the late 1930s, a reference must be made to the 'League's Week', organised by the PML in July 1939. The meetings of the ML held between 15-21 July, were confined to Peshawar city. Apart from the local leaders, some League orators from Punjab including Inayatullah, Yusuf Salim and M. Bakhsh Muslim were invited to speak on the occasion. The speeches were typical: general criticism of Khan Sahib's ministry; 'sub-ordination' of the inhabitants of the province by the Congress and Congress atrocities in the Muslim minority provinces.[475]

By-elections and the League's Success

In the general elections of 1937, there was no ML candidate in the N-WFP to contest on behalf of the party there. After the revival of the PML, in 1938, it contested the by-elections and performed well by getting two out of the total of five seats. The by-elections contested by the League candidates included the Muslim-Rural Constituencies of Mardan i,e., Razar and Amazai. The League candidates were Zia-ud-Din, Bar-at-Law, a Ka Ka Khel Mian of outstanding calibre, and Shah Pasand, a big Khan. Kamdar Khan and Allahdad Khan, small Khans with a sound political background, were the Congress nominees. As Congress was popular in the area, it won both the seats, getting about 80% of the votes. The organisational ability of Congress as compared to the League was 'perfect' reported the Governor N-WFP, 'whereas the efforts of the Muslim League were spasmodic and ineffective through the usual personal differences between the Khans'.[476] Next came the by-elections in

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[475]: More details on 'League's Week' can be seen in Shad, 'Deed', III, pp. 1-6 ; CID Diaries, Peshawar, F. No. 770, SBP, pp. 283-305; 315-335.

[476]: GR, 10 March 1938, Mss. EUR., D. 670/14, IOLR.

Hazara — the strong hold of the ML in the FP. The PML directed all its prominent workers to pay special attention to showing people outside the province that all the Muslims of the N-WFP were not solidly behind Congress. In the Haripur North Muslim Rural Constituency, Abdur Rashid, the local League's candidate, defeated his rival Mehdi Zaman Khan, the Congress nominee, who was notorious for changing sides, by a margin of only 13 votes.[477] In the Southern Hazara Muslim Constituency the contest was between Sardar Bahadur Khan, a prominent landholder, who was the League nominee and M. Aslam Khan, an ordinary Congress worker. Sardar Bahadur defeated his rival and became a member of the Frontier Assembly.[478] The main reason for the ML's success in the by-elections in Hazara was its anti-Ministry propaganda. The Congress provincial ministry was portrayed as a Pashtoon ministry, and was accused of doing nothing for the welfare of Hazara, D.I.Khan and other non-Pashtoon dominated areas.

The success of the League candidates in the by-elections encouraged the provincial Leaguers to work towards moving a vote of no-confidence against Khan Sahib and forming a ML Ministry in the N-WFP. The Frontier Premier took it very lightly and remarked that if the opposition succeeded in producing 25 signatures [out of a House of 50], he would resign from office without waiting for the vote of no-confidence. But, according to the Governor N-WFP, the Leaguers were 'very unlikely to succeed'.[479] Cunningham gave several reasons for that: the chief disadvantage of the ML, according to him, 'is the lack of a real leader; until one is found there is little hope of unifying the various small parties, among whom there are at least eight aspirants to Cabinet rank';[480] '...too many selfish, ambitious and private feuds. Saadullah would bitterly contest the premiership with Aurangzeb; the Hindus would be shy of joining a party tainted with the name of Muslims...'.[481] Furthermore, the Leaguers in the provincial assembly relied 'solely on making the most of unpopular decisions made by the Ministry and on magnifying communal differences'.[482]

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[477]: *Khyber Mail,* 1 July 1938.

[478]: *Khyber Mail,* 13 August 1939; Shad, 'Deed', III, pp. 7-25; Shah, *Muslim League,* pp. 39-40.

[479]: GR, 21 November 1938, Mss. EUR., D. 670/14, IOLR.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed reasons for the failure of the League to acquire adequate support among the province's Muslims in the 1930s. It has shown that the fragile League machinery in the province owed much to elite groups, especially to big Khans and Sir A. Qaiyum's followers, who formed the backbone of British imperialism locally and rendered support to the League after Sir A. Qaiyum's death. The big Khans, with a large number of their retainers and traditional followers, flocked into the League not because of their love of Islam or their sympathy with its programme, but for protection against the Congress onslaughts. It was due to the joining of such a large number of the big Khans that the provincial League was regarded as a pro-British party and was accused of working for the perpetuation of British rule in India. The local urban Leaguers and a small group of Ulema, who were in the forefront of the re-organisation of the PML, resented the growing influence of the elite but were outvoted. However, these big Khans were instrumental in ensuring the League's success in a couple of by-elections in 1938. Since the League's politics were pro-British, its attempts to smear the Khan Brothers and the KKs as 'Hindu agents' and

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[480] : *ibid.*, 9 November 1938.
[481] : *ibid.*, 9 January 1940, D.670/15.
[482] : *ibid.*, D. 670/14.

'traitors to Islam' met with little success. It was only after the resignation of the Congress ministry and its temporary 'disappearance' from active politics during the war years that the League was enabled to utilise the political vacuum and strengthen itself, a theme to which we now return.

CHAPTER FIVE

POLITICS DURING THE WAR YEARS

This chapter deals with war time politics in India and on the Frontier. The war years saw two major developments in Indian, as well as Frontier politics. One was the adoption of the Pakistan Resolution by the ML at its Lahore session in 1940, and the other was the 'Quit India' movement launched by the Congress in 1942. The Congress government of Khan Sahib was replaced by Governor's administration in 1939 which worked to the disadvantage of the Congress. But the situation changed dramatically with the installation of the ML ministry, led by Sardar Aurangzeb Khan, in May 1943.

The 'Quit India' movement had little impact in the N-WFP. The provincial authorities successfully recruited the support of the PML, the Khaksars and the big Khans for the war effort. In this they were also assisted by a number of mullahs, who, abandoning their traditional anti-establishment ideas, supported the government arguing for the destruction of Fascism which was termed anti-Islam. The League's call for Pakistan did not gain support in the province despite the ML ministry, as is evident from the fact that Sardar Aurangzeb 'shelved the issue' tactfully every time he was asked by the League workers to declare his stand on the demand of Pakistan. But the incessant communal propaganda of the League over a period of more than five years produced some impact on sections of the urban Muslim population and of the Muslim intelligentsia.

The War and all-India Politics

With the outbreak of War in 1939, the foremost concern of the Delhi Government was to enlist Indian support for the war. The Viceroy approached the leaders of the major political parties and asked them to lend their support to Britain. He invited Gandhi to Simla on 4 September and asked him for his views on the war. Gandhi favoured full and unconditional Indian support for Britain. He told Linlithgow that he contemplated the war with an English heart, and could not view with indifference the bombing of London and the possible destruction of the House of Parliament and Westminster Abbey.[483]

After Gandhi, the Viceroy met Jinnah. In this Jinnah seemed to have achieved a certain measure of success, because it was the first time that the Viceroy had invited him to discuss an all-India matter.[484] The Viceroy thus accepted his claim that the ML was the only representative organisation for Muslims in India.[485] Moreover, it is probable that Linlithgow had already decided to prop up the League as a counter-weight to Congress.[486] 'It was only then', remarked Jinnah, 'that he realised that the Muslim League was a power'.[487] The League demanded from the government that the 'Federation should be definitely dropped' and that Muslims' interests should be safeguarded. It sought an assurance that no declaration or constitutional advance relating to India would be made without the consent and approval of the AIML.[488]

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[483] : 'Statement to the Press', 5 September 1939, *CWMG*, 70,(Ahmedabad, 1977), pp. 161-162.

[484] : Jinnah's Address at Islamia College, Peshawar, 25 November 1945, F. No. 753, SBP, pp. 375-383.

[485] : A. Jalal and A. Seal, 'Alternatives to Partition: Muslim Politics Between the Wars', *MAS*, 15, 3, (1981), p. 454.

[486] : Y. Samad, 'South Asian Muslim Politics', pp. 75-76; Jalal, *Sole Spokesman*, pp. 48-49.

[487] : Presidential Address of Jinnah at the AIML Lahore Session, 22-24 March 1940, J. Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, 1, p. 154; W. Ahmad (ed.), *The Nation's Voice- Towards Consolidation: Speeches and Writings of Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah March 1935-March 1940* (Karachi, 1992), pp. 486-495.

[488] : 'India and the War', Memorandum by the Secretary of State to War Cabinet, 25 September 1939, Zetland Collection, Mss. EUR., D. 609/26, IOLR , p. 19.

The Viceroy then called on Prasad, the Congress President, and Nehru, its General Secretary, and asked for their views. Prasad was of the opinion that Indian help would be possible only if the Government made a declaration envisaging the complete freedom of India. Nehru was adamant in reiterating the Congress demand for absolute freedom for India after the war and the right of India to draft her own constitution through a CA. Linlithgow made it clear to both the Congress leaders that it would be difficult to accommodate their views,[489] and the meeting ended in failure.

On 17 October the Viceroy's statement was issued reasserting Dominion Status for India as Britain's aim after the war and the willingness of the government to consult the representatives of various communities, parties and interests groups over the framing of such modifications to the Act of 1935 as might 'seem desirable'.[490] The Viceroy's declaration aroused mixed feelings in the country. The ML's reaction was 'polite but equivocal'. It sought a clear answer to its earlier demands that, without consulting with and without the agreement of the League, there would be no change in the constitution of India.[491] To Gandhi, the declaration was 'profoundly disappointing' and meant a continuation of the 'old policy of divide and rule'. Gandhi had no doubt in his mind that 'the Congress [had] asked for bread and it has got a stone'. Congress, according to Gandhi, would 'have to go into the wilderness again'....[492] The Viceroy's statement was considered by Congress as 'wholly unsatisfactory' and 'merely an unequivocal reiteration of the old imperialist policy'. In the circumstances, Congress declared that it 'cannot possibly give any support to Great Britain for it would amount to an endorsement of the imperialist policy which the Congress has always sought to end'.[493] Thus another confrontation between the government and Congress became inevitable.

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[489] : *ibid.* pp. 146-148; R. Prasad, *Autobiography* (Bombay, 1957), p. 494; Nehru to Krishna Menon, 6 October 1939, *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru* (hereafter *SWJN*), 10, (Delhi, 1977), pp. 174-175.

[490] : Viceroy's Statement, 17 October 1939, *IAR*, 1939, II, pp. 384-389.

[491] : Resolutions of the AIML WC, Delhi, 18 September 1939, *IAR*, 1939, II, pp. 350-352; AIML WC Meeting, Delhi, 22 October 1939, *ibid.*, pp. 352-353.

[492] : Gandhi's Press Statement, 18 October 1939, *CWMG*, 70, pp. 267-268.

After the resignation of the Frontier Congress ministry, a 'sudden lull' was reported in the political atmosphere of the province. The main reasons, according to Cunningham, were that 'the rank and file of the various parties are tired of the daily meetings and constant wrangling and that in the international crisis they find a welcome excuse to give up their normal activities, while they wait to see what policy will be adopted by their Central organisations'.[494] In March 1940, in its Ramgarh session, the Congress' stand was restated: its refusal to participate in the British war effort.[495] Gandhi was empowered by the Congress to undertake responsibility for civil disobedience.[496] Congress Committees throughout the country were converted into Satyagraha Committees.

Meanwhile, on the Frontier the administration enlisted Indian public support for the British war aims. The provincial authorities were confident of mustering support for war recruitment in the province, and their impression was that 'no political advice will stop Pathans from taking an opportunity of securing employment'.[497] In the absence of Congress' playing an active role in the politics of the province, various vested-interest groups took advantage of the Congress-British impasse to offer their full-fledged support to the war effort. The majority of the Frontier Hindus, under the leadership of Khanna, resolved 'to give unstinted support to the Government in this great war for democracy'.[498] The loyal Khans also reaffirmed their old loyalty to the Crown and were hopeful of restoring their lost authority. The Governor assured them of the government's support, as he was confident of their instinctive loyalty towards the British Empire.[499]

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[493] : Sitaramayya, *History*, II, p. 141.

[494] : GR, 14 September 1939, Mss. EUR., F. 125/74, IOLR.

[495] : Resolutions of the INC at Ramgarh, 20 March 1940, *IAR*, 1940, I, pp. 228-229; C. H. Philips (ed.), *The Evolution of India and Pakistan 1858 to 1947* (London, 1964), pp. 338-339.

[496] : Sitaramayya, *History*, II, p. 173.

[497] : GR, 20 April 1939, Mss. EUR., D. 670/15, IOLR.

The Frontier's Response to the Pakistan Resolution

While Congress was busy trying to reach a resolution of Indian problems with the British government, the AIML tried its level best to represent itself as the party working to safeguard Muslim interests. Jinnah was firm on his stand regarding the deserving position of the Muslims.[500] The 27th session of AIML was held on 22-23 March 1940 at Lahore. Resolutions were moved demanding from the British Government the grouping together of the Muslim majority areas of Baluchistan, Sind, Punjab and the N-WFP in the North-West and Assam and Bengal in the East, and the creation of a separate homeland for the Muslims of the sub-continent. The rest of India would be the Hindus' federation.[501] The supporters of the partition scheme argued that the Muslims had a different historical heritage, different heroes and different memories of defeats and victories from the Hindus. To them, India was a land of diverse races, cultures and civilisations and the only bond which kept it united was the British yoke.'The moment it ceases, India will revert to its old normal component parts'.[502]* 'The only way out of the impasse therefore seems to be to divide India into two federations', argued Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad, (a Lecturer at the Muslim University, Aligarh), to consist of a federation of Muslim majority provinces and states and another of Hindu majority provinces and states. He regarded the creation of two such federations as being in the best interests of both Muslims and Hindus.[503]

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[498] : *C&MG*, 26 February 1941.

[499] : CD, 30 May 1940, Mss. EUR., D. 670/15, pp. 16-17.

[500] : R. J. Moore, 'Jinnah and the Pakistan Demand', *MAS*, 17, 4 (1983), pp. 445-445.

[501] : *IAR*, 1940, I, pp. 485-495; ML Activities, 30 March 1940, No. 13, F. No. 752, SBP, pp. 37-41.

The Lahore resolution aroused widespread opposition and controversy. To Linlithgow, it seemed merely a bargaining strategy, but a dangerous one:

> the effect of Lahore has been to a remarkable degree to increase Jinnah's prestige and to consolidate his position as an all-India Moslem spokesman...unsound as [the] partition idea may be, it is one which will get into the heads of very large numbers of Moslems and may prove increasingly difficult to dislodge.[504]

Lord Zetland, the Secretary of State for India, was convinced of the 'great force in Jinnah's arguments that the circumstances of India are unsuited to the form of democracy which we have evolved in this country'.[505] Gandhi regarded it as a 'baffling situation', but he was confident regarding the Muslims' reaction to the 'vivisection' of India. To him, the 'two-nations' theory was 'untruth', as the vast majority of Indian Muslims, according to Gandhi, were converts to Islam and they 'did not become a separate nation as soon as they become converts'.[506] V. D. Savakar, president of the Hindu Mahasabha, regarded the Pakistan demand and the partition

* Full article can be seen in Appendix Two.

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[502]: Aurangzeb, 'A Reply to Hindu Critics', *Progress*, Bombay, 28 April 1940; S. Ansari, *Pakistan: The Problem of India* (Lahore, 1945), p. 14, and, P. Moon, *The Future of India* (London, 1945), pp. 26-27.

[503]: J. Ahmad, 'The Problem of Nationalities in India', F. No. 96, QAP, p. 126.

[504]: Viceroy to the Secretary of State, 6 April 1940, Mss. EUR., D. 609/26, IOLR, p. 67.

[505]: Secretary of State to Viceroy, 5 April 1940, Mss. EUR., D. 609/12, IOLR, pp. 96-97.

[506]: 'A Baffling Situation', 1 April 1940, *CWMG*, 71, (Ahmedabad, 1978), pp. 387-390.

of the country as 'the wild demand of cutting the mother into two'.[507] Pakistan, to the extremist Hindus, was not based on facts or principles, but on the romance of a battle cry and all the 'potentialities of a crusade'.[508]

Despite severe criticism by several organisations and individuals, the League's idea of Pakistan received support from the Communist Party of India and a few well-known individuals. P. C. Joshi, secretary of CPI, had favoured the idea of granting Pakistan to 'the Muslim peoples like the Sindhis, Baluchis, Pathans, Western Punjabis, Eastern Bengalees who have the necessary characteristics of nations'. He further added that the Pakistan movement, under the banner of the League 'is the national movement of these nationalities'.[509] To M. N. Roy, Pakistan offered 'a solution of the constitutional problem of the country'.[510] According to B. R. Ambedkar, the Scheduled Castes' leader, 'it would be neither wise nor possible to reject summarily a scheme if it has behind it the sentiment, if not the passionate support, of 90 p.c. Muslims of India'.[511] Master Tota Singh, (president, All India Adhdharam Mandal, Lyallpur) regarded Pakistan as the only solution to the communal problem.[512]

The Pakistan scheme also aroused mixed feelings in the N-WFP. The PML delegates participated in large numbers in the Lahore session of AIML. Aurangzeb seconded the historic resolution demanding a separate homeland for the Muslims of South Asia. He assured the Muslims living in the Hindu majority provinces of their full support.[513]

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[507] : *Pakistan*, forward by K. M. Ashraf, (Delhi, 1940), pp. 40-41.
[508] : B. M. Chaudhri, *Muslim Politics in India* (Calcutta, 1946), p. 47.
[509] : Chaudhri, *Muslim Politics*, p. 70; Interview, Qalandar Mohmand, Peshawar, 25 October 1988.
[510] : *Khyber Mail*, 7 December 1941.
[511] : B. R. Ambedkar, *Some Thoughts on Pakistan* (Bombay, 1941), p. 2; Ambedkar, *Pakistan or the Partition of India* (Lahore, 1967), p. xvi.
[512] : S. S. Pirzada, M. Usman H. Nanji (ed.), *Unpardonable Crime of Jinnah* (Bombay, nd), pp. 38-39.
[513] : Pirzada, *Foundations*, II, p. 341. For full details on the N-WFP contingent to AIML session at Lahore see Shah, *Muslim League*, pp. 48-56; Shad, 'Deed', III, pp. 78-98; CID Diaries on N-WFP ML, F. Nos. 752, 273, SBP; Interviews with Mian Maab, Ziarat Ka Ka Sahib, 1 May 1985; Shad Mohammad, Peshawar, 29 March 1985; Ashraf Khan, Peshawar, 28 October 1984; Mian Zia-ud-Din, Peshawar, 13 October 1984; Mian Zia-ud-Din, *Memoirs*, pp. 56-57.

After their return from Lahore, the members of the PML explained to the Frontier people the new policy and the future programme of the AIML. The Muslims, according to the Leaguers, were not ready to concede Hindu majority rule under a Hindu Raj. They urged the inhabitants of the Frontier to join the League and gave full support to Pakistan.[514]

Until then the PML was simply regarded as an organisation formed as a reaction against the Frontier Congress, but after adopting the Lahore resolution as its creed, the future course of action became clear to its members. Apart from criticising Congress, they began to approach the Muslim masses directly in pursuit of a separate homeland for the Muslims. As most of the provincial Congress leaders were away from the political scene, either in prison or outside the province, it was the best opportunity for the PML to popularise itself amongst the Muslims of the FP using the idea of Pakistan.

The few Congress leaders who were out of prison started a well organised programme against the League's demand for Pakistan. To Hakim Abdul Jalil, a Hindu minority under a Muslim Federation or a Muslim minority under a Hindu Federation 'will always remain as a stranger'.[515] Qaiyum condemned the Pakistan scheme and termed it impracticable, accusing the Leaguers of creating communalism. According to Qaiyum, while the patriots were busy getting rid of imperialism, the AIML was helping the British to prolong their rule in the sub-continent.[516] Abdul Karim viewed Pakistan as the domination of Punjab over Sind, Baluchistan and the N-WFP. According to him it would be impossible for Sindhis, Baluchis and the Pashtoons to stay under the 'oppression and tyranny' of Punjabis. He was very annoyed that the financially well-off Hyderabad State was excluded but the bankrupt state of Kashmir was included in the proposed scheme. Moreover, he was worried about the desecration and destruction of the historical heritage of Muslims in India at the hands of extremist Hindus, if Pakistan was granted.[517]

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[514]: Mian Zia-ud-Din Speech at Peshawar, 19 April 1940, F. Nos. 273, 773, 784 and 788, SBP.
[515]: CID Diaries, 6 April 1940, Peshawar, F. No. 37, SBP, pp. 15-18.
[516]: Qaiyum Khan, 8 April 1940, Peshawar, F. No. 37, SBP. pp. 26-27.

Despite the vehement criticism and anti-Pakistan propaganda of the non-League Muslims, the ML stuck to its programme and insisted on the formation of Pakistan. Khaliquzzaman, disposing of all the fears of the other communities, made it clear that their Pakistan 'aims only at making the Muslims of India free and no more'.[518] Jinnah, elaborating on the demand for Pakistan, appealed to the opponents of the scheme to approach the problem besetting the country with a fresh mind and to 'get away from all old ideas'. That was the only way to tackle it. 'In this fast moving world', said Jinnah, 'there was the greatest need for scrapping old pacts and drawing up new agreements'.[519]

The Khudai Khidmatgars and 'Quit India'

Unlike other Congress provinces, for the time being, the N-WFP remained calm and peaceful. The inhabitants of the province were not very interested in a distant theatre of war. However, the provincial Congress continued to occupy itself in keeping its workers engaged in organising public meetings, though on a very small scale. The main theme of the Congress meetings remained anti-British — urging the Congress workers not to co-operate with British war aims. The Congress' Poona Offer (September 1939) of conditional support to the British war effort had caused confusion within the Congress ranks. To Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the offer was not a 'light-hearted' issue: he was pledged to non-violence and the purpose of the KKs was to serve all humanity alike. 'We have been condemning wars and their horrors' he remarked, 'and now is the time to prove our sincerity and resist all attempts to be dragged into any wicked combination for that purpose'.[520] Informing Gandhi of his resignation from the CWC, Abdul Ghaffar Khan wrote:

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[517]: *Pakhtun*, 1 June 1940, pp. 5-11.
[518]: *Khyber Mail*, 14 December 1941.
[519]: *C&MG*, Lahore, 12 January 1941.

> Some recent resolutions of the Congress Working Committee indicate that they are restricting the use of non-violence to the fight for India's freedom against constituted authority.... I should like to make it clear that the non-violence I have believed in and preached to my brethren of the Khudai Khidmatgars is much wider. It affects all our life, and only this has permanent value. Unless we learn this lesson of non-violence fully we shall never do away with the deadly feuds which have been the curse of the people of the Frontier. Since we took to non-violence and the Khudai Khidmatgars pledged themselves to it, we have largely succeeded in ending the feuds. Non-violence has added greatly to the courage of the Pathans...Khudai Khidmatgars must, therefore, be what our name implies — pure servants of God and humanity — by laying down our lives and never taking any life.[521]

Abdul Ghaffar Khan also informed the Congress high command of his resignation from the CWC on 8 July 1940, stating the AICC's confirmation of the Wardha and Delhi resolutions of the Working Committee as the main reasons for this.[522] The resignation of Abdul Ghaffar Khan aroused mixed feelings. By deciding not to follow Gandhi's and Congress' line favouring participation in the British war effort, Abdul Ghaffar Khan proved himself to be a firm believer in non-violence. For the time being he was isolated from the rest of his colleagues in the AICC. However, this was a clear proof that, despite being a very close associate of Gandhi, Abdul Ghaffar Khan was a man of strict principles. Furthermore, this can also be cited as the best example of his independence to those who regarded Abdul Ghaffar Khan as a 'blind follower' of Gandhi. On occasions like this, he and his KKs proved to be a separate organisation, only collaborating with Congress in their joint nationalist struggle for the independence of India. Cunningham viewed his resignation as 'trying to detach his volunteers from the Congress organisation' and an attempt to reorganise his own non-violent KKs.[523] Gandhi appreciated Abdul Ghaffar Khan's adherence to non-violence.[524] However, Nehru thought the decision hasty and wished Abdul Ghaffar Khan had waited and not taken that decision, because, 'in any event we have to face conflict and we shall of course face it all together'.[525] His resignation had created a 'great deal of consternation in people's mind and confusion prevails as to where everybody is'. The average Pashtoon 'sees that Badshah Khan [the name given to Abdul Ghaffar Khan by his people as a mark of gratitude, deference, and acknowledgement of the services he rendered to the cause of the freedom struggle] has resigned from various Congress Committees and he thinks there must be something wrong somewhere...'.[526]

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[520] : *Pakhtun*, 11 March 1940, pp. 4-9; M. Yunus, *Frontier Pathans and Freedom Struggle* (Delhi, 1985), p. 169.

[521] : 'Khan Sahib's Ahimsa', 16 July 1940, *CWMG*, 72, (Ahmedabad, 1978), pp. 277-278.

[522] : Abdul Ghaffar Khan to Secretary AICC, quoted in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 1 August 1940, Tendulkar Papers, NMML.

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[523]: GR, 9 August 1940, Mss. EUR., D. 670/15; and, 8 March 1941, D. 670/16, IOLR.

[524]: 'In the storm that shook most of the members of the Working Committee', Abdul Ghaffar Khan 'stood firm as a rock', said Gandhi. He added that 'Being so clear about his own faith and that of the Khudai Khidmatgars, there was for him no escape from resignation of his membership of the Congress Working Committee. His continuing on it would have been anomalous and might have meant an end of his life's work. He could not ask his people to join as recruits in the army and at the same time forget the law of tribal retaliation. The simple Pathan would have argued with him — and the argument would have been irresistible — that the present war was a war of retaliation and revenge, and that there was no difference between it and their blood feuds'. To Abdul Ghaffar Khan, according to Gandhi, the matter of non-violence was 'not of intellectual conviction but of the intuitive faith'. 'Khan Sahib's Ahimsa', 16 July 1940, *CWMG*, 72, pp. 277-279.

[525]: Nehru to M. Yunus, 6 August 1940, *SWJN*, 11, (Delhi, 1978), p. 229; Yunus, *Frontier Pathans*, p. 170.

[526]: Nehru to Azad, 4 August 1940, *SWJN*, 11, p. 228.

Abdul Ghaffar Khan's resignation decision was endorsed by most of his colleagues and followers in the FP. The FPCC in its meeting on 7-8 April 1940, presided over by Jaffar Shah, gave its whole-hearted support to the decision. To them the matter was very simple: Congress had said that it would fight against Britain's enemies if it attained independence, and this very idea of fighting was against the non-violent principle of the KKs.[527] However, there was a row amongst his followers including Pir Shahinshah, Kamdar Khan, M. Jan, Jaffar Shah and Ali Gul Khan. They tried their utmost to persuade Abdul Ghaffar Khan to reverse his decision for the welfare of the provincial organisation. Abdul Ghaffar Khan stood firm and insisted on serving humanity as a whole through the KK organisation.[528] On 11 August, the FPCC met at Abbottabad, ratified the decision, and reaffirmed its full support to and expressed confidence in the Pashtoon leader.[529] His opponents, however, took his resignation otherwise. They accused him of going against the Islamic injunctions and the Quranic principle of Jihad and adopting instead an 'effeminate cult of non-violence' under all conditions.[530]

After the AICC resolution at Ramgarh and the resumption of Congress leadership by Gandhi,[531] Abdul Ghaffar Khan rejoined Congress and was immediately authorised by the central organisation to guide and direct the Congress' Individual Satyagraha movement in the N-WFP.[532] The main object of the individual Satyagraha launched by Gandhi was to voice anti-war views by individuals, specially selected for the purpose, in violation of wartime ordinances and orders of the government. It was not a campaign for gaining independence, rather it was a campaign for freedom of speech — because the 'absence of such a basic freedom was symbolic of India's present servile status. It was also of course a demonstration of their commitment to non-violence'.[533]

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[527] : *Pakhtun*, 21 April 1940, pp. 16-21.

[528] : *Pakhtun*, 1 May 1940, pp. 12-15.

[529] : A. Qaiyum Swati, G. Secretary FPCC to Secretary AICC, 15 August 1940, F. No. 63 (II), Nehru Papers, NMML, pp. 7-8; P-15 (1940) AICC, p. 13.

[530] : *Khyber Mail*, 21 July 1940.

[531] : For a detailed discussion of Gandhi's resumption of his lost influence on Congress see Judith M. Brown, *Gandhi : Prisoner of Hope* (London, 1989), pp. 325-329.

[532] : G. L. Puri, *Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan* (Delhi, 1985), pp. 163-165.

Following the instructions of the Congress high command, the FPCC was transformed into the provincial Satyagraha committee.[534] Abdul Ghaffar Khan started a whirlwind tour of the province to enrol the volunteers and to organise training camps to impart the true spirit of Satyagraha in the provincial workers.[535] Such camps were organised at Sardaryab,* Sherpao, Utmanzai and Bannu. The main theme in the speeches remained non-participation in the war effort of the British, anti-recruitment and opposing the British government for not solving the Indian problem.[536] However, as reported by the CID, there was a lack of 'local interest' in the affairs of the camps.[537]

While the FPCC was busy organising its members for the intended civil disobedience, the provincial government did not sit idle. Unlike on previous occasions (1930-34), the Government of the N-WFP decided to treat the agitators leniently.Cunningham was of the firm opinion that harsh treatment prompted more violence from the peoples' side. 'If disturbances arise', remarked Cunningham, 'I am convinced that our policy ought to be to confine arrests to the fewest possible

* For details of Sardaryab Camp see Appendix Three.

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[533] : Brown, *Gandhi: Prisoner of Hope*, p. 329.
[534] : *Pakhtun*, 21 April 1940, pp. 16-21; *Rikhtinai Khudai Khidmatgar*, Peshawar, 9 April 1940; Zamarud Diaries, 6, p. 30; Secretary, AICC to Secretary, FPCC, 5 April 1940, F. No. 343, SBP, pp. 35-39.
[535] : *IAR*, I, 1940, p. 248.
[536] : For further details on such camps see *Pakhtun*, 11 May 1940, p. 17 and 1 June 1940, pp. 19-23; F. Nos. 88, 89, 91, 92 and 137, SBP; GR, No. 10, 23 May 1940, Mss. EUR., D. 670/15, IOLR; F. M. Barr, 'A "Red Shirt" Camp', *The Modern Review*, January 1942, vol. LXXI, No. 1, pp. 54-56 *[Appendix Three]; Abdul Ghaffar Khan, *Zama Zhwand*, pp. 647-651; *CWMG*, 75, (Ahmedabad, 1979), pp. 85, 95, 143-145.
[537] : CID Diaries, F. No. 92, SBP, p. 15.

number...'.[538] On 2 April [1940] a circular of the same kind was issued by the Inspector General of Police to the authorities, instructing them on how to deal with the Congress civil disobedience in the FP. He directed the officials to avoid repression, as it resulted in provocation, and to deal only with those who were actually involved in the agitation. He believed ordinary laws were enough to deal with any such emergency and opposed promulgation of special ordinances in the province. Acknowledging the influential position of pro-British Khans and other persons from various walks of life, the IGP promised the full and strong support of the government to 'all those who continue to show loyalty to the British Government and who show willingness to help in stamping out the agitation'[539]. The leniency of the provincial government, however, did not apply to the Forward Bloc members in the N-WFP. The real way to Indian freedom, according to the Forward Bloc workers, was through a violent struggle against British imperialism, and the war had provided them with the best opportunity to get rid of the British yoke. They tried their best to dissuade the people from helping in the British war effort, either with men or through 'materiel'. On 22 June 1942, the Government of India declared the Forward Bloc an unlawful association. Some of its Frontier leaders were arrested, while the remainder went underground for the time being.[540]

In order to muster public support, the Frontier government formed the District War Committees. Cunningham himself toured the province to persuade the notables to enlist themselves as members of those Committees. Besides the loyal Khans some pleaders and other professionals also joined them. The main purposes behind the formation of the Committees were to stabilise public opinion in favour of the government, counteract false rumours and to assist the government in the collection of war funds.[541]

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[538]: GR, 9 March 1940, Mss. EUR., D. 670/15, IOLR.

[539]: Confidential Letter of IGP, N-WFP, F. No. 34, SBP, pp. 41-47.

[540]: For details see F Nos. 36, 39, 89, 135, 343, SBP; Extracts From Home Department War Histories, Indian Police Collection, Mss. EUR., F. 161/148, IOLR; GR, 23 June 1940 and 9 July 1941, D. 670/16, IOLR; *Khyber Mail*, 26 June 1942.

Abdul Ghaffar Khan remained busy in propagating the intended Satyagraha; the Frontier government was worried about his activities, but for the time being he was left untouched. To the authorities, everything depended on the way in which Abdul Ghaffar Khan 'himself chooses to direct the movement...'.[542] Gandhi launched his individual Satyagraha on 17 October 1940. According to his programme, only selected individuals had to offer Satyagraha. V. Bhave, whom Gandhi called one of those 'who believe in pure *ahimsa*', offered Satyagraha at Paunar, a village near Wardha.[543] His arrest was followed by that of Nehru and other satyagrahis. In the N-WFP, there was speculation about the intended satyagrahis. The general forecast was for Abdul Ghaffar Khan but 'this does not seem', remarked Cunningham, 'to be in keeping with Gandhi's selection of a comparatively obscure person to set the ball rolling in the rest of India itself'.[544] Eventually the long awaited decision of the FPCC about the launching of the campaign was taken in a meeting at Peshawar on 11 December 1940. The first batch of 20 satyagrahis would start the civil disobedience on 14 December by shouting approved slogans at selected places in the N-WFP. Notices were sent to the DCs giving details of the time and place of Satyagraha actions in their respective jurisdictions.[545]

The Satyagrahis started promulgating anti-war slogans on schedule, but the provincial government, restricting itself strictly to its policy of 'not to arrest straightaway',[546] desisted from making any arrests. Only the two Satyagrahis in Hazara were arrested, but they were released on 24 December after a short imprisonment.[547] The slogan shouters were 'quite nonplussed' at not being arrested and were told by the authorities to disperse and go home.[548] The lenient treatment of the agitators was disliked by the Central government. Objections were raised concerning Cunningham's policy, which was viewed by Delhi as creating embarrassment for other provincial governments. It was demanded that stern action should be taken against the agitators. Cunningham resisted the interference of the Centre and remained firm in his policy.[549] To Congress workers, the government policy of ignoring the Satyagrahis was meant to prove that the Muslims who dominated the N-WFP had no interest in the Congress struggle.[550]

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[541] : CD, 30 May 1940, Mss. EUR., D. 670/4, IOLR, p. 17; *Khyber Mail*, 21 June 1940.
[542] : GR, 9 December 1940, Mss. EUR., D. 670/15, IOLR.
[543] : Verbatim Reports of the Interviews/Conversation With Gandhi of Azad, Nehru and Abdul Ghaffar Khan on 11 October 1940, Amrit Kaur Collection, NMML, pp. 1-2; Sitaramayya, *History*, II, p. 219.
[544] : GR, 23 October 1940, Mss. EUR., D. 670/15, IOLR.
[545] : CID Diaries, 12 December 1940, F. No. 38, SBP, p. 185.

Actually, there was a lack of public interest in the movement. It did not arouse public sympathy to the same extent as in the early 1930s. By mid-February, the jubilant Governor had no doubts in his mind that 'unless some entirely new method is devised by Mr. Gandhi, the movement will quickly die'.[551] Abdul Ghaffar Khan tried some new tactics by sending KKs to the rural areas to raise slogans, but without much response from the people. The logical outcome of all these endeavours was that the individual Satyagraha was suspended never to be revived again.[552] In December 1941, the government and Congress no longer seemed to be at loggerheads. On 3 December Nehru and Azad were released , followed by others in batches.

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[546] : CD, December 1940, Mss. EUR., D. 670/4, IOLR, p. 38.

[547] : A. Q. Swati to Sadiq Ali, 16 October 1941, F. No. P-15 (1940), AICC, pp. 59-60; Sadiq Ali to A. Q. Swati, 2 March 1941, P-15 (1940), AICC, p. 57.

[548] : CD, 14 December 1940, Mss. EUR., D. 670/4, IOLR, p. 39.

[549] : CD, 16 December 1940, Mss. EUR., D. 670/4, IOLR, p. 39.

[550] : M. Yunus, *Qaidi Key Khaat* (Delhi, 1969), pp. 15-16; Qaiyum's Speech at Peshawar, 19 August 1942, F. No. 66, SBP, p. 199.

[551] : Cunningham to Linlithgow, 13 February 1941, Mss. EUR., F. 125/76, IOLR, p. 9.

[552] : CID Diaries, F. No. 65, SBP, p. 41.

One of the main reasons for lack of public interest in Individual Satyagraha was that the theatre of war was far away. The men in the streets and fields were more concerned with their daily affairs than with developments in a distant theatre of war. They were minimally interested in such slogans as 'freedom of speech' or 'resisting all wars with non-violent resistance'. The provincial government's lenient treatment restricted the movement largely to the active workers of the Congress party, and the rank and file and the KKs were left undisturbed. The half-hearted participation of the KKs proved fatal to the movement. On the resignation of Abdul Ghaffar Khan from Congress, the KKs assumed that they should have nothing to do with the violent struggle of Congress, and that they should concentrate on the social uplift of the Pashtoons. As they were the dedicated followers of Abdul Ghaffar Khan and not the Congress party, they wholeheartedly supported his programme and policy and not that of the INC. More attention was given to aspects of the constructive work of the organisation, such as training and education to the newcomers in the KK organisation, sweeping the village lanes, and doing other kinds of community work.

Pressed by public opinion at home and abroad, the British Cabinet decided to take some immediate steps to win over Indian public opinion and to protect the sub-continent from an imminent Japanese invasion. A 'deal' was hurriedly prepared by the War Cabinet, and Winston Churchill, the British Prime Minister, announced on 11 March 1942 a mission by of Sir Stafford Cripps, a Cabinet Member, to deliver a message personally to India. Cripps, with a draft declaration, arrived at Delhi on 23 March. He was to explain to Indians the British government's proposals for India's attainment of full self-government after the war, in the event of their full co-operation in the war. The draft declaration conceded the Congress demands partially by recognising India's right to frame a constitution through a CA after the war. The Pakistan demand, also was met, though in vague terms, to the satisfaction of the League, by giving the provinces which did not want to join the new constitution the right to frame their own, which would enjoy the same status as the Indian Union.[553]

Both the major parties in India, Congress and AIML, rejected Cripps' proposals. Congress reiterated its former stand that 'no other status except that of independence for the whole of India could be agreed to or could meet the essential requirements of the present situation'. The AIML, while expressing its gratification at the possibility of the recognition of Pakistan by 'implication by providing for the establishment of two or more independent Unions in India', regretted 'that the proposals of HMG's embodying the fundamentals are not open to any modification and therefore no alternative proposals are invited...'.[554] The outcome of all these endeavours was that Cripps' mission failed. In April, Cripps cut short his discussions and left for London. The general feeling in the FP about the failure of Cripps' mission was of great 'relief'. The local Congress workers regarded the main purpose of the Cripps mission as the obstruction of the actions of Congress in the pursuit of achieving liberty.[555]

After the failure of the Cripps' mission, which widened the existing gulf between Congress and the Government, the Congressites prepared themselves for another battle with the Government.[556] The WC of INC met at Wardha on 14 July and demanded that British rule in India 'must end immediately....[557] It was followed by another resolution passed on 8 August at Bombay, (known as the 'Quit India' resolution) calling on the British to quit India, and authorising Gandhi to lead a mass struggle on non-violent lines on the widest public scale.[558] The authorities were prepared to combat the Congress civil disobedience. On 9 August Gandhi and other members of CWC were arrested and the AICC, CWC and PCCs were proclaimed illegal. The arrest of the leaders was followed by widespread disorder in the country, resulting in attacks on government installations and the law courts. Many cases of looting, arson and derailing were reported. This was followed by a general crack-down on Congress workers.[559]

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[553]: *IAR*, 1942, I, p. 60. Also see R. Coupland, *The Cripps Mission* (Bombay, 1942), p. 5; Sitaramayya, *History*, II, pp. 310-331; R. J. Moore, *Churchill, Cripps and India 1939-1945* (Oxford, 1979), pp. 67-68.

[554]: Philips, *Evolution of India and Pakistan*, pp. 373-376; S. S. Pirzada, *Evolution of Pakistan* (Lahore, 1963), p. 215; F. Akhtar, *The March of a Nation* (Lahore, 1945), p. 125; Aga Khan, *The Memoirs of Aga Khan: World Enough and Time* (London, 1954), p. 290 and Coupland, *The Constitutional Problem in India* (Oxford, 1943), p. 279.

[555]: CID Diaries, 18-19 August 1942, F. No. 66, SBP, pp. 83, 197.

The AIML termed the 'Quit India' movement an insidious attack on Muslim India and called upon the Muslims to 'abstain from any participation in the movement'.[560] Jinnah considered it a splendid opportunity to fill the vacuum created by the temporary disappearance of Congress from the political scene.[561]

While the situation in the rest of India was complicated and difficult, in the N-WFP it was calm at the beginning of the movement. The Frontier Governor had rightly remarked on the province being the 'only pleasant part' of the sub-continent.[562] In order to stir up some excitement among the general public and to popularise the Congress' programme beyond the settled areas, in July 1942, Abdul Ghaffar Khan sent KK delegations to various areas in tribal territory.[563] Except for the arrest of one group, sent to Waziristan, the government did not interfered with their activities, because propaganda by pro-government mullahs and the tribal Maliks had already turned a 'vast majority' of the tribal population against Congress. In most of places, to the satisfaction of the Frontier Governor, they were even treated as unwelcome guests. In Malakand, reported Cunningham, the local Maliks staunchly opposed the KKs and they had to 'come back without achieving anything'.[564] In Bajaur, they were denied traditional Pashtoon hospitality. The Afridis, under the leadership of Nawab Zaman Khan, warned the KKs to leave their territory. They were not allowed to enter Kurram and were stopped by the Kurram Militia at the entrance to the Valley.[565]

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[556] : 'Prepare to Face the Challenge', Nehru's speech at a public meeting at Lucknow, 31 May 1942, *SWJN*, 12 (Delhi, 1979), pp. 333-338.
[557] : *IAR*, 1942, II, p. 207; Sitaramayya, History, II, pp. 337-343.
[558] : Sitaramayya, *History*, II, pp. 343-354; Brown, *Gandhi*, pp. 338-339.
[559] : For details see, *Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances, 1942-43* (Delhi, 1943), pp. 1-39; *Some Facts About the Disturbances in India 1942-43* (nd, np), pp. 1-20; B. Mitra, P. Chakraborthy (eds.), *Rebel India* (Calcutta, 1946), p. 201, and Sitaramayya, *History*, II, pp. 360-519.
[560] : *IAR*, 1942, II, p. 355.
[561] : J. Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, II, p. 457.
[562] : CD, 7 February 1942, Mss. EUR., D. 670/4, IOLR, p. 76.

On 14 August, the provincial Congress workers launched their civil disobedience by picketing liquor shops in Peshawar. The authorities did not interfere as 'it hurts nobody and is a good face-saver for Congress', according to Cunningham. He added that the people were getting 'what they want at the back door', so the agitators were left undisturbed, at least for the time being.[566] The next stage, which started in the first week of September, was the picketing of schools. Attempts were made to organise student *hartals* but with very little success. Only in Bannu did the situation get out of control and 450 arrests were made. The third stage was the occupying of government offices and 'raids' on the law courts. With the exception of Peshawar and

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[563]: Sarfaraz Khan, Abdul Malik, Kamdar Khan, Pir Shahzada and Syed Akbar were sent to Bajaur, Faqir Mohammad and Abdul Majid to Tirah, Abdul Hakim Khan and Abdur Rehman to Waziristan, Taj Mohammad Khamosh to Faqir of Ipi and Fazal ur Rahim Saqi and Abdus Samad Khan to Mohmand Territory. For more details see F. R. Saqi, *Zhwandoon* (Peshawar, 1977), pp. 60-133; Abdul Ghaffar, *Zama Zhwand*, pp. 658-664; Interviews with Fazal ur Rahim Saqi, Wardaga (Charssadda), 17 November 1991; Sarfaraz Khan, Boobak (Charssadda), 17 November 1991.

[564]: GR, 10 September 1942, Mss. EUR., D. 670/16, IOLR.

[565]: *ibid.*

[566]: CD, 19 August 1942, Mss. EUR., D. 670/4, IOLR, p. 95.

Mardan, this did not materialise. The provincial leadership failed to mobilise the public to the extent which it had in the early 1930s.[567]

Several factors contributed to the success of the authorities in dealing with the Congress movement. The provincial government, following the success of its policy during the campaign of Individual Satyagraha, decided to avoid the arrest of Congress volunteers for as long as possible. Cunningham was urged time and again by the Central government to arrest all prominent Congress members capable of leading any agitation, and to regard all activities related to Congress as unlawful. But Cunningham resisted this, convinced that he should not arrest the provincial Congress leadership; and he proposed to 'ignore hot air and arrest only if force or violence is shown'.[568] 'If we had done so', he remarked, 'A bond would automatically have been created between the Red Shirts and Congress proper, and this would have attracted a certain amount of sympathy to Congress which, has in fact, not been forthcoming...'.[569] The provincial authorities were not in favour of declaring the FPCC an unlawful organisation immediately and only favoured prosecuting those individuals who were directly interfering with recruitment, the collection of taxes, and transport systems, or were preaching sedition or advocating the breach of some law.[570] The FPCC was the only PCC which was never declared unlawful during the war years. The government's hesitation in not arresting the top leadership of the provincial Congress proved the best protection against the agitation turning to violence.[571]

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[567] : For details see Zamarud Diaries, vols. 6-7; Wali Khan, *Bacha Khan*, pp. 329-348.
[568] : CD, 29 July and 12 August 1942, Mss. EUR., D. 670/4, IOLR, pp. 92, 94-95.
[569] : Rittenberg, 'Independence Movement', p. 280.
[570] : Suggestions for Policy and Procedure in Dealing with any Future Civil Disobedience Movement, IGP, N-WFP, 9 April 1942, F. No. 185, SBP, p. 1.
[571] : CD, 15 September 1942, Mss. EUR., D. 670/4, IOLR, p. 100.

However, with the intensification of the movement in the fourth week of October, the provincial government abandoned its earlier policy and for the time being resorted to the same tactics as were adopted by the government in other parts of India. Congress volunteers were brutally lathi charged and their demonstrations were fired on. Abdul Ghaffar Khan himself was not spared; he was mercilessly beaten and arrested on 27 October, at Mir Wais Dheri, a suburb of Mardan. Following the arrest of Abdul Ghaffar Khan, other prominent leaders of the KKs in Mardan, Charssadda and Peshawar were also arrested. For a short while there were signs of a strong protest from Congress volunteers. The KKs were induced by those leaders who were still outside prison not to pay their revenues; government servants were asked to leave their jobs and army men were requested to desert the army.[572] But, contrary to the expectations of the Congressmen, the general public had lost interest in civil disobedience. During January 1943 batches of 4 or 5 volunteers daily offered themselves for arrest, which was regarded by Cunningham as 'annoying having to accept this small daily offering' but he was satisfied that it 'attracts no public attention now and is looked upon as something of a joke'.[573] By May 1943, the movement dwindled away, causing no further threats to the provincial authorities. The lenient policy and tactful treatment of the provincial authorities proved the best bulwark against the Congress' attempts to arouse the people to the same extent as on earlier occasions. If large scale arrests had been made, the government might have faced a more 'unpleasant situation'.[574] However, the 'majority' of the people did not see themselves as involved and regarded it as merely a political contest between Congress and the government.[575]

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[572] : Details can be seen in Wali Khan, *Bacha Khan*, pp. 338-339; Abdul Ghaffar, *Zama Zhwand*, pp. 666-676; H. B. Joshi, *Badshah Khan* (Hyderabad, nd), pp. 154-156; *Pakhtun*, Peshawar, November 1991, pp. 9-35; F. Nos. 18, 40, 67, 68, 92, 93, 142, 144,180, 181, SBP; *Khyber Mail*, 30 October 1942.

[573] : Cunningham to Linlithgow, 23 January 1943, Linlithgow Collection, Mss. EUR., F. 125/78, IOLR, p. 3.

[574] : Editorial on the Civil Disobedience Movement in the N-WFP, *Zamindar*, 18 September 1942.

There were also other reasons which contributed to the authorities' ability to deal with the movement. As the provincial government anticipated, certain organisations and individuals sided with it during the war days. The Khans professed their loyalty to the Crown. The Khaksars also offered their full support to Britain and the Ahrars, in most cases, proclaimed their neutrality. The PML, waiting for such an occasion since the resignation of Khan Sahib's Ministry, considered it as the best opportunity to move close to Cunningham. They were very helpful to the Government in making 'the right sort of propaganda'.[576] Then there were several maulvis who had been working for the British interest for a long time, and 'have come out with strong anti-Congress speeches in mosques'[577]. The first noted contact with the maulvis of JUS was made through K.B. Kuli Khan. On 5 August 1939, Cunningham summoned Kuli Khan and urged him to convince the maulvis of JUS to emphasise that British interests were almost identical with Islam's, which he duly did.[578] Cunningham continued with his modified plan. A network was established through the DCs and PAs, and, in addition, some prominent private individuals were employed to work for the Crown. Initially, the attention of the subsidised clergy was diverted towards the 'atheist Bolsheviks', with a particular reference to their treatment of Muslims in Central Asia. The Germans were denounced as the collaborators of the Russians. But, with the Russian entry into the war on the Allied side, the whole situation changed. 'Mullahs have been sending me questions through Kuli Khan', reported Cunningham, 'as to what propaganda they should now do.... This is not too easy, as up to June last year I was encouraging them to preach anti-Bolshevism more than anti-Nazism. Most people seem to take it for granted that, although we don't particularly like Bolsheviks, we are only too glad to have them killing the Germans'.[579] Cunningham felt puzzled when asked whether they really were helping their old enemies, the Russians. His reply was simple: that for the common purpose of the destruction of Nazism, they could cooperate with the Russians, without accepting the ideas of Communism or the Soviet system.[580] The government succeeded in switching over the propaganda from the Bolsheviks to the Germans and the 'Mullahs seems to look quite naturally to the Nazis as being the principal enemy of Islam and Britain alike'.[581] It was not very difficult for the authorities to direct their propaganda against Congress. The Congressmen were denounced as the collaborators of Fascism, who were trying to drag Islam into a war which was not of its concern. The services of the JUS were always at the disposal of the government, *fatwas* were issued against the KKs for their close association with the Hindu Congress,[582] and, in particular, the Khan Brothers were criticised for their friendship with Gandhi.

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[575]: GR, 23 September 1942, Mss. EUR., D. 670/16, IOLR.

[576]: GR, 23 September 1942, Mss. EUR., D. 670/16, IOLR; and, CID Diaries, F. No. 775, SBP, p. 65.

[577]: GR, 8 August 1942, Mss. EUR., D. 670/16, IOLR. A very interesting and detailed account of the cordial relationship between the British and several prominent and influential clerics and other notables, along with the subsidy list they were getting from the Government in lieu of their services to the Crown, can be seen in Cunningham's Correspondence with the External Affairs Department regarding Propaganda through Mullahs etc. in Cunningham Collection, Mss. EUR., D. 670/19 and CD, D. 670/4-5, IOLR.

[578]: CD, 5 August 1939, Mss. EUR., D. 670/4, IOLR, p. 24.

The internal feuds within the provincial Congress also contributed largely to the successful dealing of the civil disobedience by the provincial authorities. The in-fighting in the provincial organisation distracted the attention of Congress volunteers from civil disobedience. G. M. Khan Lundkhwarh was expelled from the party in November 1940. On the intervention of the Congress high command, he was readmitted for the time being, but drifted away again from the party. Jaffar Shah and Arbab Ghafoor had their own differences with each other, resulting in their resignations from the offices of FPCC president and secretary respectively. Rab Nawaz, the Commander-in-Chief of the KKs, had his own views on the non-violent struggle of the KKs during the war years, which led to his resignation from the organisation.[583] Finally, an important factor (previously neglected by scholars) was the mobilisation of and increase in the police force in the N-WFP during the war period. At the outbreak of war, the strength of the Frontier police was 6500 men, by 1941 it had been increased to 7500. It was further increased to 21000 plus levies of 9000. The police were equipped with modern weapons (such as sten guns and mortars), provided with adequate motor vehicles and ambulances, and made into a fully mobile force. The wireless network was improved and the CID was expanded. According to A. F. Perrott, the IGP, FP, 'it is largely owing to the conduct, efficiency and the bravery of the police, that the province has remained quiet during the war years'.[584]

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[579]: CD, 1 July 1941, *ibid.*, pp. 56-57; GR, 9 July 1941, Mss. EUR., D. 670/16, IOLR.

[580]: GR, 9 July 1941, Mss. EUR., D. 670/16, IOLR. Cunningham narrated how at a big Jirga in the Kurram Agency, the Turis — 'the most rabid of all our Shias' — asked him whether it was true that they were helping their old enemy, the Russians. Cunningham replied that 'if a mad dog got loose in the Parachinar Bazaar, Shias and Sunnis would combine to shoot it'. 'This remark', noted Cunningham, 'has been repeated along the border and is accepted as a reasonable statement of the case'. GR, 8 August 1941, Mss. EUR., F. 125/76, IOLR.

[581]: GR, 9 October 1941, Mss. EUR., F. 125/76, IOLR.

[582]: Rittenberg, 'Independence Movement', pp. 288-289.

Formation, Working and the Weaknesses of the Muslim League Ministry

During the war period, it was a feature of British policy to set up as many non-Congress ministries in the provinces as possible, to prove to the outside world that despite Congress non-co-operation, the general public was contributing to the Allied war effort. In Sind, Bengal and Assam, non-Congress ministries were formed. The same formula was tried in the N-WFP. On the resignation of Khan Sahib's ministry, the Governor called on Aurangzeb, the Opposition Leader in the assembly, and asked him to form an alternative ministry. However, Aurangzeb showed an inability to command a majority in the provincial assembly.[585] Jinnah was informed of the Frontier Governor's invitation to Aurangzeb, and of his refusal. Jinnah pressed Aurangzeb to 'form Ministry [at] any cost, even Interim Ministry, waverers and others will come afterwards'. When told that a ministry with a working majority was impossible, he insisted on forming a ministry anyway and reprimanded Aurangzeb for his 'Great mistake' of 'missing [the] opportunity'. He advised Aurangzeb to 'form a Coalition Ministry, make every sacrifice, let others be Ministers'.[586]

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[583] : *ibid.* pp. 290-292.

[584] : Official Report by A. F. Perrott, IGP, N-WFP, Mss. EUR., F. 161/181, IOLR, pp. 1-3.

In the absence of Congress, neither Aurangzeb nor any other leader was capable of commanding the loyalty of more than 20 members in a House of 50. The Governor, at least for the time being, opposed a ministry with no majority support in the assembly. But he was optimistic of Aurangzeb's success in the formation of the said ministry within four months 'if outside Muslim League leaders lend a hand to rally the necessary support'.[587] In March 1940, the AIML deputed Sikandar Hayat, the Punjab Premier, and Sir Akbar Hydari, Member for Information and Broadcasting in the Viceroy's Executive Council, to the N-WFP to help the local Leaguers in the formation of a ministry. They reached Peshawar on 9 March, remained there for a couple of days and held detailed discussions with the non-Congress Muslims of the provincial legislature in that connection. Sikandar Hayat thought that if Khuda

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[585] : Governor's Tel. to Viceroy, 10 November 1939, Mss. EUR., F. 125/74, IOLR, p. 99.
[586] : Jinnah to Aurangzeb quoted in GR, 12 November 1939, Mss. EUR., F. 125/74, pp. 101-102.
[587] : *ibid.*

Bakhsh, Pir Bakhsh and Nishtar, the three Independents, could 'be induced to join the Muslim League Party, it ought to be possible to obtain a coalition with a bare majority in the House'.[588] But their efforts failed and they returned empty-handed.

Despite the endeavours of the League high command, the situation remained unaltered. There were personal jealousies in the PML leadership; Saadullah could not see eye to eye with Aurangzeb and both of them were rivals for the premiership. The feuds within the provincial leadership convinced the Governor that there was no chance of any alternative ministry. According to Cunningham

> There are too many selfish, ambitious and private feuds. KB Saadullah Khan would bitterly contest the premiership with Aurangzeb Khan; the Hindus would be shy of joining a party tainted with the name of Muslim; among the Hindus themselves, two Rai Bahadurs are inveterate rivals and would split the Hindu group; the two independents..., would, I think, vote with Congress in a crucial division.[589]

To him the best solution was to end the internal feuds within the party and to persuade the Hindus to join the ML party, if the latter were to call themselves Unionists and gave certain written understandings assuring the Hindus that there would be no discrimination against them'.[590] The Governor willingly offered his services. 'The extent to which I could go to help them', added Cunningham, 'would be, firstly, to try and persuade individuals to sink personal ambitions and combine for the good of the Province, and secondly, to assist in forming an agreement between the Muslim and Hindu groups in the event of their coming to the stage of such negotiations'.[591]

Aurangzeb remained engaged in manoeuvring towards a League ministry under his own premiership. In September 1941, he further discussed the matter with Jinnah in

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[588] : GR, 23 March 1940, Mss. EUR., F. 125/75, IOLR, p. 24.
[589] : GR, 9 January 1940, Mss. EUR., D. 670/15, IOLR.
[590] : CD, 13 February 1940, Mss. EUR., D. 670/4, pp. 2-3.
[591] : GR, 22 February 1940, Mss. EUR., F. 125/75, IOLR, p. 14.

Delhi, who after much consideration gave his approval.[592] On his return from Delhi, Aurangzeb made a whirlwind tour of the province. He had the backing of the Governor N-WFP and two senior bureaucrats, Iskandar Mirza and Shaikh Mahboob Ali. The 'trio' intensified their activities and sought the support of provincial MLAs.[593] A well-organised propaganda campaign in favour of Aurangzeb developed; he was presented as the 'Champion of Islam' and the 'natural leader of the Muslim intelligentsia and poor' alike.[594] The Central government was also interested in the formation of a League ministry in the FP. Feroz Khan Noon, Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, was sent in September 1942 to discuss it with Cunningham. Personal jealousies and internal feuds among the League leaders, however, remained the main hurdle. Furthermore, there was no visible majority for the Aurangzeb group, essential to forming a ministry.[595] By November, the situation remained unchanged. Aurangzeb tried his level best to get the support of the required number of MPs but without any positive results. When asked by the Governor about the latest developments, Aurangzeb informed him there would be a 'bathroom majority'. When asked to explain, he said it meant that 'if one member retired to the WC during a division they would probably be in a minority'.[596]

In January 1943 the position in the assembly was such that the total strength of the existing members was 40. Five members were by then dead, three had accepted service under the Crown and two were in prison. Keeping in view the latest figure of 40, the support of at least 20 was necessary for the formation of a ministry.[597]

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[592]: ML in the N-WFP, F. No. 775, SBP, p. 75.
[593]: Shad, 'Deed', III, pp. 164-166.
[594]: *Khyber Mail*, 17 July 1942.
[595]: GR, 28 September 1942, Mss. EUR., 70/L/P&J/5/2/19, NDC.
[596]: CD, 9 November 1942, Mss. EUR., D. 670/4, p. 104.
[597]: *Khyber Mail*, 22 January 1943.

Aurangzeb intensified his activities towards his cherished goal of establishing a ministry and with the help of the 'trio' he succeeded in getting support from Ajit Singh of the Akali Party. As Khanna was out of the country (as a delegate to the Pacific Conference), the party's secretary Ajit Singh acted as the spokesman of the HSNP. Aurangzeb's negotiations with Ajit Singh, which began in Peshawar progressed in Delhi and came to fruition in Amritsar. The Akali Party offered support in return for a promise to give one ministerial position to Ajit Singh. Moreover, it was resolved to safeguard minority rights. Due consideration was to be given to the minority communities in the province in the matter of their shares in services and in educational grants.[598] Nishtar (Independent), Raja Abdur Rahman (Hazara Democrats) and Samin Jan (Congress deserter) were also promised portfolios in the intended Cabinet under Aurangzeb.[599] By the end of April, Cunningham still stood firm in demanding the names of 22 Aurangzeb supporters.[600] But the Viceroy, who also was looking for the formation of a League ministry in the N-WFP, directed Cunningham to act on the desire of Jinnah — i,e the formation of a League ministry at any cost.[601] Cunningham, on getting approval from the Centre,[602] changed his mind and agreed to be content with 16 firm supporters for Aurangzeb — with the hope of five more MLA's joining his side in due course.[603]

Eventually the Governor invited Aurangzeb to form the ministry. On 24 May 1943 the Governor had a detailed meeting with Aurangzeb. Aurangzeb was asked about his policy regarding the war effort, on which he assured the Governor of his wholehearted support. To the satisfaction of Cunningham, he promised to accept the already authorised budget, and further said that on general administrative questions he would be doing nothing to embarrass the Governor or other government officials and would fully rely on bureaucrats for technical advice.[604] On 25 May, Section 93 was revoked and the Governor formally invited Aurangzeb to form a ministry in the N-WFP. The ministry was sworn in on 25 May.[605] Thus with the formation of the ML ministry in the N-WFP, the AIML, at least for the time being, succeeded in weaning the Frontier from the Congress fold to its side. Jinnah rightly remarked that all of the Muslims were with the League.[606] The pro-government newspapers regarded it as 'a new ray of hope for Muslim India in general and the Frontier Muslims in particular'.[607] The provincial Congress accused the authorities of 'conspiring' against the people of the N-WFP by installing the League ministry without popular support. It was termed as a 'reactionary' and 'puppet' ministry.[608]

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[598] : *IAR*, 1943, II, p. 306; Sitaramayya, *History*, II, p. 528.
[599] Zia-ud-Din, *Memoirs*, p. 65; Shad, 'Deed', III, pp. 167-168.
[600] : GR, 23 April 1943, Mss. EUR., D. 670/16, IOLR.
[601] : Linlithgow to Cunningham, 26 April 1943, Mss. EUR., F. 125/78, IOLR, p. 15.
[602] : Linlithgow to Cunningham, 2 March 1943, Mss. EUR., F. 125/78, IOLR, pp. 7-8.
[603] : GR, 4 May 1943, Mss. EUR., D. 670/16, IOLR.

After the assumption of power, the foremost concern of the ministry was the forthcoming by-elections in the seven vacant seats of the provincial legislature. Of the seven seats, elections were held for six — four Muslims and two Hindus, — the polling in the Sikhs' seat was postponed for technical reasons.[609] The AIML deputed Khaliquzzaman and Jamal Mian to help the PML in its election campaign. The main theme of their speeches centred on the Congress' treatment of Muslims in Congress majority provinces and the new ideals of the Pakistan scheme versus Akhand

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[604] : Cunningham to Linlithgow, 24 May 1943, Mansergh, N. & Lumby, E. W. R., (ed.)., *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India. The Transfer of Power 1942-7,* (henceforth *TP*), III, (London, 1971), p. 1006.

[605] : It consisted of Aurangzeb as Chief Minister; Nishtar as Finance Minister; Ajit Singh, Minister of Public Works; Raja A. Rahman, Information Minister and Samin Jan as the Education Minister. CD, 25 May 1943, Mss. EUR., D. 670/4, IOLR, p. 130; *Khyber Mail,* 28 May 1943.

[606] : Pirzada, *Foundations*, II, p. 406.

[607] : *Sarhad*, Peshawar, 31 May 1943, (Yusufi Collection).

[608] : CID Diaries, 11 June 1943, F. No. 69, SBP, pp. 181-182.

[609] : GR, 9 July 1943, Mss. EUR., F. 125/78, IOLR, p. 37.

Hindustan.[610] In order to infuse more life into the electioneering,. Jinnah sent a message to the Muslims of N-WFP exhorting them to support the League candidates in the by-elections.[611] The provincial Congress split into two groups on the question of participation in the by-elections. One group led by Khan Sahib, including B. R. Gandhi and Ali Gul Khan, had favoured contesting them 'to expose the hollowness of the Constitution'; while the other, led by Sher Ali Khan, thought that, after its declaration of complete independence during 'Quit India', Congress should not take part in such things. But the latter group was voted down,[612] and Congress participated in the by-elections.

The elections were held on 6-7 August. To the utter surprise of political circles, all the four contested Muslim seats were won by the PML, while the two Hindu seats went to Congress.[613] Congress accused officials of canvassing for the League candidates and helping them to win the elections. Khan Sahib met the Governor and informed him of vote-rigging and malpractices by returning officers, officials and ministers at the polls.[614] Cunningham acknowledged the complaints of the ex-premier and saw 'some truth in all this',[615] though he regarded the ML successes as 'a victory for the British Government over the subversive elements'. According to him, it was through the organised propaganda of the Government against the KKs that the League candidates had succeeded in defeating their rivals.[616]

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[610]: CID Diaries, 21-22 July 1943, F. No. 777, SBP, pp. 55-59.

[611]: 'All Muslim India's eyes are today towards you' remarked Jinnah. 'If you fail in duty you will shock all Mussalmans of India. The Mussalmans of India have great faith and hopes in you and believe that you will be unconquerable soldiers of Islam like your unconquerable rocks and through you Islam in India will be able to revive the glorious past'. *Khyber Mail*, 23 July 1943.

[612]: Gupta, *Freedom Struggle*, p. 136.

[613]: *The Information*, Peshawar, 1 September 1943, Yusufi Collection. The League's successful candidates were Ghulam Hussain, Arbab Sher Ali Khan, M. Ayub Khan and Nasrullah Khan. The two successful Congress candidates were Kewal Ram and Lala Hans Raj. *Khyber Mail*, 13 August 1943.

[614]: CD, 16 August 1943, Mss. EUR., D. 670/5, IOLR, p. 8; CID Diaries, F. No. 72, SBP, pp. 39, 77.

[615]: CD, 16 August 1943, Mss. EUR., D. 670/5, IOLR, p. 8.

[616]: CD, 10 August 1943, Mss. EUR., D. 670/5, IOLR, p. 6.

Thus, with official patronage and blessings, the Frontier League ministry started its career. Cunningham was not happy with the attitude of his ministers. Soon after their assumption of power, Cunningham complained of the ministers' partiality towards their partymen. He was not happy with the abuse of power and authority, particularly by the CM, who allowed party and personal considerations to colour his actions.[617] Aurangzeb, according to the Governor, 'seems to have forgotten that the function of a Minister is to advise the Governor. Nearly every file comes from him with a note: "I solicit the advice of H.E. the Governor!'.[618] The manipulation of the ministers in administrative appointments, promotions and postings, discrimination in allocating government funds, interference in police investigations, tampering with the judicial processes, and nepotism in jobs,[619] compelled Cunningham to warned the CM that if they continued with such practices, 'either I must give up the Governorship or I must get new Ministers'.[620]

Pakistan was another sensitive question for the ministry, as it was certainly bound to cause problems with the minorities. From the outset Aurangzeb was warned by the Governor to 'keep Pakistan in the background as much as possible';[621] as the demand for Pakistan had rallied Muslims very successfully in the provinces where they were in the minority, 'so the cry of no Pakistan may unite non-Muslim elements most effectively against him in the majority provinces'.[622] But he did not succeed in keeping it away for long from the assembly discussions. Saadullah, the prominent Leaguer, demanded that a resolution on Pakistan be moved immediately. He asked the Frontier premier to declare a policy on the issue.[623] Aurangzeb assured him that 'all the Muslim members of the Government are committed to Pakistan',[624] and thus shelved the issue without antagonising the minorities in the Frontier.[625]

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[617]: CD, 20 October 1943, Mss. EUR., D. 670/5, IOLR, p. 14.

[618]: *ibid.* P. 4.

[619]: GR, 24 September 1943, Mss. EUR., D. 670/16, IOLR; A. Qaiyum, secretary ML, Lundkhwarh to Members, Committee of Action (AIML), 22 June 1944, F. No. 343, AFM, p. 94.

[620]: CD, 20 October 1943, Mss. EUR., D. 670/5, IOLR, p. 14.

[621]: GR, 9 August 1943, Mss. EUR., F. 125/78, IOLR, p. 42.

[622]: Linlithgow to Cunningham 17 August 1943, *ibid.* p. 25.

From September 1943, Aurangzeb's ministry released more than 1000 Congress members detained in various prisons in the province. The Congress MLAs, however, were not released. The reason, probably, was to 'maintain itself comfortably in office'.[626] Cunningham was urged by some loyal notables of the Frontier to release the Congress MLAs. To keep the number of the opposition less than the ministerial party (total 23) in the legislature, the government decided to release the detainees in stages. The release of six Congress MLAs added strength to the previous fourteen, bringing the total number of the opposition members to twenty. The Governor was requested by the opposition members of the assembly to convene a session of the assembly, which he declined on the plea that there was not enough legislative business to be carried out. It was the first time since 1932 that the Frontier assembly did not meet for the autumn session. The obvious reason was, of course, to save the ministry from a defeat, as the Governor was sure of an opposition no-confidence motion, supported by some of the League members who were not happy with Aurangzeb.[627]

Before concluding this discussion of the Aurangzeb ministry's term of office, it is proper here to mention the reaction of a strong segment of the provincial Leaguers to the way the ministry functioned. Saadullah accused the CM of paying no heed to the party and the organisation. The ministers, including the CM, according to Saadullah were involved in corruption, thus giving a bad name to the League organisation. He informed Jinnah that in such circumstances, he 'cannot tolerate any more to work with Sardar Aurangzeb because of his treacherous attitude and hypocritical habit' and that he would vote against him, whenever a chance came.[628] Shahzada Fazaldad, the most prominent Leaguer from the southern districts, termed the ministry 'corrupt, nefarious and anti-Muslim'.[629] Some of the League supporters became so disgusted with the ministry that they decided to leave the organisation and join Congress, but were requested to 'have patience and not to be led away by personalities'.[630] The ministry's misuse of power and authority and greediness annoyed some of its staunch supporters and they withdrew their support from the League ministry.[631] Taj Ali Khan, president of the PML, also could not remain a silent spectator to the corruption of the ministry especially as it related to the management of wartime rationing. He informed Jinnah that 'different elements of the Ministry as far as I know are not functioning practically for the Muslim League, but for mercenary ends of their own or of their relatives...'.[632] Jinnah replied that he himself had to put his house in order: 'The Centre is doing its best to help and guide, but the root is in the province itself, and it is therefore up to you all to work selflessly for the cause and establish solidarity amongst those who understand better, to begin with, and create complete unity and discipline amongst our people'.[633] Jinnah summoned Sardar Bahadur, Speaker, N-WFP assembly, and the

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[623] : Saadullah, *PLAD*, 24 August 1943, pp. 5-7.

[624] : Aurangzeb, *ibid.*

[625] : Cunningham to Linlithgow, 13 September 1943, *TP*, IV, (London, 1973), pp. 245-246; *IAR*, 1943, II, pp. 184-186.

[626] : *Khyber Mail*, 24 September 1943.

[627] : GR, 9 October 1944, Mss. EUR., D. 670/16, IOLR.

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[628]: Saadullah to Jinnah, 7 November 1944, N-WFP-1, Shams ul Hasan Collection, Karachi, (hereafter SHC), pp. 74-74(E).

[629]: Shahzada Fazaldad to Jinnah, 10 July 1944, F. No. 519, QAP, p. 108.

[630]: Liaquat to Ziarat Gul, 5 August 1944, N-WFP-I, SHC, pp. 5-5(a).

[631]: Pyarelal, *Mahatma Gandhi: vol. I: The Last Phase* (Ahmedabad, 1965), p. 122; W. C. Smith, *Modern Islam in India* (Lahore, 1969), pp. 341-342.

[632]: Taj Ali to Jinnah, [?] December 1944, N-WFP- I, SHC, pp. 18-18(C). For more details see Talbot, *Provincial Politics*, pp. 12-14.

[633]: Jinnah to Taj Ali, 18 December 1944, N-WFP-I, SHC, p. 19.

Muslim ministers to Delhi to find a solution to the grave situation in the FP, which he regarded as 'not only painful but calculated to damage the prestige and honour' of the League in the FP.[634] While Jinnah remained occupied in seeking a favourable outcome, anti-ministry Leaguers in the province decided that it would of great advantage to the League organisation as a whole if the ministry was wrecked. Some of them finally decided to save the PML from further deterioration and supported the Congress in its move of no-confidence against Aurangzeb's ministry.[635] *

Cunningham informed Wavell of the weak and insecure position of the League ministry, which was likely to be defeated during the forthcoming budget session.[636] Wavell's personal observation on the fall of the ministry was that there would be no difficulty in replacing the Aurangzeb ministry.[637] However, his main concern was the support of the would-be new ministry for the British war effort.[638]

Despite the best efforts of the bureaucracy to keep the League ministry in office, another session of the provincial legislature could not be postponed any longer. The spring session of the assembly was called in March 1945. On 9 March, the assembly met for its budget session, and following the presentation of the budget for 1945-46, a no-confidence motion was tabled against Aurangzeb's ministry.[639] The motion was

* Full letter of K.B. Saadullah Khan can be seen in Appendix Four.

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[634] : Jinnah to Sardar Bahadur, 20 November 1944, N-WFP-I, SHC, p. 12.
[635] : Saadullah to Convenor, Committee of Action, 8 August 1945, N-WFP-I, SHC, pp. 60-60(A).
[636] : GR, 23 January 1945, *TP*, V, (London, 1974), p. 490.
[637] : Wavell to Amery, 30 January 1945, *TP*, V, p. 490.
[638] : Wavell to Amery, 13 March 1945, *TP*, V, p. 680.
[639] : CD, 9 March 1945, Mss. EUR., D. 670/5, IOLR, p. 65.

admitted and discussed on 12 March [1945]. Khan Sahib, the mover, accused the ministry of deliberately keeping the Congress MLAs in prison to perpetuate their minority government, and he charged the ministry with gross mismanagement and corruption.[640] Aurangzeb refuted the charges levelled against him. About corruption he remarked 'corruption started with Adam and will end on doomsday'. He reviewed the work done during their tenure in detail and said that the government had deeds and not words to justify their existence.[641] The no-confidence motion was carried in the assembly by 23 votes to 18, supported by 3 ML members of the House.[642] Aurangzeb and his colleagues formally tendered their resignation and on 16 March the Governor invited Khan Sahib to form his ministry.[643]

The PML came to power in May 1943, and managed to stay in office for about two years, mainly because of the deadlock which existed between Congress and the government. The bureaucracy supported the weak ministry of Aurangzeb to their utmost, but due to certain malpractices such as corruption, misuse of power and nepotism, the ministry earned a bad name for the provincial organisation of the League which widened the already existing rift within the party leadership. The ousting of the League ministry was a real setback for the AIML. The central organisation responded quickly and expelled Saadullah, K.B. Faizullah and M. Afzal Khan, the three who voted against the League ministry, from the party.[644] The PML, a faction-ridden body, was dissolved by Jinnah as it was the 'logical outcome of the faction feeling within the Provincial League which has been its greatest weakness'.[645] Nishtar was instructed by Jinnah to 'boldly give a lead to our people in the N-WFP, you will find 99 per cent of the Mussalmans behind you, provided that the Muslim League organisation will adhere solemnly to its policy and programme, that its leaders are selfless, sincere and servants of the nation, and that you put forward a definite, well-considered parliamentary programme in the form of a manifesto'.[646]

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[640] : Khan Sahib on No-Confidence Motion, 12 March 1945, *PLAD*, pp. 43-46.

[641] : Aurangzeb, *ibid.* pp. 46-53.

[642] : *PLAD*, pp. 73-74; *IAR*, 1945, II, p. 210; CD, 12 March 1945, Mss. EUR., D. 670/5, IOLR, p. 65.

[643] : The second Congress ministry in the N-WFP consisted of four members: Khan Sahib, the Chief Minister, also in charge of Home, Public Works and Public Health; Qazi Ataullah as Education, Revenue and Local self-government, B. R. Gandhi as the Finance Minister and Abbas Khan as the Minister for Industries and Forests. CD, 16 March 1945, Mss. EUR., D. 670/5, IOLR, p. 65; *IAR*, 1945, I, pp. 210-211. For more details on the working of second Congress ministry see Gupta, *Freedom Struggle*, pp. 162-171.

[644] : CID Diaries, F. No. 753, SBP, p. 231.

Second Congress Ministry

This was the first Congress ministry to accept office, of course with the approval of Gandhi,[647] during the war years. Despite some improvements in Congress-Government relations, Congress till July 1945 had not resumed its former ministerial responsibilities anywhere else in the sub-continent.[648] The N-WFP Governor regarded it as a victory for the government as Congress 'has now had to go back on their resolutions of '39 and '42'. He was satisfied to pursue his own policy, despite the opposition of the Central government. 'It is also clearly a vindication of the line I took in 1942'; remarked Cunningham. 'It is quite clear now that if we had declared Congress an unlawful association straightaway we would have been in the same sort of trouble as other Provinces, and Congress would certainly not have formed a Ministry here'.[649]

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[645] : GR, 23 April 1945, Mss. EUR., D. 670/16, IOLR; F. No. 344, AFM, p. 59.

[646] : Jinnah to Nishtar, 23 May 1945, Nishtar Collection, vol. I, AFM, p. 25.

[647] : 'Interview to Frontier Delegation', 19 February 1945, *CWMG*, 79, (Ahmedabad, 1980), p. 139.

[648] : Sitaramayya, *History*, II, pp. 531-532.

[649] : CD, 16 March 1945, Mss. EUR., D. 670/5, p. 65.

Simla Conference (1945) and Its Repercussions on the Provincial Politics

As the war situation improved, the solution of the Indian problem was sought with new vigour and hope. It was decided by the British government to convene a RTC of the Indian political leaders. As a gesture of good will, on 15 June 1945 the detained members of the AICC, were released. A Conference was convened at Simla which started its deliberations on 25 June. Besides the presidents of INC and AIML, the Conference was attended by twenty-two delegates, including the representatives of the Scheduled Castes, the Sikhs, and premiers and ex-premiers of the British Indian provinces.[650] With the beginning of the Conference's deliberations, differences between the Congress and the ML came out in the open. By the second day agreement was reached on certain issues such as the representation of minorities, whole-hearted support for the war effort, and continuance of the reconstituted Executive Council till the end of the war. Differences, however, emerged regarding the composition of the Executive Council. Jinnah took the stand that Congress would include only Hindu members in its quota on the Executive Council. He argued that if Master Tara Singh and others could choose their own men, the ML was right 'in insisting on its right to choose all the Muslim representatives'.[651] The Congress rejected Jinnah's stand as it could not accept the ML as the sole representative and authoritative organisation of the South Asian Muslims. Azad rebutted the League's claim by citing the examples of the N-WFP, Bengal, Punjab and Assam, Muslim majority areas with non-League ministries. Moreover, Congress reiterated its stand on complete independence for India, while the League could not agree to a constitution on any basis other than that of Pakistan.[652] For Jinnah, acceptance at that stage might 'shelve' the Pakistan issue for an indefinite period 'whereas the Congress will have secured under this arrangement what they want, namely, a clear road for their advance towards securing Hindu national independence of India...'.[653] Thus the deliberations at Simla ended in complete failure. They marked a watershed in Indian political history.[654] Henceforth, Congress realised the importance of the League, without whose consent no long-term settlement of the Indian problem could be brought about.[655] In the N-WFP, Cunningham reported that communal feelings had grown worse since the failure of the talks at Simla. Well-educated Muslims, according to Cunningham, were becoming anti-Hindu and pro-ML.[656]

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[650] : Broadcast speech by Wavell, Delhi, 14 June 1945, *TP*, V, pp. 1122-1124; *IAR*, 1945, I, pp. 235-250; P. Moon (ed.), *Wavell: The Viceroy's Journal* (London, 1973), pp. 147-151; Azad, *India Wins Freedom*, p. 101; S. K. Majumdar, *Gandhi and Jinnah: Their Role in India's Quest for Freedom* (Lahore, 1976), p. 213.

[651] : Wavell to Amery, 25 June 1945, *TP*, V, pp. 1151-1157; Wavell to Amery, 28 June 1945, *ibid.*, pp. 1170-1171; *IAR*, 1945, II, p. 130.

The Governor's views are confirmed by taking note of the prominent political figures now joining the League organisation, which infused new life into the feud-ridden body of the provincial League. The new entrants included Amin ul Hasanat, the Pir of Manki Sharif, a prominent *sajjada nashin* of Nowshera, who also brought a large number of his disciples to the League fold. Then there were Qaiyum, former Deputy Leader of the Congress at the CLA; Arbab Ghafoor, former Congress MLA; G. M. Khan, ex-president of the FPCC; Rab Nawaz, the one time 'Salar-i-Ala' of the KKs and M. Abbas Khan, a former minister in the Congress ministry.[657] The deserters from Congress and the new entrants brought with them organisational skills, a large number of their own followers and a plan of action against the Congress programme, particularly in the rural areas. This gave an impetus to the League organisation in the FP.

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[652]: Wavell to Amery, 1 July 1945, *TP*, V, pp. 1182-1185; Azad, *India Wins Freedom*, p. 116; Hodson, *The Great Divide*, p. 122.

[653]: Statement of Jinnah at a Press Conference, 14 July 1945, J. Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, II, p. 186; Jinnah to Wavell, 7 July 1945, *TP*, V, pp. 1205-1207; Jinnah to Wavell, 9 July 1945, *ibid.*, p. 1213.

[654]: Wavell to Amery, 13 July 1945, *TP*, V, pp. 1239-1241; Minutes of the Final Meeting of Simla Conference, 14 July 1945, *ibid.*, pp. 1243-1246; *IAR*, 1945, II, pp. 128-130.

[655]: Khalid Bin Sayeed, *Pakistan: The Formative Phase, 1857-1947* (Karachi, 1978), p. 133; S. Wolpert, *Jinnah of Pakistan* (Delhi, 1985), pp. 243-245.

[656]: Cunningham to Wavell, 9 October 1945, *TP*, VI, (London, 1976), p. 318-319.

Conclusion

The political developments during this period inexorably brought the politics of the province into the vortex of all-India politics. As the issue of Pakistan acquired centrality the status of the N-WFP in the new political configuration became a matter of controversy and strife. Though the N-WFP was a Muslim majority province the Muslim majority was not as yet sympathetic to the idea of Pakistan. Pakistan was not relevant to the aspirations of the Pashtoons. And yet they could not escape its logic, they resisted it, developing in the process the idea of an autonomous status for the Pashtoons, unfortunately ultimately without success. The factors responsible for the creation of communal hatred in the N-WFP and its repercussions on the provincial politics would be analysed further in the next chapter.

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[657]: For more details on the desertions from Congress and of the deserters joining the League see Shah, *Pir of Manki Sharif Syed Amin ul Hasanat Aur Unki Siyasi Jaddo Jehad* (Islamabad, 1989); Jinnah - Amin ul Hasanat Collection, Manki *Collection*; Files on Jamiat ul Asfia, Manki Collection; Shad, 'Deed', III, pp. 205-207; Jinnah-Qaiyum Correspondence, N-WFP-II, SHC, and GRs for September 1945, Mss. EUR., D. 670/16, IOLR; *Khyber Mail*, October 1945, and Talbot, *Provincial Politics*, pp. 24-25.

CHAPTER SIX

MOVING TOWARDS COMMUNALISATION OF POLITICS

During the elections of 1946, in the N-WFP, the contest was mainly between Congress and the ML. Congress had to prove that the N-WFP Muslims were supporting both it and the ideology of Indian nationalism, while the League was eager to show that the influence of the Khan Brothers and Congress had waned and that the Frontier Muslims wanted Pakistan. Through an examination of the policies and programmes of both the parties regarding the N-WFP, this chapter discusses the rapid changes that were taking place in all-India politics and their repercussions on the FP. The official visit of Nehru to the N-WFP tribal areas and the reactions of the various tribes will also come under discussion.

The Elections of 1946

The Labour Party won the British general election in July 1945, and formed a new government under Clement Attlee. It decided to give priority to the Indian problem. One of its first actions was to announce elections for the central and provincial legislatures.[658] The Indian elections were to lead India to more democratic government and pave the way for independence. The declaration by Whitehall, however, was not welcomed in the political circles of the sub-continent. Congress, as reported by the Viceroy, was indignant at the lack of consultation, and apparently wanted more time to organise itself.[659] The ML reiterated its position that no solution without Pakistan as a basis was acceptable.[660] But, in spite of their reservations, the politicians committed themselves to the election campaign so as to secure a role in the legislatures. Congress claimed that it stood for equal rights and opportunities for every citizen of India and for the unity of all communities and religious groups. It envisaged a free democratic state, with fundamental rights and liberties for all citizens guaranteed in the constitution. Moreover, it advocated for a federal constitution with autonomy for its constituent units, and demanded that the elections should be fought on the basis of an adult franchise. Congress further declared that it would fight elections principally on the issue of keeping India united.[661] The AIML approached the voters and asked them to cast their votes for the ML to bolster the cause of Islam and Pakistan.[662] Moreover, it had to prove that the ML was the only representative organisation of the Muslims of India.[663] Campaigning on the platform of Pakistan, the ML became the 'overwhelming favourite' of many Muslims as there was now no chance of diverting the Pakistan movement.[664] Many pro-League Muslims saw in Pakistan a chance of not only restoring the physical but the moral authority of Islam, which otherwise in the India of 1945 was 'shady'.[665]

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[658]: Broadcast of C. Attlee, London, 19 September 1945, *IAR*, 1945, II, p. 150.

In the N-WFP the elections were expected to be contested mainly between Congress and the AIML. There were some smaller organisations, such as the Khaksars, Ahrars,

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[659] : Moon , *The Viceroy's Journal*, p. 164.

[660] : J. Ahmad (ed.), *Some Recent Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah* (Lahore, 1947), II, pp. 386-389; Hodson, *The Great Divide*, p. 130.

[661] : Congress Election Manifesto, *IAR*, 1945, II, pp. 107-112.

[662] : J. Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, II, pp. 390-394.

[663] : *ibid*. pp. 396-397.

[664] : L. Ziring, *Pakistan: The Enigma of Political Development* (Kent, 1980), p. 70.

[665] : P. Hardy, *The Muslims of British India* (Cambridge, 1972), p. 240.

JUH and the Akalis, but their activities were mainly confined to particular localities in the province. It was a test case for the Congress to prove that the Muslims of the FP were under the banner of Congress and were struggling against British imperialism. It also had to disprove the claims of the ML that it was the sole representative organisation of the Indian Muslims, demanding a separate homeland for the Muslims of South Asia.[666] The ML, on the other hand, had to prove that the influence of the Khan Brothers and Congress had waned in the N-WFP, and that the Frontier Muslims were flocking to the League to safeguard their interests and eliminate Hindu domination in the sub-continent.

Confident of its success in the forthcoming general elections, the PML decided to contest all the 38 Muslim seats including 2 Landholders' seats, and spread its resources thinly. It was sure to win 24 of the 36 Muslim seats plus the 2 Landholders' seats, in a House of 50 — providing the big Khans were not allowed to contest on the League ticket.[667] In spite of the fact that the PML had gained the support of the Muslim intelligentsia, there was disunity among the party's provincial leadership.[668] According to Cunningham, the League's chances of success in the elections depended 'on the efforts their central command is now making to improve the local organisation'.[669]

The central organisation responded quickly. Jinnah appealed to Muslims to 'give up their personal quarrels' for the sake of the 'sacred and noble cause' of Pakistan. He urged them to 'take a solemn oath that you would not falter or fail to make all sacrifices for the establishment and achievement of our National goal of Pakistan'.[670] On 27 September, the League high command sent two of its prominent members, M. Ismail and Khaliquzzaman, to the N-WFP to formulate plans for the forthcoming general elections.[671] They toured the province and on their recommendations the Parliamentary Board of the AIML constituted three Boards for the province, namely: (i) the ML Selection Board, to chose candidates, (ii) an Election Board, for organising and making arrangements for the elections, and (iii) a Finance Board, to collect funds and maintain regular and proper accounts.[672] The League candidates were selected by the ML Selection Board. Though Mamdot was the president of the Board, the real powers were vested in Qaiyum, who played a crucial role in the distribution of party tickets. Interestingly, six of the Board's nine members were themselves nominated as League candidates.[673] The prominent Leaguers who were excluded from award of party tickets included Aurangzeb, Mian Zia-ud-Din, Taj Ali Khan, Bakht Jamal and Saadullah. They were accused of creating a rift in the League organisation; they appealed to the central organisation, but only Mian Zia-ud-Din succeeded in getting a ticket for himself.[674]

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[666] : Dr. Shah, *Muslim League and Frontier* (Kohat, 1946), p. 1.
[667] : CID Diaries, 1 August 1945, F. No. 754, SBP, p. 23; GR, 9 September 1945, L/P&J/5/222, NDC.
[668] : Ziarat Gul to Liaquat Ali, 30 August 1945, F. No. 344, AFM, pp. 98-99; Saadullah Khan to Jinnah, 1 September 1945, SHC, N-WFP-I, pp. 59-59(a).
[669] : GR, 9 October 1945, Mss. EUR., D. 670/16, IOLR.

Pakistan remained the focus of attention during the League's election campaign. Appeals were made to the Frontier Muslims to vote for the League candidates, as 'Every vote for a Muslim League candidate is a vote for Pakistan'.[675] The Muslims of the N-WFP were warned against Hindu domination in India and reminded of the treatment meted out to the Muslims in the Hindu majority provinces during Congress rule. The ML, according to the League orators was safeguarding the interests of the Mussalmans.

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[670] : Jinnah's Pakistan Day Message, 22 March 1945, F. No. 1020, QAP, pp. 2-3.

[671] : *Khyber Mail*, 28 September 1945.

[672] : Extracts from the proceedings of the Central Parliamentary Board's meeting held at Delhi, 8/9 October 1945, Nishtar, I, AFM, pp. 137-138; CID Diaries, 26 October 1945, F. No. 754, SBP, p. 141.

[673] : They included Qaiyum, Noor M. Khan, Kiyani, Jalal, Habibullah and Zakori. Jansson, *Pakhtunistan*, p. 114.

[674] : CID Diaries, 13 December 1945, F. No. 753, SBP, p. 307.

[675] : CID Diaries, F. No. 754, 778, 779, SBP; *Khyber Mail*, 26 October, 9 and 30 November 1945.

During the Frontier elections, Muslim students campaigned for League candidates and appealed to the Muslim electorate to cast their votes for Pakistan. On the occasion of their Frontier visit, Mamdot and Khaliquzzaman visited ICP. They appealed to Muslim students to support the League and to carry out its programme in the rural areas of the province.[676] Similar requests to the students of Aligarh Muslim University and other Muslim institutions had already been made by the League high command. Responding to the League appeals, fifty students from the N-WFP then studying at Aligarh resolved to work for League candidates in the elections. They proceeded to the N-WFP to participate in the election campaign, and were joined by more students from the same institution some days later.[677] ICP and a few other Muslim institutions in the province were closed, obviously to enable the students to canvass for the League candidates.[678] Activities by pro-League students were reported from Hazara, Charssadda, Nowshera, Bannu and other parts of the southern districts of the N-WFP. Muslims were exhorted to give their whole hearted support to the League candidates to enable them to achieve Pakistan.[679]

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[676]: CID Diaries, 4 October 1945, F. No. 754, SBP, p. 115.

[677]: Shah, *Muslim League*, pp. 101, 178-179; F. No. 238, AFM, pp. 26-29 and F. No. 753, SBP, p. 297.

[678]: Abdul Ghaffar Khan, *My Life and Struggle* (Delhi, 1969), pp. 174-175.

[679]: CID Diaries, F Nos. 754 (p. 779), 789 (pp. 211-215) and 797 (p. 289), SBP.

Jinnah's Second Frontier Visit (November 1945)

To give a further boost to the League election campaign, Jinnah himself visited the Frontier, arriving at Peshawar on 19 November.[680] During his stay, Jinnah participated in the ML Conference held on 20 November at Shahi Bagh, Peshawar. Jinnah in his address elaborated on the representative character of the AIML and its role as the main bulwark against the Congress onslaught. He regarded the forthcoming elections as the 'first step towards the achievement of Pakistan'. If they succeeded, half of their work would be done; if they failed they would be wiped out from the political scene.[681] Jinnah argued that the only solution of the Indian problem was to concede Pakistan. He made a fervent appeal for support for the League candidates in the elections. 'If you win', remarked Jinnah, 'you will make them believe that you want Pakistan and if not, you would be helping that false propaganda of the Congress'.[682] He warned the Congress leaders to keep their hands off the Muslims, and to treat them equally to make the country happy, prosperous and great.[683] Jinnah appealed to Frontier Muslims to vote for the League candidates as 'Every vote in favour of Muslim League candidate means Pakistan. Every vote against a Muslim League candidate means Hindu raj'.[684] Jinnah's visit gave a major stimulus to the election campaign of the League in the N-WFP. Cunningham also shared the opinion that Jinnah's visit had strengthened the ML cause and provided it with 'fairly effective propaganda'.[685]

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[680] : CID Diaries, 20 November 1945, F. No. 754, SBP, p. 225.

[681] : Jinnah's address at the ML Conference, Peshawar, 20 November 1945, F. No. 753, SBP, pp. 349-353;. *Khyber Mail*, 23 November and 14 December 1945.

[682] : Jinnah's address at Islamia College, Peshawar, 25 November 1945, F. No. 753, SBP, pp. 375-383.

[683] : CID Diaries, 26 November 1945, F. No. 753, SBP, pp. 385-389; Shah, *Muslim League*, pp. 84-85.

[684] : *Khyber Mail*, 30 November 1945.

The PML soon became overconfident of its success in the elections. The defections from the Congress gave an added strength to its poor organisation. The League tried its best to exploit the anti-Pashtoon feelings of the majority of the non-Pashtoon inhabitants of Hazara, Kohat and D.I.Khan, and its ascendancy became clear in the urban centres of the province. The successful visit of Jinnah in November 1945 convinced many people that the tide had turned in favour of the League. But such speculations proved short-lived for, soon the number of new adherents to the League cause decreased and the League had to confront the more organised Congress.

The FPCC, in contrast to the PML, nominated its candidates only for those seats where there was some chance of winning, and contested 27 out of 38 Muslim seats, mostly in the Pashtoon-dominated regions. Congress, however, contested all 12 minority seats. In some areas, where there was no chance of success for a Congress candidate, it supported non-Congress candidates.[686] The Congress candidates were chosen through a two-part procedure. First, the *Tappa* Congress Committee had to send the name of its nominees. The final decision then rested with a six-member executive sub-committee of the FPCC. A. K. Azad was the representative of the Congress high command, but he had very little say, and the distribution of tickets was mainly conducted by the above-mentioned Committee. In contrast to the League, there was little dissent on the distribution of tickets. Only four[687] unsuccessful candidates deserted the party.

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[685]: GR, 8 December 1945, Mss. EUR., D. 670/16, IOLR.

[686]: Rittenberg, 'Independence Movement', p. 323.

From the outset Abdul Ghaffar Khan was against taking part in the elections. He was not satisfied with the performance of the former Congress ministry and the MPs, and he accused the Congress legislators of giving attention to their personal interests rather than paying heed to the electors whom they were representing in the assembly.[688] Soon, however, he found himself compelled under 'special' circumstances to start canvassing for the Congress nominees. The active participation of large numbers of students from Aligarh, Calcutta and other parts of India, who thronged the FP to promote the League election campaign, and the covert support of the Frontier bureaucracy for the PML, changed his mind. One month before the elections, he decided to tour the province and urge the Pashtoons to vote for the Congress candidates.[689] He deemed it necessary not only for the prestige of Congress in the N-WFP, but also for the freedom of India.[690] The Congress workers urged the voters to support the Congress nominees and bolster the nationalist movement against British imperialism. To them the real issue was neither Pakistan nor United India but gaining freedom. Moreover, emphasis was given to social and economic questions — safeguards for and protection of the peasants and the ordinary KKs from the exploitation of the big Khans, who in most cases were the allies and the active supporters of the ML. The big Khans and those like-minded were charged with being more interested in the protection of their 'class' interests than in the advancement of the Pashtoon cause. The pro-League clergy was also accused of playing into the hands of the British government and its supporters. According to the KKs, religion was always being exploited by vested interests to deceive the simple-minded Pashtoon. The voters were warned of the activities of the 'sold-clerics' — the so-called religious leaders of the masses in the FP.[691]

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[687]: They included Paira Khan (D.I.Khan), Amir Alam Awan (Hazara), Mian M. Shah (Nowshera) and Ibrahim Khan (Peshawar). The former three ran as independent candidates in D.I.Khan, Hazara and Nowshera, without harming Congress but Ibrahim Khan's desertion from Congress and support of the League, defeated the Congress candidate in the Bara Mohmand Constituency. After the elections were over the above mentioned were accused of indiscipline and of opposing Congress nominees in the election, and were expelled from the organisation. *The Frontier Mail*, Peshawar, 10 March 1946.

[688]: 'Elections and the Khudai Khidmatgars', *Pakhtun*, 17 October 1945, pp. 4-5.

[689]: Abdul Ghaffar Khan, *My Life and Struggle*, pp. 174-145; CID Diaries, 29/30 December 1945, F. No. 41, SBP, p. 129.

[690]: Abdul Ghaffar Khan quoted in *Hindustan Times*, 23 January 1946.

One of the noteworthy feature of the elections of 1945-46 was that two parties which previously had played a crucial role in the Frontier politics had faded away. The HSNP now being confronted with the prospect of Pakistan, most of its members, including the party's provincial president Khanna, had joined Congress. The other party was the Independent Party. Nishtar, one of its prominent members, had joined the ML and other members, Khuda Bakhsh and Pir Bakhsh, were no more in active politics. Other smaller organisations, parties and groups such as the Ahrars, Khaksars, JUH and the Independents were also contesting the elections, but the real contest was virtually between Congress and the ML.

The franchise qualifications were the same as in 1937. Over 20% of the province's population was enfranchised as compared to the 10% in 1937. Few women were included in the voters' list.[692] Polling took place between 26 January and 14 February 1946. The Congress won an absolute majority, taking 30 seats out of 50; the ML was victorious in 17; JUH got 2 seats and the Akali got 1. The results of the Frontier elections showed that the Congress swept the minority seats, wining 11 out of a total of 12, losing only one seat to the Akali Dal in Peshawar. It captured 19 out of the 27 Muslim seats it contested, while of its allies, JUH won 2 more seats in D.I.Khan. The ML won the remaining 15 Muslim and 2 Landholder constituencies. The Congress did well in the Pashtoon-dominated areas of the province i.e., Peshawar, Kohat, Mardan, Bannu and Tank tehsil of the D.I.Khan, where it won in 16 constituencies out of the 19 contested. The ML, on the contrary, emerged as the representative of the province's Muslims urban middle class and of the non-Pashtoon Muslims, wining 8 of the 9 seats in Hazara and 2 of 3 urban seats and both landholder constituencies. However, out of 347,632 Muslim votes, the ML polled a 'slightly larger number' than Congress. 145,510 went to the ML; 143,571 to Congress. The remainder went to other contestants such as Ahrars, Khaksars, Jamiat and the Independents.[693] The remarkable victory of Congress in the FP was interpreted as a victory of nationalist forces over British imperialism. The Muslim majority province of the Frontier, according to Congress, had rejected the communal ideology of the ML and Pakistan, and had given its verdict in favour of Indian nationalism.[694]

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[691] : For more details of the Congress election campaign in the N-WFP see CID Files Nos. 74, 118, SBP; Rittenberg, 'Independence Movement', pp. 327-330; Gupta, *Freedom Struggle*, pp. 175-176; Jansson, *Pakhtunistan*, pp. 149-150.

[692] : GR, 24 December 1945, Mss. EUR., D. 670/16, IOLR; A. S. Dhawan, *Report on the General Elections to the Central Assembly (N-WFP Constituency) and to the N-WFP Legislative Assembly in 1945-46* (Peshawar, 1946), p. 10.

The Leaguers counted the undue interference of the Congress ministers during the polls as one of the main reasons for League's failures. The Congress ministers were accused of making false election promises for grants of money, sugar and other essential commodities, which were then scarce in the open market.[695] Congress was charged with approaching the electorates in the name of the KKs and not the Congress party as such. The personal influence of Abdul Ghaffar Khan was utilised for the success of Congress candidates in the provincial elections.[696] But the

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[693]: GR, 23 March 1946, Caroe Collection, Mss. EUR., F. 203/1, IOLR, p. 10.

[694]: 'Verdict of Frontier Muslims', Yusuf Meherally, *The Frontier Mail*, 10 March 1946; Statement of Hakim Abdul Jalil, CID Diaries, F. No. 41, SBP, p. 167.

[695]: CID Diaries, 21 March 1946, F. No. 151, SBP, p. 237.

[696]: *Khyber Mail*, 5 April 1946.

Governor of the N-WFP refuted all these charges.[697] 'The reasons for the League's failure', according to Cunningham, 'were not, I think, what many people said, that Congress Government was in office. Against this one has to put the strong League sympathies of most Muslim officials'. According to him the main reasons for the League's failures were lack of the organisation it desperately needed, internal feuds and factionalism in the party.[698] Then 'the Pakistan cry', Cunningham added, 'has little reality to the average Pathan villager, to whom the suggestion of Hindu domination is only laughable'.[699] Qaiyum was accused of undermining the influence of Nishtar, another nominee of the League for the dual constituency of Peshawar.[700] Qaiyum was also accused of wrongly distributing the League tickets,[701] ignoring deserving party workers and giving them to his own loyal supporters in the League.[702]

The outcome of the Frontier elections was a test case for the ideological struggle of Congress and the ML. It can be rightly argued that the Pashtoon's ethnic loyalties proved stronger than their religious identity during the elections. The ML tried its best to provoke the feelings of the Muslims of the N-WFP by repeating stories of repression and atrocities committed on Muslims in Hindu majority provinces during Congress rule, but the Pashtoons, at least for the time being, cared little about those stories. By pleading the cause of Pashtoon nationalism, the provincial Congress for the time being succeeded in hindering the entrance of the ML's ideas on separatism. The Frontier Congress, by getting a 'landslide victory' in the elections, disproved the claims of Jinnah that the influence of the Khan Brothers and Congress had waned in the province. Furthermore, it was a real setback for the AIML, who had earlier claimed that the League was the sole representative organisation of the Muslims in the sub-continent.

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[697] : When the Governor was informed by some prominent Leaguers of Qazi Ataullah's undue interference in the elections and of his forcing of subordinate officials to enter bogus names in the electoral list, Cunningham asked them to produce even one name entered 'in this way, and they have so far failed to do so. Until they do', remarked Cunningham, 'I remain sceptical'. GR, 9 November 1945, Mss. EUR., D. 670/16, IOLR.

[698] : Summary of Events in N-WFP 1937-46, 17 March 1946, Mss. EUR., D. 670/17, IOLR, p. 44.

[699] : Cunningham to Wavell, 27 February 1946, *TP*, VI, pp. 1085-86.

[700] : Sardar Bahadur to Jinnah, 27 November 1945, F. No. N-WFP-I, SHC pp. 11-11(c); Inayat Kibrya to Jinnah, 10 January 1946, F. No. N-WFP-II, SHC, p. 2.

[701] : Asad-ul-Haq, advocate, a prominent Leaguer regarded it as 'perfect farce'. 'Where Nawabs were available', he remarked, 'Khan Bahadurs were rejected, where Khan Bahadurs were to be found, Khan Sahibs were ignored, where Khan Sahibs were the applicants, Khans had no chance and in the presence of the Khans, commoners were of course a dirty lot!'. Asad-ul-Haq to Jinnah, 20 December 1945, SHC, F. No. N-WFP-I, pp. 90-90(e).

[702] : Mian Zia-ud-Din to Liaquat Ali, 6 June 1946, F. No. 366, AFM, pp. 13(A)-13(d).

The Third Congress Ministry

On 7 March 1946, Khan Sahib accepted the Governor's invitation to form a new ministry. Abdul Ghaffar Khan was consulted before the ministers took oath of office. He consented and willingly offered his co-operation, provided the ministers promised to serve selflessly the poor majority of the population. The Congress parliamentarians agreed to follow the guidelines of the KK organisation, [703] and the Congress ministers took office on 9 March.[704] Another important change during the first week of March was the arrival of Sir Olaf Caroe as the new Governor of the N-WFP, in place of Cunningham, on 2 March.[705]

The first act of the third Congress ministry was the abolition of *Tora* — a particular tax which the peasants and the artisans had to pay to landholders to hold a wedding.[706] Then certain other anti-Khan measures, like the abolition of *lambardari* were introduced.[707] There were discussions on the language issue — Congress workers insisted on Pashto while Leaguers pressed for Urdu. Corruption charges against the Congress ministers were levelled by the opposition MLAs. The Leaguers utilised every measure which they considered appropriate to label the Provincial Congress as Hindu agents working for the establishment of Hindu Raj. Congress, on the other hand, championed the cause of Pashtoon nationalism and of the peasants, criticising the big Khans, the majority of whom were in the PML, for helping the British to prolong their stay in the sub-continent. Furthermore, the League was accused of creating communalism in the province, thus encouraging anti-social elements to play with the lives and properties of the N-WFP's minorities.

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[703] : *Pakhtun*, 9 March 1946, pp. 5-6.

[704] : It included Khan Sahib as Chief Minister and in charge of Law and Order, Parliamentary Affairs and Public Works; Qazi Ataullah as Minister of Revenue, Supplies, Medical and Jails; Yahya Jan as Minister of Education and Local-Self Government and Khanna as the Minister of Finance, Information, Agriculture and Industries. *The Frontier Mail*, 10 March 1946; *Madina*, 13 March 1946. CID Diaries, 7 March 1947, F. No. 41, SBP, p. 181.

[705] : Cunningham to Wavell, [?], Mss. EUR., D. 670/7, IOLR, p. 14.

[706] : Speeches of Abdul Aziz Khan, M. Akbar Khan, Qazi Ataullah, M. Abbas Khan, M. Zaman Khan, Latif Zakori, Jalal-ud-Din, Munfaatullah Khan, 13 March 1946, *PLAD*, vol. XI, No. 14, pp. 780-801.

Also significant was the introduction and passage of the Peshawar University Bill, introduced by Yahya Jan, the Education Minister, on 21 March 1947. Since its separation from the Punjab in 1901, the N-WFP had had no university of its own and Frontier educational institutions were affiliated to the Punjab University. N-WFP students often found it difficult to gain admission to Punjab's higher educational institutions. Yahya Jan announced the establishment of a university at Peshawar at an estimated cost of Rs. 20 to 30 lakhs with a recurring expenditure of Rs. 8 to 10 lakhs annually.[708]

The Governor was apprehensive about his ministers, and particularly with the way the Chief Minister was criticising the bureaucracy publicly. Certain acts of Khan Sahib were regarded as a 'blow to the prestige of the Service', and the Governor was bent upon protecting his subordinates from open public criticism.[709] Both Congress ministers and the opposition members remained busy in levelling charges and counter-charges against one another. None of this rhetoric was new, nor did it affect the overall political life of the province, for legislative politics were beginning to have less importance than the rapid changes developing on the all-India scene.

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[707] : The Governor opposed the abolition of lambardari on the grounds that he regarded them as the 'root of the administration in the rural areas'. The abolition would certainly 'attract my special responsibility for peace and tranquillity', remarked Caroe, 'for on the lambardars hinges the police administration and the land revenue'. GR, 23 March 1946, F. 203/1, IOLR, p. 11; For more details see Gupta, *Freedom Struggle*, pp. 180-191.

[708] : For more details see debate on Peshawar University Bill, 21 March 1947, *PLAD*, vol. XIV, Nos. 1-10, pp. 320-330; *C&MG*, 30 March 1947.

Cabinet Mission Plan and the Formation of an Interim Government

The general elections had been fought on the theme of whether India should remain united or be partitioned between Hindus and Muslims. But the results were contradictory. True to its claims, the AIML swept the polls in the CLA Muslim seats, and the Congress became the representative of the Hindu majority. On the provincial level, however, the situation remained ambiguous. Of the provinces the League claimed for Pakistan, in Assam and the N-WFP the Congress won a clear majority and formed its own governments. In the Punjab, the League failed to muster the support of the majority of assembly members to its side and a Congress-Sikh-Unionist coalition ministry under Khizar Hayat was formed. However, in Bengal the League won a landslide victory, and formed a ministry under H. S. Suhrawardy. In Sind, the League also formed a ministry but mainly depended on the support of Europeans. In the Hindu majority provinces, the ML got a majority of the Muslim seats: in the UP 54 out of 66 seats; in Bihar 34 out of 40; in Orissa all 4; in Madras all 29; in CP 13 out of 14 and in Bombay all the 30 seats.

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[709]: GR, 9 March 1946, p. 7; Caroe to Wavell, 23 April 1946, p. 17 and Caroe to Wavell, 8 May 1946, pp. 19-20, Mss. EUR., F. 203/1, IOLR; Jansson, *Pakhtunistan*, p. 154-155.

Soon after the election results were made public, Attlee announced in the House of Commons on 19 February, the sending of a team of three Cabinet Ministers to India to seek an agreement on the principles and procedures to be followed in framing the future constitution. The members of the Mission were Lord Pethick-Lawrence (Secretary of State for India), Sir S. Cripps (President of the Board of Trade) and A. V. Alexander (First Lord of the Admiralty).[710] The Mission members arrived in Delhi on 24 March and started negotiations with the important political organisations. As the proclaimed objectives of the Congress and the League were diametrically opposite, the Mission's task of bringing them to a negotiating table was extremely difficult. Congress stood for a united India, while the League wanted partition.[711] The discussions with the political parties of India concluded without reaching any agreement. Thereupon it was decided by the members of the Mission to elaborate their own proposals, which they considered as the best arrangement for providing a new constitution for an independent India.[712]

On 16 May, the members issued a statement concerning the future constitution of India and the formation of an interim government. It called for a three-tiered de-centralised government under the proposed arrangements, the Central government would deal with foreign affairs, defence and communications. All the remaining powers were vested in the provinces, which were to merge into groups. The proposed groups were: Section A: Madras, Bombay, UP, CP, Bihar and Orissa; Section B: Punjab, N-WFP and Sind; Section C: Bengal and Assam. The new arrangements would be reconsidered initially after ten years and at ten yearly intervals thereafter.

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[710]: Pethick-Lawrence to Wavell, 19 February 1945, *TP*, VI, pp. 1010-1011; *IAR*, 1946, I, pp. 129-132.

[711]: 'Note by Major Wyatt', 28 March 1946, *TP*, VII, pp. 22-24; 'Memorandum by Major W. Wyatt', 29 March 1946, *ibid.*, pp. 54-55. More details can be seen on pp. 90-93, 110-124.

[712]: 'Record of Seventh Meeting of Second simla Conference', 12 May 1946, *TP*, VII, (London, 1977), pp. 525-526. Also see *ibid*,. pp. 528-537; P. Moon, *Divide and Quit* (London, 1961), p. 47.

Then there would be a CA whose task would include the implementation of the above plan. The composition of the proposed CA reflected party strength in the provincial legislatures and also included representatives of the Princely States and the Chief Commisioner's provinces.[713]

The scheme aroused mixed feelings in the political circles of the country. Congress was in no mood to reconcile itself to partition; while the ML showed its willingness to accept the plan. The AIML expressed its hopes that 'it would ultimately result in the establishment of a complete Pakistan'.[714] Congress showed concern at the grouping system and reiterated its earlier demand for the complete independence of India. However, they were willing to accept the proposals for an interim government. 'Hopes rose high', commented Moon, 'but were dashed by the last-minute intervention of Gandhi'. Gandhi insisted on the inclusion of a nationalist Muslim in the interim government, which was unacceptable to Jinnah.[715]

The AIML had accepted earlier the statement of 16 May, as it saw the seeds of Pakistan in the compulsory grouping of six Muslim majority provinces in Section B and C[716] but rejected the latest developments in regard to the formation of an interim government: no parity, liberty for Congress to nominate a Muslim, equity rather than equality in portfolios, and no communal vote. After withdrawing its acceptance of the Plan, the AIML expressed its indignation and protested at the formation of an interim central government without its consent. The League WC was authorised to draw up a plan for 'Direct Action' against the inclusion of Congress in the interim government.

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[713]: Cabinet Mission Statement, 16 May 1946, *TP*, VII, pp. 582-591; *IAR*, 1946, I, pp. 144-150; F. No. 2, Nishtar Collection, AFM, pp. 42-49.

[714]: J. Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, II, pp. 521-523; Moon, *Divide and Quit*, p. 51.

[715]: Moon, *The Viceroy's Journal*, pp. 229-317. For more details see Sitaramayya, *History*, II, pp. 785-804; Hodson, *The Great Divide*, pp. 134-166.

[716]: Pirzada, *Foundations*, II, pp. 538-539.

Jinnah was critical of the Cabinet Mission members, who according to him had 'played into the hands of Congress'.[717] He bluntly declared: 'Never have we in the whole history of the League done anything, except by constitutional methods and by constitutionalism. But now we are obliged and forced into this position. This day we bid good-bye to constitutional methods'.[718] Liaquat urged the Muslims to 'resort to Direct Action to achieve Pakistan...'.[719] 16 August was fixed as the 'Direct Action Day'. On this day protest demonstrations were organised on a large scale throughout the country. In Bengal, the League ministry declared 16 August to be a public holiday. The day started in Calcutta with rioting, loot, murder and arson, which lasted from 16 to 20 August, resulting in some 20,000 people being killed or seriously injured. The Muslims, despite their provocation of the carnage, were the worst victims, as they were in a minority there. The authorities were unable to control the frenzy. The riots spread to East Bengal. In Noahkali more than two hundred Hindus were massacred. The news of the atrocities committed in Noahkali reached Bihar, where, in revenge, serious rioting broke out. The Muslims suffered terribly, the number of dead men, women and children being between five and eight thousand. There were still more riots in UP. The total number of victims ranged between ten and twenty thousand.[720]

On 24 August, while the affected cities were 'still clearing up the mess, the whiffs of putrefaction issued from hitherto unfound bodies shoved down drains or trapped in burnt-out houses',[721] the composition of the interim government was announced. The intended ministers, it was also announced, had to take the oath on 2 September. The ministers included six Hindus, three Muslims, a Sikh, a Parsee and an Indian Christian. For the time being the ML was kept away from participating in the interim government. Two more Muslim seats were held vacant.[722] Jinnah regarded it as the Viceroy's 'double betrayal in going back on his solemn word and in ignoring and by-passing the Muslim League'.[723] Meanwhile the Viceroy visited Calcutta, and after seeing the horrors at Calcutta, he became convinced that he should secure the co-operation of the ML in the interim government.[724] After the great loss of life and property, the Viceroy invited Jinnah for talks since he realised that no solution of the ensuing problems could be possible without the League's participation in the interim government. Jinnah, also considered it fatal to the interests of the Mussalmans to leave the entire field of administration to Congress, and accepted the invitation. On 26 October, the League joined the interim government, nominating Liaquat Ali, I. I. Chundrigar, Nishtar, J. N. Mandal and Ghazanfar Ali to be included in the Cabinet.[725]

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[717] : J. Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, II, pp. 407-419.
[718] : *ibid.*
[719] : Pirzada, *Foundations*, II, p. 558; J. Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, II, p. 536.
[720] : Wavell to Pethick-Lawrence, 22 November 1946, *TP*, IX, (London, 1980), p. 139; F. Tuker, *While Memory Serves* (London, 1950), pp. 152-190; M. D. Wainwright, 'Keeping Peace in India, 1946-47: The Role of Lieut. General Sir Francis Tuker in Eastern Command', Philips and Wainwright (eds.), *The Partition of India* (London, 1970), pp. 127-147.
[721] : I. Stephen, *Pakistan* (London, 1963), pp. 105-107.

One of the main issues during the Cabinet Mission deliberations remained the procedural question involving the N-WFP and Assam. From the very beginning, Congress insisted on voluntary grouping, while the League demanded that the grouping should be compulsory. As regards the N-WFP, the provincial Congress leaders were opposed to the compulsory grouping for various reasons. One of the main reasons was that compulsory grouping negated the electoral victory which they recently had won, and pushed them against their wishes to remain forever under the domination of the Punjab, about which they had never previously thought even for a moment. In fact the Frontier Congress leaders were 'vague' about the future of their province.[726] Till then they had been following Congress and reiterating the demand to keep India united, though they had successfully retained their separate identity. The Frontier Congressmen demanded maximum provincial autonomy within the Indian context, so that the Pashtoon should themselves control their own affairs after independence. The provincial Congress sought the merger of the tribal areas with the settled districts of the N-WFP, as the inhabitants of both places belonged to a common ethnic group and kept aloof from the rest of the Pashtoons.

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[722]: The ministers were: Nehru, Patel, Prasad, Rajagopalachari, Sarat C. Bose, Jagjivan Ram, Asaf Ali, Syed Ali Zaheer, Shafaat Ahmad Khan, Baldev Singh, C. H. Bhaba and J. Mathai. *IAR*, 1946, II, p. 19.

[723]: J. Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, II, pp. 425-428.

[724]: Hodson, *The Great Divide*, pp. 168-169.

[725]: J. Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, II, p. 469; Moon, *The Viceroy's Journal*, pp. 362-365.

As soon as the Cabinet Mission views regarding the grouping of provinces were known, Abdul Ghaffar Khan opposed compulsory grouping. He considered it compulsion by the British government to join the Punjab. At the same time, he had no doubts in his mind that the KKs would never join the Hindu majority provinces hundreds of miles away. The Frontier Congress Muslims showed their willingness to join Group B, provided Punjab gave them assurances of better treatment.[727] They demanded discussion with the Punjab on points of mutual understanding. The other alternative, according to Abdul Ghaffar Khan, was to 'leave them alone: we are happy in framing our own destiny by ourselves'.[728] The main concern of the provincial

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[726]: 'Note of Meeting between Cabinet Delegation, Wavell and Dr. Khan Sahib', 1 April 1946, *TP*, VII, pp. 74-76. Khan Sahib, the Frontier Premier, was the first Indian leader interviewed by the Mission members. He was invited on 1 April and was asked about his views. He spoke on the issue, but according to the Viceroy, 'He had obviously not really thought out the problems of Pakistan and refused to consider its possibility', Wavell further remarked that 'Nor had he considered what Hindu domination at the Centre might entail. He talked in fact entirely from the Provincial angle, as if the Pathans were a separate nation living in Pathanistan'. Moon, *The Viceroy's Journal*, pp. 232-233.

[727]: Caroe to Wavell, 23 July 1946, Mss. EUR., F. 203/1, IOLR, p. 36.

[728]: Abdul Ghaffar Khan on compulsory grouping under Cabinet Mission Plan, *Pakhtun*, 17 July 1946, pp. 6-8; also see 9 June , pp. 4-9 and 9 September 1946, p. 17.

Congress leaders seemed to be the protection of Pashtoon identity at any cost.[729]

The PML interpreted the statements of the Congress leader in its own way. It exploited the Muslim character of the FP and criticised Abdul Ghaffar Khan and other prominent Congress leaders. Abdul Ghaffar Khan was accused of inciting the Muslims to join hands with the Hindus, ignoring their Muslim identity. The Leaguers asserted that in view of the position of N-WFP, it could not stand alone and had to join some group.[730] Qaiyum accused Abdul Ghaffar Khan of

> chanting a hymn of hate by rousing Pathans against the domination of Punjabi Muslims....He conveniently forgets that if there is a danger of 16 million Punjabi Muslims dominating the six million Pathans in the tribal areas, the N-WFP and Baluchistan, the danger of domination by the Hindu group is much more real as their population is something like 100 times the population of this province....[731]

The League leaders reiterated that the N-WFP would never join the proposed 'Akhand Hindustan' and that the Frontier Muslims would fight to the last for preserving the integrity of Pakistan.[732]

The charges and counter-charges went on for a long time. The Leaguers continued to criticise the Frontier Congress ministry and its leaders. The KKs were, however, prevented by their leaders from responding to the League charges and told not to pay any heed to the 'false propaganda' of the ML. Abdul Ghaffar Khan reiterated that the main objectives of their organisation were to do constructive work such as the eradication of social evils and a growing factionalism in Pashtoon society, and to avoid any direct confrontation with the ML, as the KK movement was for peace and non-violence.[733] So, for the time being, Abdul Ghaffar Khan remained busy in his two-fold work: urging the Pashtoon to maintain unity; and searching for a place worthy of respect for themselves in the future political shape of the sub-continent.

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[729] : Allah Nawaz Khan, Speaker of the provincial assembly argued:
'Pathans and Punjabis are two major nations by any definition or test of a nation and the idea and the very thought of grouping the N-WFP with the Punjabis is revolting to the Pathan mind. We are a nation of three million, and what is more, we, the Frontier Pathans, are a body of people with our own distinctive culture, civilisation, language, literature, art and architecture, names and nomenclature and sense of values and proportion, legal and moral codes, customs and calendar, history and traditions, and aptitudes and ambitions. In short, we have our own distinctive outlook on life and by all canons of international law a Pathan is quite separate from a Punjabi'. Rittenberg, 'Independence Movement', p. 337.

[730] : Handbill issued by Abdul Hamid, president ML, Peshawar (Khalil Branch), nd, F. No. 366, AFM, p. 16; More details can be seen in CID Diaries during May/June 1946, F. No. 779, SBP, pp. 245, 283-291,321.

[731] : *Khyber Mail*, 14 June 1946; *C&MG*, 16 June 1946.

[732] : *Khyber Mail*, 13 December 1946; *Dawn*, 26 December 1946.

Communal Strife

Following the directives of the ML high command, a 'Committee of Action' with Pir of Manki as its leader was constituted to lead the 'Direct Action Day' campaign in the N-WFP. The Day was observed with *hartals* and peaceful demonstrations throughout the province.[734] The outbreak of communal violence in various parts of India changed the outlook of the majority of the pro-League Muslims in the FP. Earlier, they were thinking in terms of Pashtoon first and Muslim afterwards, but Hindu-Muslim riots led them to think otherwise. With every new outbreak of violence and rioting in the country, their sense of belonging to a greater Muslim community become stronger, and their minds changed to considering themselves as Muslims first and afterwards Pashtoon. The League had waited for such an opportunity for a long time and exploited it to its advantage. The PML ensured that the news of the outburst of communal violence and atrocities against Muslims were publicised in the province at the highest possible pitch. While on an all-India level the massacres of 1946 destroyed the last hopes for communal harmony and of any peaceful political settlement which

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[733] : Abdul Ghaffar Khan on ML Propaganda, *Pakhtun*, 17 July 1946, pp. 3-4.
[734] : Jansson, *Pakhtunistan*, p. 177.

avoided partition, in the N-WFP they provided the League with its best weapon for winning over the sympathies of a large segment of the Muslims. It achieved within months successes which otherwise it could not have thought of achieving in years. Public opinion changed in favour of the League, and its demand for a separate homeland for Muslims. Once the rioting started, the conflict between the Pashtoons' religious and political loyalties became acute and they adapted themselves to the larger framework of Muslim identity.[735]

The PML did its best to propagate details of the atrocities committed in Bombay, where a large number of Pashtoon transient labourers were residing. Teams were sent to investigate the details of massacres in the riot-affected areas and brought back accounts of rape, murder, torture, destruction of mosques, and desecration of the Holy Quran. Three medical missions, consisting of doctors, volunteers and party workers, were sent to help the Muslims in that great hour of suffering. A majority of the Frontier Muslims resented the atrocities against Muslims in the riot-affected areas. They condemned the slaughter of the Mussalmans in various parts of the sub-continent, and requested Jinnah to take special measures to stop it.[736] The pitiable condition and the plight of riot-affected Muslims was deplored. Jinnah was urged to request the government to stop the slaughter of the Muslims at the hands of 'Hindu Congress', and to 'afford adequate protection to Muslims and bring the offenders to jail and dismiss the incompetent Ministers; otherwise the responsibility will be entirely yours' if the Muslims also were to lose control, as these things could no longer be tolerated.[737]

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[735]: *Khyber Mail*, 3 jan 1947; Rittenberg, 'Independence Movement',p. 345.

[736]: Muslim Leaguers of Nowshera to Jinnah, 9 November 1946, F. No. N-WFP-II, SHC, p. 75; *Khyber Mail*, 8 November 1946.

[737]: Qudratullah Khan to Jinnah, 8 November 1946, F. No. N-WFP-II, SHC, p. 73; Shah, *Muslim League*, pp. 108-110; *Khyber Mail*, 20 December 1946.

Nehru's Frontier Visit (October 1946)

In the midst of the communal frenzy, Nehru, in charge of External Affairs and the Commonwealth Relations in the interim government, decided to visit the N-WFP tribes in his official capacity to apprise himself of the deplorable condition of the tribesmen. Moreover, according to Nehru, such a visit was essential to enlist support of 'some properly elected representatives' of the tribes to join the intended Advisory Committee on the tribal affairs of the CA.[738] The provincial Congress approved the visit, obviously because they wanted to use Nehru's official position to gain access to the tribal areas, from which they had been barred by the permanent administration.

But there were other motives also behind it. Azad has mentioned that Nehru was receiving official reports that a large segment of the Muslims in the N-WFP had turned against the Khan Brothers and Congress. Defectors from Congress were joining the League in large numbers. The authorities were of the view that a change had taken place and the Frontier was divided equally between the Congress and the ML. Nehru, did not believe this, and regarded it as a fabrication by British officials. In order to acquaint himself with the latest intelligence on the Frontier, Nehru decided to visit the province personally.[739] The trip aroused mixed feelings elsewhere in the country. Two prominent Congress leaders, Azad and Patel, opposed the visit. Keeping in view the latest communal situation, such a trip, according to them, might cause harm to party interests and give an extra advantage to the ML in the N-WFP.[740] On 28 September, Caroe was informed of the intended visit of Nehru in October for a week and that he would like to be accompanied by the Khan Brothers and some senior British officials. The Governor was asked to prepare a tentative programme for the visit.[741] Caroe felt disturbed over the proposed visit of Nehru to the tribal areas[742]. He advised the Viceroy of the undesirability of the visit and regarded it as a 'deliberate partisan approach to the tribal problem at a most critical juncture'. Caroe warned Wavell that, 'If this plan is carried out at this moment and before the League comes to terms I am convinced that serious tribal reactions must be expected and that any hope of securing coalition is likely to be wrecked'.[743] Abell, the Private Secretary of the Viceroy, took it to be 'an exaggerated view' on the part of the Frontier Governor. He suggested that it would be very awkward that the Foreign Member should be prevented from visiting the tribal areas.[744] Wavell informed Caroe of the firm intention of Nehru to visit the tribal areas of the Frontier and advised him to suggest to Nehru that he should confine his visit to Peshawar.[745]

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[738] : *Pakhtun*, 24 October 1946, p. 7; Nehru to Khan Sahib, 14 September 1946, *SWJN*, 1, Second Series, (Delhi, 1984), pp. 301-302.

[739] : Azad, *India Wins Freedom*, p. 169.

[740] : Moon, *The Viceroy's Journal*, p. 361; Azad, *India Wins Freedom*, pp. 169-170.

Caroe went to Delhi to dissuade Nehru from visiting the Frontier because his visit would result in the weakening of the Congress ministry, as 'the flags of Islam would be unfurled'. If he wanted a United India, he 'should play a waiting role'. But Nehru remained adamant.[746] The Viceroy advised Nehru to take a Muslim member of the Cabinet with him 'to show a united front',[747] but he politely declined the offer and remained firm on taking only the Frontier Congress leaders with him.

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[741] : Foreign Department Telegram to Caroe, 28 September 1946, *TP,* VIII, (London, 1979), p. 626.

[742] : Nehru to Khan Sahib, 10 October 1946, *SWJN,* 1, pp. 306-307.

[743] : Caroe to Wavell, 29 September 1946, *TP*, VIII, p. 626.

[744] : Minutes by Abell and Wavell, 30 September 1946, *TP*, VIII, p. 627.

[745] : Wavell to Caroe, 30 September 1946, *TP*, VIII, p. 627; Wavell to Pethick-Lawrence, 1 October 1946, *TP*, VIII, p. 637.

[746] : Caroe to Wavell, 11 October 1946, Mss. EUR., F. 203/1, IOLR, p. 52.

[747] : Wavell to P. Lawrence, 9 October 1946, *TP*, VIII, p. 685.

Caroe, when became sure of Nehru's visit, requested the Viceroy to ask Jinnah to prevent the League followers in the N-WFP from staging hostile demonstrations on the eve of Nehru's visit.[748] The Viceroy acted promptly and asked Jinnah that, though the League was looking at Nehru's Frontier visit with contempt and displeasure, in the larger interests of the coalition government in which League was shortly to be participating, the PML should desist from organising anti-Nehru demonstrations.[749] Jinnah replied that as 'the people of the Frontier look upon Pandit Nehru's visit with disfavour', it would be advisable if it could be postponed to a later date. He informed the Viceroy that the central organisation of the League had issued no instructions to stage hostile demonstrations on the eve of Nehru's Frontier visit.[750] However, contrary to his assurances to the Viceroy, it is evident from the Jinnah-Pir of Manki correspondence that Jinnah had approved such demonstrations.[751]

While the KKs and the provincial Congress welcomed the visit, the PML expressed its resentment concerning the proposed visit of Nehru to the tribal areas. It was alleged that Nehru was coming to the Frontier to bring the tribesmen under Congress domination. The PML resolved to stage a demonstration on his arrival at Peshawar and to receive him with black flags.[752] Nehru was warned by the PML and pro-League tribes, not to visit the Frontier against the wishes of the people. If he insisted, the responsibility for the disturbances which might take place would rest on him. Confidence was expressed in the leadership of Jinnah, and assurances were given to the League high command that the Muslims of the FP and of the tribal territory were ready to obey their orders.[753] At that stage, some prominent League leaders, including the Pir of Manki and Mian Zia-ud-Din, opposed the demonstrations to be staged on that occasion, on the grounds that they might harm the League organisation in the FP, but they were outvoted.[754] The Pir of Manki changed his mind concerning the intended step by the PML, swayed by the popular demand of his party. He started a tour of the adjacent tribal territory, visited Malakand and Khyber Agencies and the Mohmands and there exhorted a large number of his disciples and other tribesmen to oppose with their full strength the proposed visit. Significantly, ex-Congress workers were in the forefront of organising all these demonstrations. They included Qaiyum, Arbab Ghafoor, Mian Abdullah Shah and Ibrahim Khan, who had recently defected from Congress and had joined the League. The Leaguers, who had been waiting for a long time, decided to stage a hostile demonstration at Peshawar airport.

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[748]: Caroe to Wavell, 15 October 1946, *TP*, VIII, p. 730.
[749]: Wavell to Jinnah, 15 October 1946, *TP*, VIII, p. 731.
[750]: Jinnah to Wavell, 15 October 1946, *TP*, VIII, p. 737.
[751]: Pir of Manki to Jinnah, 1 November 1946, Shah, 'The Making of Pakistan and the N-WFP: Quaid-i-Azam-Pir of Manki Sharif Unpublished Correspondence: November 1945-November 1946', *Pakistan Journal of History and Culture,* VII, 2, July-December 1986, pp. 41-59.
[752]: CID Diaries, 2 October 1946, F. No. 756, SBP, p. 117.

Nehru commenced his visit on 16 October. On his emergence from the plane, the Leaguers, about 5000 in number, most of whom were armed with long lances, spears and staves, started shouting anti-Nehru and anti-Congress slogans. The situation became so 'ugly' that Nehru had to be slipped out by a back way. The reception became an entirely one sided affair because the Frontier Congress, in order to avoid any clash with the ML, had refrained from receiving him in a befitting manner at the airport.[755] Abdul Ghaffar Khan accused the Political Department of engineering the demonstration with the connivance of the ML. 'All that you saw in this morning', he remarked, 'and anything else that you may see when Pandit Nehru goes into the tribal area and all that you have been hearing during the past few days, is engineered and manoeuvred by the Political Department'. Elaborating on the purposes behind these manoeuvring, Abdul Ghaffar Khan added that, as the Political Department and the Frontier Governor had tried their best and failed to dissuade Nehru from undertaking a visit to the tribal areas, they wished to teach Nehru a lesson for disobeying their orders.[756]

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[753]: CID Diaries, F. Nos. 758, 815, SBP, pp. 17, 95; Resolutions sent to Jinnah, N-WFP-II, SHC, p. 46.

[754]: Mian Zia-ud-Din to Nishtar, 20 October 1946, AFM, Nishtar vol. II, pp. 86-87; Pir of Manki to Committee of Demonstration, PML, nd, and Committee of Demonstration to Pir of Manki, nd, Manki Collection quoted in Shah, *Muslim League*, pp. 115-116.

[755]: *The Times*, London, 17 October 1946; CID Diaries, 16 and 17 October 1946, F. No. 758, SBP, p. 384; Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan*, p. 384. When asked to comment on why a rally of KKs was not arranged for Nehru's welcome at the airport, Abdul Ghaffar Khan replied that Nehru was visiting the Frontier in his official capacity as a Member of External Affairs and, therefore, the Agent to the Governor-General (Sir Olaf Caroe) was responsible for making arrangements for his reception. He left the official agencies free to organise the sort of reception they wanted to give him. He further added that he was responsible only for his programme of 21 October, when Nehru would be visiting Sardaryab Markaz. 'I invite you all', concluded

Next day, Nehru accompanied by the Khan Brothers and Creighton, the Secretary for External Affairs, flew to Miranshah. The Waziri tribal Jirga asked Nehru about his mission to Waziristan. They made it clear that the Waziris would never tolerate any interference with their independence. They recognised neither Congress nor the League but wanted to be left alone to lead their own lives as they thought best.[757] The tribesmen exchanged some hot words with Khan Sahib and left the meeting without hearing Nehru. From Miranshah the party flew to Razmak and stayed there for a night. Next morning, the 'hand-picked' Maliks invited for the occasion by the Political Agent to meet Nehru were introduced to him. The Maliks reiterated their rhetoric of independence and showed indignation at the atrocities committed on the Muslims in the Hindu dominated areas.[758] The Jirga representatives, prominent amongst whom were K.B. Mehr Dil, Malik Khaisor, Malik Khandan, and Shah Pasand, refused to be

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Abdul Ghaffar Khan, 'to see the reception we Pathans can give him there'. Abdul Ghaffar Khan's Press Conference at Peshawar, 16 October 1946, Tendulkar Papers, S. No. 4, NMML, p. 1404.

[756]: Abdul Ghaffar Khan's press conference at Peshawar, 16 October 1946, *Hindustan Times*, 18 October 1946. For full details see S. No. 4, *Tendulkar*, NMML, pp. 1384-1529.

[757]: Interviews with Maulana Hashim, Bannu, 29 October 1994; Amir Niaz Ali Khan, Haider Khel, 30 October 1994.

[758]: Record of meeting of Nehru with the tribals at Razmak, S. No. 1, Tendulkar, NMML.

ruled by an outsider.[759] However, all the Mahsuds were not hostile to Nehru and Congress. While he was at Razmak, Nehru received an invitation from Musa Khan, Shahzada Fazal Din, Parmana Khan, Dilbaz Khan, Akhti Khan and other noted anti-government Mahsuds to see them separately at Shkar Kot, near Makin, five miles away from Razmak. The political authorities heard of the pro-Congress tribal gathering, a majority of which were the Shabi Khels, who were there to express their gratitude to Nehru for his stopping of the bombing raids on the Shabi Khels.[760] The authorities did not allow Nehru to go outside the Razmak Cantonment and meet the tribesmen, as the security arrangements outside the cantonment were 'insufficient'.[761] From Razmak they came back to Miranshah and from there flew to Wana. The Ahmadzai Wazir meted out the same treatment to Nehru as had faced him in Miranshah and Razmak. There was a hostile demonstration and the waving of black flags, prepared especially for the occasion. Without addressing the Ahmadzais, Nehru had to go to Tank.[762] At Tank, there was a fracas between the local Leaguers and the Congress workers, which resulted in minor injuries on both sides. From Tank the party paid an impromptu visit to Jandola. Surprisingly, they were warmly received by the Bhittanis and were offered the traditional Pashtoon hospitality.[763]

On 20 October, they motored through the Khyber Pass. After receiving the Khyber Rifles at Jamrud, the party proceeded to Torkham, on the Afghan frontier. On their way back near Landi Kotal, the stone-throwing started. The pro-League Afridis and Shinwaris protested against the 'forcible' visit of Nehru to Landi Kotal against their will and consent.[764] On the same afternoon they proceeded to Malakand. Unlike on the previous occasions, there was no demonstration at the airport. They spent the night at Head Aman Dara. On 21 October, on their way back to Peshawar, the party was stoned twice; at Malakand and again at Dargai. With great difficulty they escaped by an unfrequented route through the Abazai Canal and reached Peshawar.[765]

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[759]: 'A Mission of Love', Nehru's address to a Jirga at Razmak, 17 October 1946, *SWJN*, 1, p. 308; Interviews with Ali Zar, Razmak, 31 October 1994; Gul Mazar, Razmak, 31 October 1994; Noor Baqi Jan, Razmak, 31 October 1994; Umra Khan Masood, Razmak, 31 October 1994.

[760]: For bombing of the Shabi Khels and the resentment of the nationalists see *Pakhtun*, 24 September 1946, pp. 7-8; *Madina*, 17 September 1946.

[761]: Interview with Khair Mohammad, Razmak, 1 November 1994.

[762]: Interviews with Shah Gul, Wana, 2 November 1994; Mohib Ullah, Wana, 2 November 1994; Maulana Noor Mohammad, Wana, 2 November 1994; Telegram from Ahmadzai Wazirs to Jinnah, 19 October 1946, SHC, N-WFP- II, p. 56.

[763]: Abdul Ghaffar, *My Life and Struggle*, p. 186; Nehru to Caroe, 26 October 1946, *TP*, VIII, p. 820; Interview with Muntazir Bhittani, Tank, 3 November 1994.

Before the culmination of his Frontier visit, Nehru was invited to the KK Centre at Sardaryab. On 21 October, on the last day of his Frontier visit, Nehru went to Sardaryab. The government offered to guard the convoy and the premises of the camp, but Abdul Ghaffar Khan turned this down on the excuse that Nehru was coming to the camp in his private capacity, and therefore the KKs would themselves be responsible for his protection.[766] The Leaguers, who earlier were planning a hostile demonstration on the occasion, desisted at the last moment.[767] The KKs staged a 'show of strength' on Nehru's arrival at the centre. About 2500 Red Shirts and Congress volunteers were on road protection duties; in addition, there were mobile columns of horsemen and cyclists. Nehru was given a befitting reception on his arrival at the Markaz. Speeches were made, the general tone of which was criticism of the

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[764]: Interview with Amir Hamza Khan Shinwari, Landi Kotal, 2 January 1989 ; Swat Khan Afridi to Jinnah, 25 October 1946, SHC, N-WFP-II, p. 64; Telegram Afridis of Khyber to Jinnah, 22 October 1946, SHC, N-WFP-II, pp. 60-63(2); Abdul Ghaffar, *Zama Zhwand*, p. 711; Shah, *Muslim League*, pp. 118-119; Jansson, *Pakhtunistan*, pp. 184-186.

[765]: Interviews with Naik Khan, Abul Hasan Khan, Sakha Kot (Malakand), 21 October 1994; Caroe to Wavell, 23 October 1946, Mss. EUR., F. 203/1, IOLR, p. 56; Nehru to Caroe, 26 October 1946, *TP*, VIII, pp. 814-815,817-819; Abdul Ghaffar, *Zama Zhwand*, pp. 711-715; Shah, *Muslim League*, pp. 120-121.

[766]: *Pakhtun*, 9 November 1946, p. 12.

[767]: 'Up to the last moment', informed Caroe, 'the League had been intending to make a counter-demonstration...For some reasons unexplained the League luckily called this off at the last moment. Either they felt that they would not be numerically strong enough at this point to deal with the Red Shirts demonstrations, or perhaps...Jinnah had done something from Delhi to call them off'. Caroe to Wavell, 23 October 1946, Mss. EUR., F. 203/1, IOLR, p. 57.

Political Department, the Frontier Governor and the PML for staging the hostile demonstrations against Nehru. Nehru in his speech reiterated his support for the Khan Brothers. Abdul Ghaffar Khan also spoke on the occasion. According to him, the British had changed their strategy from 'using the iron rod' and instead were relying on the 'green flag' of the ML. The main rhetoric of his speech remained the same. He accused the Governor and Political Department of maligning the fair name of the Pashtoons, known for their traditional hospitality, and of giving an impression to Nehru and through him to the Congress high command that the influence of the Khan Brothers was waning in the N-WFP.[768]

The provincial Congress leaders and Nehru himself charged the Political Department and the PML with being responsible for staging the hostile demonstrations.[769] The charges were time and again repudiated by Caroe, for whom the responsibility lay with Nehru himself and no one else. According to Caroe, if Nehru had gone round himself quietly and without losing his temper and told the tribes that he was their guest, he would have been politely received, but it was fatal to take round a party politician like Abdul Ghaffar Khan. If he meant to take party politicians with him, he should have attempted to induce men from all parties to go with him.[770] G. L. Mallam, another senior Civil Servant, viewed it differently. To him 'no political issue, not even a class war, could withstand the power of religion in the tribal mind'. Mallam argued that Nehru's visit was interpreted by the tribesmen as a danger signal for Islam. They regarded it as a preparation of the ground for Hindu rule in the sub-continent, which was totally unacceptable to them. They had no doubts in their minds that if the Pashtoons had to have a ruler he must be a Muslim. 'From that moment', according to Mallam, 'the common people of the Frontier began rapidly to switch their allegiance from Congress to the Muslim League, preferring for the time being the company of the hated Khans to the worst of all evils — Hindu domination'.[771] Moreover, the tribesmen generally approved the reception given to Nehru because they 'have been incensed by the riots in India'.[772]

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[768]: *Pakhtun*, 9 November 1946, pp. 4-12; 22-55; *ibid.* 17 November 1946, pp. 3-4; Abdul Ghaffar, *Zama Zhwand*, pp. 715-718; Interview with Sarfaraz Khan, Boobak (Charssadda), 17 November 1991; CID Diaries, F. Nos. 101 (67-69,75,67,91-95, 97),758(33)815(99), SBP ; *The Bombay Chronicler*, 23 October 1946.

[769] Jansson has given some details of the justification of the Congress charges against the Political Department of instigating the tribesmen to stage hostile demonstrations on the eve of Nehru's Frontier visit. Jansson, *Pakhtunistan*, pp. 184-186. During my research field trip to Miranshah, Razmak, Wana, Jandola, Tank, Khyber Pass and Malakand (all those places which Nehru visited in October 1946) I interviewed several persons, some of whom were eye witnesses to the hostile demonstrations, and some themselves took active part in them. I was informed that they had the blessings of the officials. Interviews with Ali Zar Khan, Razmak, Gul Mazar Khan, Razmak; Khair Mohammad, Razmak; Mohibullah, Wana, and Shah Gul, Wana.

Nehru's Frontier visit provided the ML with an opportunity for effective propaganda. On the conclusion of his visit, the authorities noticed a swing amongst the Frontier Muslims in favour of the ML. According to League circles, it showed that the real sympathies of the Frontier Muslims were closely linked with their co-religionists in the rest of the sub-continent.[773] Nehru's visit 'has unwittingly turned him into an effective instrument of Muslim League propaganda', and 'happily Pandit Nehru has done what the Muslim League could not do in its long campaign of four years of intense political activity'.[774] Qaiyum shared this view. He informed Jinnah that 'what we could not hope to achieve in several years, was in fact achieved within about a week'.[775] Hence the visit had some far reaching effects. According to Caroe, when Mountbatten visited the N-WFP and discussed having a referendum there, Nehru consented without any hesitation. His only condition was the replacement of Caroe, to which Mountbatten agreed. This was 'very largely' according to Caroe, 'due to Nehru's mistake in coming

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[770]: Caroe to Wavell, 23 October 1946, Mss. EUR., F. 203/1, IOLR, p. 57.
[771]: G. L. Mallam, 'Imperial Frontier', (unpublished manuscript), Mallam Papers, CSASC, p. 242.
[772]: I. Stephens, 'Nehru's Frontier Visit', *The Statesman*, Delhi, 2 January 1947.
[773]: *Khyber Mail*, 25 October 1946.
[774]: *ibid.* 1 November 1946.

up on that occasion, which I think put partition much nearer than it was...'.[776] Another result of Nehru's Frontier visit was that the tribes, who hitherto were very little interested in Indian politics, plunged into it actively. The ML was given a free hand to approach the tribesmen in the name of Islam and Pakistan. By the end of 1946, the tribesmen were aware of the complex situation at the centre and were looking forward to the establishment of Pakistan.

According to Nehru, the brief visit was undertaken for the understanding of problems and the development of a policy for the welfare of the tribesmen. He recommended that free education and necessary health facilities should be provided for the tribesmen. He condemned the system of paying allowances to a few selected Maliks, thus creating groups of 'haves' and 'have nots'; regarding it as 'blackmail'. Nehru pleaded for the free association of the tribesmen with their own brethren of the settled districts who shared the same ethnicity. The ML was accused of treacherously organising the demonstrations in spite of the fact that they had been given a share in the interim government. The Political Department was in league with those demonstrators; in the case of Jandola, which they visited without any pre-planned programme, they were greeted in a most befitting manner. Elaborating on the Malakand incident, which caused the most acrimonious controversy, Nehru accused Mahbub Ali, the PA, of incompetence and gross neglect of duty, and demanded his immediate removal from office.[777]

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[775]: Qaiyum to Jinnah, 25 October 1946, SHC, N-WFP-II, p. 113.

[776]: Record of Oral Interviews of Caroe, Tape Thirteen, Mss. EUR., F. 203/80, IOLR, pp. 104-105.

[777]: Nehru to Caroe, 26 October 1946, *TP*, VIII, pp. 814-815 and 'Note on my tour in the Tribal Areas of the North-West Frontier , October 16 to 21, 1946, *ibid.* pp. 816-825. For details of Shaikh Mahbub Ali's case see: Caroe to Nehru, 7 November 1946, *TP*, IX, pp, 20-22; Nehru to Caroe, 16 November 1946, *ibid.* pp. 85-91; Caroe to Wavell, 9 November 1946, Mss. EUR., F. 203/1, IOLR, pp. 60-61; Caroe to Colville (acting Viceroy) 8 December 1946, Mss. EUR.. F. 203/1, IOLR, p. 71; Caroe to Colville, 23 December 1946, Mss. EUR., F. 203/1, p. 74; Caroe to Wavell, 13 January 1947, Mss. EUR., F. 203/1, IOLR and Secretary of State to Viceroy, 3 May 1947, *TP*, X, (London, 1981), p. 602.

In November, Wavell decided to visit the N-WFP personally 'to obliterate the impression left by Nehru', and to restore 'the morale of the Political officers', shaken by the accusations against them by the pro-Congress politicians.[778] Wavell was amused by Nehru's suggestion that the 'wild' tribesmen of the Frontier would be win over by a mere 'love', and favoured the continuation of the allowances to the tribal Maliks.[779] Wavell arrived at Peshawar on 14 November. On 15 November, he was driven to Landi Kotal where he saw a Jirga of Afridis and Shinwaris. They demanded that if Britain was leaving India, the Khyber Pass should be given back to them. They expressed their resentment over Nehru's Frontier visit, and made it clear to the Viceroy that they would oppose Hindu rule in that part of the sub-continent. Wavell met another Jirga at Wana, the Ahmadzai Wazirs, whom he found 'more communal', wishing to align themselves with the ML. Wavell advised both the Jirgas 'not to ally themselves with any particular party, but to wait on events, and remain united to negotiate new arrangements with the future Government of India when the time comes'. The Viceroy assured them that their freedom would be safeguarded.[780]

Conclusion

Thus the Frontier Congress, which had gained a clear majority verdict in the elections, had proved that the nationalists were still in a strong position in the N-WFP. However, the ML, which had initially failed to mobilise public opinion on the Pakistan issue, exploited the occurrence of the communal riots in other parts of India to its advantage. It succeeded in publicising accounts of Hindu atrocities against Muslims and creating a situation of 'Islam in danger' in the rest of the sub-continent. For the time being Pashtoon ethnicity became a less dominant political identity, overtaken by the Pashtoons' sense of belonging to a larger Muslim community of the sub-continent.

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[778]: Wavell to P. Lawrence, 30 October 1946, *TP*, VIII, p. 844.

[779]: Wavell to P. Lawrence, 5 November 1946, *TP*, IX, p. 12.

[780]: Wavell to F. Bourne, 20 November 1946, *TP*, IX, p. 120; Moon, *The Viceroy's Journal*, p. 377.

The frantic politics after the elections generated new tensions in the province. The long-established political loyalties came under strain on account of developments elsewhere in the sub-continent. The Pashtoons were religiously a part of the wider Muslim community of the sub-continent but ethnically a distinct self-subsisting entity. This was their durable identity, temporarily overshadowed by the communal happenings in north India. Their politics deviated from the tradition pioneered by the KKs, with long term consequences. Ideology did not modify identity but certainly succeeded in influencing political choice at a critical juncture in the history of the province.

But while these changes were taking place outside the legislature, the Congress was still the majority party in the Frontier assembly. Khan Sahib and his colleagues enjoyed the confidence of the majority of the assembly. Unlike other provinces, no communal tensions existed in the FP. The Congress ministry was running the administration smoothly, at least for the time being. As it was impossible for the League to defeat the Congress ministry within the legislature, they started devising ways and means of unconstitutional onslaught on the ministry which forms a major part of the discussion in the next chapter.

CHAPTER SEVEN

N-WFP MUSLIMS AND PAKISTAN

This chapter deals mainly with the circumstances leading to the creation of Pakistan and the final phase of the nationalist movement in the N-WFP. The emergence of the League as a massive force of Muslim nationalism in opposition to the nationalism of the Congress throughout India brought into question of survival of the idea of a single successor state to the British Indian empire. The political fortunes of the Pashtoons were closely bound up with that idea on account of their intimate association with the Congress. Most unfortunately for them during the course of the negotiations leading upto the transfer of power the idea was abandoned by the Congress, leaving the nationalists Pashtoons to face the wrath of the ML and the state it established. For the Pashtoons the best alternative, in the absence of a United India, would have been independence. This option was not given to them by the departing British power. The Congress, having accepted the Mountbatten Plan of 3rd June 1947 could do nothing to safeguard the interests of the Pashtoons. A plebiscite offering them a choice between joining India or Pakistan was meaningless in the context of the division of the country, and therefore the nationalists in the N-WFP boycotted it, with the result that the League won an easy victory for the incorporation of the province in the new state of Pakistan. Soon after the establishment of Pakistan, rough, often un-constitutional, methods were employed to remove Khan Sahib's ministry from power and to suppress the KKs as a force in the life of the province.

A majority of the Muslim intelligentsia was against the role of the K.B.s, other title-holders and the big Khans in the League organisation, which gave the ML a poor image in the eyes of the public. Jinnah was informed that the Frontier Muslims were 'tired of such type of people and they have no faith in these Jagirdars and K.B.s and Nawabs' and was requested 'to bring the movement to the masses'.[781] It was argued that, to counter the well-organised N-WFP Congress, the provincial organisation of the League needed an 'overhaul'. On 21 February a meeting of the PML was convened at Peshawar and Qaiyum was appointed as the League's Leader in the provincial assembly;[782] a new organising Committee of the PML was formed with Samin Jan as the Chairman and M. Ali Khan Hoti as Secretary. After the preliminary task of the formation of the provincial organising Committee was completed, District Committees were formed.[783]

A comprehensive programme of meetings and conferences was undertaken. It was decided to hold 'Pakistan Conferences'.[784] Pakistan was explained as being the only solution which would provide a peaceful settlement between the Hindus and the Muslims. It was demanded that, in the greater interest of the communities living in the sub-continent, the demand for Pakistan should be conceded. Criticism of the provincial Congress ministry was another topic at these Conferences. Abdul Ghaffar Khan was also not spared. He was criticised for his friendship with the Congress leaders and of following policies laid down by 'Wardha'. Confidence in the leadership of Jinnah and the ML was expressed.[785] Muslim clerics were approached in the name of Pakistan. The Ulema were promised more prestigious place in Pakistan. After the Hindu-Muslim riots in north India, where a number of mosques were damaged and the Holy Quran desecrated, a considerable number of Frontier Ulema were apprehensive about the future of Islam in a Hindu-dominated India. The League orators created a sense of 'Islam in danger' and appealed Ulema to support Pakistan. The Leaguers thus succeeded in winning over the sympathies of a significant number of Frontier Ulema to its side.[786] This added more strength to the demand of Pakistan in the N-WFP.

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[781]: Dost Mohammad Khan, Bannu, to Jinnah, 2 October 1945, F. No. 881, QAP, pp. 3-5.

[782]: *Khyber Mail*, 15 March 1946; ML Peshawar, CID Diaries, 28 February 1946, F. No. 779, SBP, p. 117.

[783]: The personnel of the new committees were as following:
Peshawar: Qaiyum, Nishtar, Aurangzeb, Arbab Ghafoor, Ibrahim Khan, Arbab M. Sharif, Rabnawaz Khan, Arbab Sher Ali, Sher Bahadur Khan, M. Yusuf Khan, Ghulam Haider Khan, Mian Abdullah Shah, Arbab Noor Mohammad, Mian M. Shah and Mian Zia-ud-Din. Hazara: Abbas Khan, Jalal ud Din, Zain Khan, Sardar Bahadur, Sultan Ahmad Khan, M. Zaman Khan. Mardan: Bakht Jamal, Ghulam M. Khan, M. Yaqoob, Samin Jan, M. Ali Khan, M. Akbar Badshah Bamkhel, Purdil Khan, Nawab Akbar Khan. Kohat: M. R. Kiyani, Mohabbat Ali Khan, Yusuf Khattak. Bannu: Habibullah, Pir Abdul Latif Zakori, Malik Damsaz, Hakim Khan, Wazirzada Gul M. Khan. D.I.Khan: Nawab Qutub ud Din, Nasrullah Khan, Abdul Rahim, M. Ramzan, Abdul Haye and Maulvi Noor Bakhsh. F. No. 366, AFM, pp. 17-17(A); *Khyber Mail*, 28 April 1946. CID Diaries, 7 July 1946, F. No. 757, SBP, p. 103.

[784]: M. Ali Khan to Secretary AIML. 24 June 1946. F. No. 366. AFM. pp. 18-18(a).

Organising for Pakistan: The League's Civil Disobedience Against the Frontier Congress Ministry

As any change within the legislative assembly was impossible, and the next elections were at least four years away, the PML started preparations to devise ways and means for unconstitutional methods to be used against the Frontier Congress ministry. The defection to the League of some Congress workers, mostly for personal reasons i.e. aspiration for leadership, including Ghulam M. Khan, M. Ramzan, Mian Abdullah Shah, Arbab Ghafoor, Mian M. Shah and Khan Mir Hilali, had added new dimensions to the League programme. The Congress deserters brought with them a significant number of their followers and also used their familial connections, which proved beneficial to the ML.[787] However, it did not always serve the purpose of the League. Sometimes changing of loyalties were purely on a *parajamba* basis without giving any consideration to the ideologies and party programme of the various organisations.[788] With their joining the league the general tone of the Leaguer's speeches changed. The PML leaders began talking of using 'swords and knives' if Pakistan was not granted.[789] The provincial League workers were instructed that no licensed arms should be deposited with the government, and that they should purchase and keep licensed arms for the 'critical time to come'.[790] The Pir of Manki toured the southern districts and the adjacent tribal areas, and instructed his disciples to arm themselves to face the new challenges.[791] He met various tribal Maliks at Tank and exhorted them to a combined Jihad against the non-Muslims. The government was warned that if the riots in other parts of Hindustan were not stopped, they would start a Jihad against the non-Muslims in D.I.Khan.[792]

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[785]: For further details of the various Pakistan Conferences at Peshawar, Bannu, Kohat, Mardan, D.I.Khan and Hazara see F Nos. 755 (5-21), 797 (101-117), 800 (263-267), 789 (379, 347-349), SBP; *Khyber Mail*, 15 November 1946.

[786]: The list included Maulana Shakirullah and the Pir of Manki (Nowshera); Syed Abdullah Shah (Peshawar); Qazi Shafi ud Din, Maulana Usman (Kohat); Maulana Lutfullah (Bannu); Maulana Yahya, Maulana Ghani (Hazara); Maulana Shuaib, Maulana Midrarullah, Shaista Gul, Badshah Sahib of Bamkhel (Mardan); Pir Sahib of Zakori and Makhdum Abdul Sattar of Balot (D.I.Khan). CID Diaries, 29 October 1946, F. No. 757, SBP, pp. 185-187. For more details see Jinnah-Maulana Midrar Ullah Correspondence in Midrar Ullah Personal Collection. Mardan.

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[787] : Mian Mohammad Shah, an ardent Congress worker from Pabbi, was denied a Congress ticket during the elections by the Congress Parliamentary Board. Mohammad Shah left the organisation and contested the elections as an 'Independent', but did not get elected. Indigant at the attitude of the Congress leaders towards a member of one of their families, the Mians of Pabbi joined the PKL and gave their full support to the League during its civil disobedience campaign against Khan Shahib's ministry. After the creation of Pakistan, this temporary phenomenon disappeared and the same group, with its leader Mohammad Shah, was seen opposing Qaiyum Khan, the League Chief Minister of the N-WFP, leading their support to the nationalists.

[788] : An interesting account of the changing of loyalties without giving any heed to ideologies or party programme occured in Ziarat Ka Ka Sahib. In November 1946, Sultan Mohammad, president of the local KK organisation had contrived a dispute with his brother Anwar. Indignant at the behaviour of Sultan, Anwar decided to join the ML as a protest. The local Leagues publicised the desertion of Anwar from Congress and arranged a reception in his honour. Meanwhile Sultan was reconciled with Anwar, who immediately announced his return to Congress. Interview with Sultan Mohammad, Ziarat Ka Ka Sahib, 1 December 1990.

[789]: Qaiyum's statement in *Khyber Mail*, 29 March 1946; *Dawn*, Delhi, 11 April 1946 and CID Diaries, 11 April 1946, F. No. 779, SBP, p. 177.

[790]: CID Diaries, 8 July 1946, F. No. 756, SBP, p. 79.

[791]: CID Diaries, 9 September 1946, F. No. 780, SBP, p. 115.

By the end of autumn 1946, there were no reports of communal violence emanating from the N-WFP. The situation was being made worse by events in Bihar and other Hindu-dominated areas of India. In December the situation deteriorated rapidly in Hazara. On the night of 7 December, the adjacent tribesmen from the Black Mountain area, either incensed by the provocative propaganda of the ML and the maulvis to avenge the killing of the Muslims in Bihar, or in search of loot and plunder, attacked Battal and burnt the bazaar. The Oghi bazaar was also attacked and burnt, inflicting a severe blow on the property of non-Muslims. The Hindus and Sikhs, fearing an attack on their lives, started moving to Abbottabad, Kohala, Muzaffarabad, Haripur and Hassanabdal. They were attacked and a number of them put to death. The reported deaths, according to the official estimates, were about 100, while some sources gave the figures as 200 killed and many displaced. Many were kidnapped and forcibly converted to Islam.[793] The government responded promptly by promulgating the North-West Frontier Province Public Safety Ordinance under Section 89 of the Government of India Act, 1935. The Ordinance provided for punishment up to three years or a fine for any person who delivered speeches or statement prejudicial to the peace and maintenance of public order, or to harm any citizen thereby.[794] The Nandihar tribe was fined for their incursion into Hazara district, the murder of innocent villagers, and the destruction of the bazaars of Battal and Oghi. They were asked to pay (a) a cash fine of Rs. 75000/., (b) a fine of 75 rifles; and, (c) surrender 40 members for a certain period as security for good behaviour. They were given a period of one week to comply with the government terms, or otherwise to prepare for a punitive expedition.[795]

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[792]: CID Diaries, 16 November 1946, F. No. 815, SBP, p. 17.

[793]: *Khyber Mail*, 3 January 1947, 31 January 1947; *Inqilab*, Lahore, 31 January 1947; *C&MG*, Lahore, 9 January 1947, 26 March 1947; Caroe to Wavell, 13 January 1947, Mss. EUR., F. 203/1, IOLR, p. 75; M. C. Khanna to Patel, 24 April 1947, Durga Das (ed.), *Sardar Patel's Correspondence 1945-50*, (Ahmedabad, 1972), 4, pp. 231-232.

In early January 1947 a pregnant Sikh woman, Basanti, (Pesari in some accounts) was abducted by Muslim gangsters from a village in Hazara. The members of her family including her husband were killed. She was forcibly converted to Islam, renamed Asia, and married to a Muslim, M. Zaman. She was recovered by the authorities but her conversion became a serious issue. The Muslims claimed her conversion to be voluntary, while the Sikhs believed that she was forcibly converted and demanded that she be handed back to them. To investigate whether her conversion was voluntary or not, it was decided to send her to Peshawar to 'give an unbiased statement', and she was put in Khan Sahib's custody.[796] At the end of her stay in the Premier's House, in the presence of her Sikh relatives and her Muslim husband she stated that she wanted to be sent back to her relatives and to return to Sikhism. The rumour quickly spread that the Sikh woman accepted Islam of her free-will but was compelled by Khan Sahib to revert to Sikhism. On 18 February a League deputation consisting of Qaiyum, Fida M. Khan, Mian Abdullah Shah and M. Ali Khan met Khan Sahib, and were satisfied by the Premier that no such coercion or compulsion was used. But the Leaguers 'distorted the incident into a justification for civil disobedience'.[797] Khan Sahib was accused of unduly interfering in religion, and of forcing the Sikh woman to re-convert to Sikhism. As the PML needed some

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[794]: Caroe to Colville, 23 December 1946, Mss. EUR., F. 203/1, IOLR, p. 73.

[795]: *C&MG*, 9, 12 and 14 January 1947.

[796]: Caroe to Wavell, 23 January 1947, Mss. EUR., F. 203/1, IOLR, p. 79; *ibid*. 8 February 1947, p. 82.

[797]: Abdul Ghafoor Sethi, 'Memoirs', (unpublished), p. 25; CID Diaries, 20 February 1947, F. No. 781, SBP, pp. 61-63; Rittenberg, 'Independence Movement', p. 362.

immediate cause to manifest its strength, the Hazara disturbances had proved to be 'a heaven-sent opportunity to drive home its argument that the fate of the Pathans is linked with the Muslims of India'.[798] A similar movement was launched in the neighbouring Punjab against the Khizar ministry. Moreover, exclusion from power at a most critical time when there were plans for the partition of India presented more frustrations for the League.[799] In both cases the ML resorted to civil disobedience against elected governments to prove that the overwhelming majority of the Muslim population was supporting the League demand for Pakistan.

Prominent Leaguers were sent to Hazara to observe the latest situation there. On 17 December, Qaiyum and M. Ali Khan visited Mansehra, Baffa and Shinkiari. They advised the Muslims not to pay fines or to furnish securities as, according to the League leaders, there was an enormous loss of lives and property of Muslims in Bihar, but nobody had fined the Hindus there.[800] Criticising the 'harsh measures' of the Congress ministry, Qaiyum predicted a 'very serious danger ahead' if the ministry continued its repressive policies.[801] The Congress ministry was accused of taking their revenge on those areas which had elected the League candidates to the legislative assembly, and Hazara, being the stronghold of the ML, was its first target.[802] A deputation of three prominent Leaguers was sent to Delhi to apprise the ML ministers in the interim government of the latest situation in Hazara,[803] which then came up for discussion in Central cabinet. A decision was taken that if the government terms were not fully complied with, troops would cross into tribal territory and exact punishment. The League members, as was expected, showed their resentment against the proposed punitive expedition against the Nandihar tribe. 'Since this was dictated', said Wavell, 'I have heard that the terms have been accepted'.[804] So the idea of the punitive expedition was dropped.

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[798]: *Khyber Mail*, 3 January 1947.

[799]: Talbot, *Provincial Politics*, p. 22; D. Gilmartin, *Empire and Islam: Punjab and the Making of Pakistan* (London, 1988), pp. 222-223.

[800]: CID Diaries, 21 December 1946-4 January 1947, F. No. 797, SBP, pp. 253,259. Yusuf Khattak, J. Secretary, PML, issued the following press statement

'In Bihar more than 40,000 unarmed Muslims were butchered in cold blood but by this time no fines have been inflicted on any village in Bihar. In Hazara on the other hand where only about 20 Hindus were killed, the whole Government machinery has been set in motion to punish the miscreants and enormous fines have been inflicted on innocent villages lying on the Hazara border'. *Khyber Mail*, 10 January 1947.

[801]: *ibid.*, 10 January 1947.

[802]: *ibid.*, 24 January 1947.

[803]: *ibid.*, 10 January 1947; *C&MG*, 12 January 1947.

The PML observed 17 January as 'Hazara Day'. Resolutions were adopted criticising the Congress ministry for its 'Black Laws' against a 'large number of respectable Muslims'. The government was threatened with direct action if the restrictions were not withdrawn.[805] In aid of the 'suffering Muslims' of Bihar, the Mardan Districts ML held a Pashto *Khooni Mushaira* (an assembly of poets gathered and recited poetry on communal violence) on 12 January. Poems were recited exhorting the Muslims to shed their blood for the innocent victims of Bihar.[806] It was followed by a large procession, defying Section 144. The authorities, however, ignored this provocation and the day passed off without any 'untoward' incident.[807]

The PML temporarily concentrated all their energies on a by-election scheduled for mid-February in Mardan. The party leaders were aware of the League's strength in Mardan, so they did not wanted to jeopardise the chances of their success. M. Ishaq Khan, the League nominee, defeated Mian Shakirullah, the Congress candidate, by 8941 to 8353 votes.[808] Once the polling was over and the result announced, the final constraint on the ML was lifted, and within a week it came out openly against the Congress ministry by defying the district authorities.

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[804]: Wavell to Pethick-Lawrence, 14 January 1947, *TP*, IX, p. 503.

[805]: *Khyber Mail*, 17,24 January 1947; CID Diaries, 18 January 1947, F. No. 781, SBP, p. 255.

[806] Prominent poets who took part in the gathering included M. Aslam Khan, Pir Gohar, Maulana Shakirullah, Fazl Mahmood, Qazi Abdul Halim Asar and Khan Mir Hilali. For full details see *Sarhad*, Peshawar, 30 January 1947.

[807]: *Khyber Mail*, 17 January 1947; *C&MG*, 15 January 1947.

[808]: *Khyber Mail*, 7 February and 14 February 1947; CID Diaries, 17 February 1947, F. No. 761, SBP, p. 155.

Before going into the details of the events, it is proper here to mention briefly the quality and dynamics of the leadership, the support from local Muslims and the initial successes of the movement against the Congress ministry. With regard to the nature of the leadership of this movement, we can distinguish two groups: local leaders who suffered personally; and those who were sent by the AIML to guide and support it. In the initial stages the local leadership was more effective. The leaders of the latter group assumed a bigger role when the movement developed and gained greater momentum. It is interesting to note how local League workers utilised the Congress devices of picketing and boycott of the civil courts and used them against the Frontier Congress ministry. The civil disobedience itself occurred in two phases. Initially it was noisy but peaceful with little incidence of sabotage and communal violence. During the second phase, particularly after the resignation of the Khizar ministry in the Punjab, violence occurred, probably due to the fact that the provincial Leaguers were given guidance from the Punjab workers to try the techniques which brought about the fall of the Khizar ministry.

The Pir of Manki remained the moving spirit behind the whole agitation. He provided a large number of his *murids*, whose services were utilised during the movement, and he was assisted by Mian Abdullah Shah, Sher Bahadur Khan and other local organisers. The 'War Council' tried to direct the agitation from Peshawar, but failed to do so. The obvious reason was the decentralised nature of the agitation. The Council delegated its authority to the district leaders, periodically touring the province only to advise and sustain the movement. Fida M. Khan organised the rallies in Peshawar; after his arrest the leadership passed to different hands. M. Ali Khan was in charge in Mardan, assisted by Bakht Jamal and others. Malik Damsaz and Habibullah were nominated for Bannu; M. A. Kiyani for Kohat; Jalal-ud-Din for Hazara and D.I.Khan was entrusted to Ramzan Khan, Pir of Zakori and Qutub-ud-Din. While some of the League organisers were arrested as soon as the movement started, some enjoyed full freedom of speech and movement till the end and the government did not interfere with their activities Normally, whenever the League workers were arrested, in order to break the movement, the authorities would send them a few miles from the urban areas removing them from the scene of the agitation. However, in most cases prior information about their destinations were provided by Muslim officials to the Leaguers, so in no time they were safely taken back to the cities.[809] There are some exaggerated accounts of the alleged atrocities of the Congress ministry against the League prisoners. In fact it was routine for the arrested Leaguers to visit their homes secretly at night, and to return to prison early the next morning with the connivance of the prison authorities.[810] There was no traditional *bigar* (forced labour) enforced upon the prisoners during Khan Sahib's tenure of office.[811] The government avoided severe treatment, and the Premier told Leaguers that if they had any complaints against his government, the best way was to meet him and put their demands to him in a non-antagonistic way and not in the confrontational manner which the League workers had adopted.[812] Moreover, while the agitation was still going on, one of the foremost concerns of the ministry was its annual budget. They were apprehensive that if they took any drastic action against the agitators, the Governor might take the extreme step of dissolving the Assembly.[813] Another fact is that, during the entire movement, most of the Muslim officials in the government had sympathy with the League and provided secret information to the League organisers. Some of those officials even helped and arranged the sabotage activities of ML National Guard volunteers.[814]

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[809]: Maula Dad, *Dera Ki Kahani*, p. 106.

[810]: *ibid*. p. 102.

[811]: Interview with Mian Amin ul Wahab, Ziarat Ka Ka Sahib, 17 January 1986.

[812]: *Pakhtun*, 1 March 1947, pp. 3-4.

[813]: G. D. Khosla. *Stern Reckoning* (Delhi. 1989). pp. 266-267.

On the afternoon of 19 February a well-attended meeting of the PML was held at Mardan. The usual anti-Congress and anti-Ministry speeches were made. Indignation was shown at Khan Sahib's attitude in dealing with the case of the abducted Sikh woman, and the government was warned of serious repercussions if their demand was not fulfilled. The members of the demonstration on their way back turned to violence, damaging several shops belonging to non-Muslims, and their leaders were arrested.[815] On 20 February, Qaiyum reached Mardan, thus defying Section 144. He was also arrested and put into jail.[816] An urgent meeting of the PML was called in Peshawar on the same day to discuss the latest developments, particularly the Mardan arrests, and to draft a programme of future action against the Congress ministry.[817] The Pir of Manki and a strong group of other Leaguers pleaded for the commencement of a civil disobedience against the provincial Congress ministry immediately. Samin Jan, the former education minister in the League's ministry, did not approve the idea and opposed the launching of any movement on communal lines. He suggested that the government should be harassed by cutting telegraph lines, burning post offices etc., but was vetoed. After heated discussion, a resolution was adopted urging the Muslims of the FP to support the PML's demands for the restoration of civil liberties and the withdrawal of 'black laws' from Hazara. A 'War Council' was formed to 'carry on the struggle, which has been forced upon them by the Government, in a strictly non-communal manner'.[818] Mian Abdullah Shah became the President, and Sher Bahadur its Secretary. Other members included the Pir of Manki, Abdul Malik Khan, Bakht Jamal and Samin Jan. It was decided to launch the movement from Mardan. On 21 March, a procession under the leadership of Samin Jan was organised at Mardan. Samin Jan was arrested. On the same evening, a huge protest meeting was organised by Leaguers at Peshawar. The meeting was followed by a procession towards Khan Sahib's house. To stop the mob from entering the Cantonment, tear gas was used, which proved ineffective. The 'unruly mob' reached the Premier's house and threw brickbats, breaking windows, and threw stones into the rooms. 'The old man [Khan Sahib] was [as] brave as a lion', reported Caroe, he 'went out on top of the porch to tell the crowd what he thought of them. He refused to give away any points' and added that such defiant attitudes on the part of the Leaguers would have no affect on him.[819] The mob dispersed, and prominent leaders of the procession were arrested.[820] The formal announcement of disobedience was made on 22 February.[821] More urgency to the League movement was provided by the announcement of Attlee in the British Parliament on 20 February that power would be transferred to Indian hands by June 1948 at the latest.[822] This provided a renewed incentive for the Leaguers to topple the Congress ministry in a Muslim majority province which was to be included in their proposed Pakistan.

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[814]: Interview with Alam Khan, drill instructor at the Police Training School, Hangu, quoted in Jansson, *Pakhtunistan*, pp. 195-197.

[815]: Special CID Diary, 20 February 1947, F. No. 760, SBP, p. 23.

[816]: *The Pakistan Times*, Lahore, 22 February 1947; *C&MG*, 21 February 1947: CID Diaries, 21 February 1947, F. No. 760, SBP, p. 25.

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[817]: Special CID Diary, 21 February 1947, F. No. 760, SBP, pp. 7-9.

[818]: CID Diaries, F. No. 760, SBP, p. 11.

[819]: Caroe to Wavell, 22 February 1947, F. 203/1, IOLR, pp. 86-87; CID Diaries, 21 February 1947, F. No. 760, SBP, p. 13.

[820]: Sahir, *Quaid-i-Azam aur Sooba Sarhad*, pp. 218-219; CID Diaries, 22 February 1947, F. No. 760, SBP, p. 29.

[821]: Press Statement by Ibrahim Khan, President Peshawar District ML, 22 February 1947, CID Diaries, F. No. 760, SBP, p. 15.

[822]: *IAR*. 1947. I. pp. 37-38.

Soon the movement spread to the other districts of the N-WFP. During the next few days, League protest meetings were reported from Hazara, Kohat, Bannu and D.I.Khan. Main themes of the speeches remained the demands for the restoration of Basanti to the Muslims, condemnation of the repressive policy of the government against the ML in the N-WFP, and Leaguers' opposition to the 'suppression of civil liberties'.[823] The government responded by promulgating Section 144 in most of the towns of the province. League processions, defying prohibition orders, became a routine matter. Non-Muslims felt threatened by the growing communalism in the FP and the political atmosphere in the province further worsened. *Khyber Mail* commented

> While everywhere else in India the Muslims are closing their ranks and achieving greater and greater harmony of aims and ideals, in this land of Pathans there is only disruption and disunity. While in other Muslim provinces the impending political changes, which promise to lead India to a new era of complete independence, have stimulated an active spirit of compromise among the various Muslim political parties, here by a queer tyranny of misfortune we are only drifting away from each other.[824]

The fall of the Unionist Ministry in the Punjab on 2 March put an intolerable strain on the Congress ministry in the N-WFP. As mentioned earlier, during the first phase of the movement, the ML high command did little; rather, it allowed complete freedom to local workers to continue the movement of their own accord. It maintained only sporadic contacts with its Frontier organisation. Occasional trips by central leaders were made to give a boost to the ongoing agitation against the Congress ministry. After the League's 'triumph' in the Punjab, the N-WFP became the main focus of attention for the League. As it was the only province of proposed Pakistan where the League was not in power, it was essential for the League to wrest it from Congress.

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[823]: CID Diaries, 26 February-5 March 1947, F Nos. 815, 760, 761, SBP.

On the other hand, the Congress still had to prove that it commanded the confidence of the Muslims, so it wanted to retain control of the N-WFP within its fold at least for the time being. The stage was set for a final contest between different conceptions of 'nation' and national identity.

The League high command sent Nishtar and M. Ismail to the N-WFP 'to study' the situation created by the League agitation there. They arrived at Peshawar on 25 February and had meetings with the organisers of the movement. Khurshid Anwar, another prominent League leader, whom Caroe regarded as 'No 2 Organiser' of the ML National Guards (hereafter MLNG), remained busy in the N-WFP imparting training to the League volunteers in the use of explosives and other weapons of assault to be used against the non-Muslims in the FP. During the civil disobedience, he operated independently, providing guidance to the war council, and at times acting as an advisor to the ML women agitators.[825]

To disrupt the provincial assembly budget session, fixed for 10 March at Peshawar, a large procession was mobilised. The participants were warned by the authorities to desist from disturbing the atmosphere around the assembly Hall but they refused to comply with the warnings. The troops opened 'controlled' fire, killing two and wounding thirteen. The angry mob fell on the non-Muslims in Peshawar. Seventeen cases of stabbing were reported on that evening and curfew was imposed in the city.[826] A. N. Mitchell, the N-WFP Chief Secretary reported: '...they turned their anger against Hindus and Sikhs, partly because of the very bad communal rioting in the Punjab, which had rouse [aroused] feelings here; partly because they regarded the

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[824]: *Khyber Mail*, 7 March 1947.

[825]: Caroe to Wavell, 11 October 1946, Mss. EUR., F. 203/1, IOLR, p. 51; CID Diaries, 2 October 1946, F. Nos. 756, 757, 760, SBP.

[826]: Caroe to Wavell, 13 March 1947, *TP*, IX, pp. 930-931; *IAR*, 1947, I, p. 231; Khosla, *Stern Reckoning*, p. 266.

firing as an attack by the Congress party, which is represented as a Hindu party, on the Muslims'.[827] Violent riots spread to other parts of the province. A campaign of communal terrorism against the non-Muslims resulted in the murder of Hindus and Sikhs in various parts of the N-WFP. The worst affected areas were Hazara and D.I.Khan, the two places where non-Pashtoons predominated and where the League was stronger than in other parts of the province. Sabotage activities, reminiscent of the 'Quit India' days, such as bomb explosions, cutting of telegraph and telephone lines, and disrupting the railways became routine. In Peshawar Valley, the only seriously affected area was Peshawar city. The rural areas mainly remained unaffected, because Congress influence was still unchallenged there. In Peshawar city, commerce and trade were badly affected; the non-Muslims faced threats of closure of businesses. In Hazara the situation worsened, and despite the imposition of curfew in major towns and cities, there were incidents of arson, looting and stabbing. Gurdwaras were burnt, individual Sikhs murdered, and forced conversions took place. There were League demonstrations at Mardan, Kohat and Bannu, but for the time being without any casualties.[828]

Khan Sahib offered a 'stout resistance'.[829] He described the League's agitation as 'unconstitutional', and dismissed the League demands for his resignation or for fresh elections.

> I am a representative of the Pathans who have put me in this office and nobody can make me resign as long as my electorate are with me. I am not going to

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[827] Rittenberg, 'Independence Movement', p. 371.

[828]: These and other details of the ML civil disobedience movement are taken from the following sources: *IAR*, 1947, I, p. 231; *The Pakistan Times*, 28 February-21 March 1947; *C&MG*, 14 March 1947; CID Diaries 20 February-18 March 1947, F Nos. 101, 760, 781, 782, 783, 786, 790, 798, 801, 812, 815, SBP; *PLAD*, 20 March 1947, Vol. XIV, Nos. 1-10, pp. 278-282; Caroe to Wavell, 13 March 1947, *TP*, IX, pp. 930-931.

[829]: Wavell to Pethick-Lawrence. 19 March 1947. *TP*. IX. p. 991.

> yield to coercive and un-constitutional methods of those who cannot tolerate us in office.[830]

Responding to the League allegation of suppression of civil liberties in the N-WFP, he stated that ' There has been no greater champion of civil liberties in this Province than the party of which I am the elected leader in the Legislative Assembly'.[831] The Congress high command was also of the view that 'No government can agree to such demands, whatever the consequences'.[832] Abdul Ghaffar Khan suspected a 'big plot and conspiracy' behind the League movement in the FP. According to him, 'it is not the love of God, Islam or love of their country, but it is the love of their departing English masters whom their friends do not want to go from India'[833] that has led the League to preach hatred.

After the budget session of the assembly was over, the Congress ministry responded by sending a large number of KKs from Charssadda and the adjoining areas to Peshawar city. On 19 March, between 10,000 and 20,000 KKs both in uniforms and in plain clothes entered the city in the form of a procession. They were called from other parts of Peshawar Valley to help the ministry to restore confidence amongst the minority communities. The presence of such a large number of the KKs had a wholesome effect, and the situation improved slightly.[834] Next day the CID reported that 'conditions in Peshawar City and Cantonment show signs of definite improvement, especially in the City, due to the Red Shirts peace efforts by placing their men on duty in the bazaars and streets. This move has been greatly responsible for fostering confidence in the minds of non-Muslims, who have been noticed moving about in different localities'.[835] The Leaguers, however, protested against bringing the KKs into Peshawar. They considered it interference with their movement, which, according to them, was peaceful and non-communal and purely directed against the Congress ministry.[836] Caroe shared the League opinion. To him, bringing KKs into Peshawar at that stage might enhance the prestige of the Congress ministry, but it was a 'totalitarian move and as such will bring its revenges'.[837] Minor scuffles were reported during the next few days between the KKs and the League volunteers, but the KKs were advised by their leaders to abide strictly by the principle of non-violence even under provocation from the other side, as it might exacerbate the already existing tensions between the two parties.[838] During the first week of April, when the situation became normal in Peshawar, the KKs were sent back to their respective areas. 'Peace Committees' were formed in various parts of the province, whose main purpose was to protect the non-Muslims from communal strife. Such Committees were formed at Charssadda, Nowshera, Akora, Mardan and Swabi.[839] The Ahrars and the Khaksars also decided to protect the lives and property of the non-Muslims, as it was against *Shariat* to terrorise Hindus and Sikhs. Anjuman-i-Gharibanan, a social organisation, condemned the 'coward' attacks on Hindus and Sikhs in the name of Islam and sympathised with the non-Muslims.[840]

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[830]: Khan Sahib's Press Conference at Peshawar, 17 March 1947, *The Pakistan Times*, 19 March 1947; *C&MG*, 18 March 1947.

[831]: *The Pakistan Times*, 4 March 1947.

[832]: Nehru to Wavell, 13 March 1947, *TP*, IX, pp. 928-929.

[833]: Abdul Ghaffar Khan on League's Agitation, 27 April 1947, *IAR*, 1947, I, p. 234.

During the first week of April the centre of communal violence moved to the south and the movement elsewhere subsided. On 2 April some pro-League Muslims killed

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[834]: Interview with Abdul Ghani Khan, Peshawar, 1 February 1987; Charssadda, 3 February 1989; Saadullah Khan to Patel, 29 March 1947, *Patel's Correspondence*, 4, pp. 230-231.

[835]: CID Diaries, 20 March 1947, F. No. 812, SBP, pp. 81, 89-95.

[836]: *ibid.*

[837]: Caroe to Mountbatten, 22 March 1947, *TP*, X, pp. 1-2.

[838]: CID Diaries, 24 March 1947, F. No. 812, SBP, pp. 117-125; Maula Dad, *Dera Ki Kahani*, pp. 93-110.

[839]: CID Diaries, F Nos. 101, 118, 152. SBP; Interview with Mian Shahin Shah, Islamabad, 26 September 1993

[840]: CID Diaries, 17 March 1947, F. No. 798, SBP, p. 19.

several non-Muslims at Kohat.[841] After Kohat, on 15 April the communal frenzy flared up in D.I.Khan. Troops were called from Bannu to assist police in controlling the situation. The reported death toll was 16 (10 Hindus 5 Muslims 1 Sweeper); about 900 shops were gutted by fire. The troubles in D.I.Khan spread to the adjoining rural areas. On 17 April, Tank bazaar was burnt and 8 non-Muslims were killed; the same number of Muslims also were killed. Mahsud tribesmen came in large numbers to Tank, obviously with the desire for loot and plunder, but were also inspired by the League propaganda. The troops fired, killing 17 Mahsuds on the spot. Non-Muslims were evacuated to D.I.Khan and other safer places. By 25 April death tolls in the D.I.Khan rioting reached 93 Hindus and 28 Muslims.[842] In Bannu, however, the situation remained peaceful and under the control of the authorities. In contrast with the worsening communal relations between the communities in other parts of the southern districts, on 12 May, a combined meeting of Congress and League workers was convened at Kakki. It was unanimously decided to adopt measures to protect the Hindus living in very large numbers in Bannu, and to safeguard the villages against the communal disturbances and the tribal raids.[843]

With the intensification of the League movement, the Frontier Premier's attitude changed. 'I will not let them play havoc any more', declared Khan Sahib, 'I cannot see any of our own people being ruined on their score. I have resolved to settle accounts with them'.[844] A general crackdown was made on the League workers throughout the province. Accounts of the number of arrests varied. Official accounts gave 2,500, while the League sources claimed that 35,000 volunteers and workers imprisoned.[845]

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[841]: *ibid.* 3 April 1947, F. No. 812, pp. 207-213.

[842]: *The Pakistan Times*, 16 and 22 April 1947; *C&MG*, 16 April 1947; *Khyber Mail*, 16 May 1947; *LIR*, 1947, I, p. 234; CID Diaries, F. No. 813, SBP, pp. 37-43, 51-57, 65-71, 85-109; I Talbot, *Freedom's Cry The popular Dimension in the Pakistan Movement and partition Experience in the North-West India* (Karachi,1996),pp 46-48

[843]: CID Diaries, 12 May 1947, F. No. 814, SBP, pp. 23-25.

[844]: *C&MG*. 11 April 1947.

A remarkable feature of the League's civil disobedience was the formation of armed organisations by Congress and the PML. During March and early April the League volunteers started harassing and abusing the KKs, especially those who were performing their duties in Peshawar City and were posted to guard the minority communities. The *murids* of the Pir of Manki were in the forefront. The KKs were advised by their leaders to remain calm, and not to retaliate, as it might further worsen the communal situation. In mid-April some KKs including Qazi Ataullah, the Revenue Minister, were passing through Mardan when they were abused and threatened by armed ML volunteers. To prevent the repetition of such incidents, on 24 April Abdul Ghani Khan, the eldest son of Abdul Ghaffar Khan, formed Zalmai Pakhtun (Pakhtun Youth), its goals including protection of unarmed KKs and checking the League's offensive against the Frontier Congress leaders. As was indicated by the name, the membership was restricted to Pashtoon youth. The members were advised to carry arms. The uniform of the volunteers was red with black stripes on their collars and cuffs, and they were required to wear black belts. It was a marked shift from the non-violent principle of Abdul Ghaffar Khan. Ghani Khan and Amir Nawaz Jalia were the moving spirits behind the organisation. It became very popular amongst the young Pashtoons, with some participants claiming that the membership reached 60,000.[846]

To counter the activities of Zalmai Pakhtun, the PML also formed its own militant organisation, Ghazi Pakhtun The duties of Ghazi Pakhtun included travelling armed in large groups with ML processions, thus providing them with moral and physical strength. No exact figures are available about the number of its members. However, official and newspapers accounts reveal them to be about 10,000.[847] Although both figures seem exaggerated, they do point to the relative popularity of the KKs and the League in the province.

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[845]: *Madina*, 25 March 1947; *The Pakistan Times*, 16 April 1947.

[846]: Interview with Abdul Ghani Khan, 1 February 1987, Peshawar; 3 February 1989, Charssadda; F. No. 153, SBP, p. 151; *Pakhtun*, 1 July 1947, p. 7 and *Madina*, 1 August 1947.

Women and Politics in the Frontier

Although the League civil disobedience was in most cases highly decentralised, some groups, particularly women, played a remarkable part in it. To provide a context for the discussion that follows, a mention must be made of the general conditions and status of the females in traditional Pashtoon society, and the part played by Pashtoon women in the national movement. Pashtoon society traditionally is very strict in regard to women. The social roles of a women, her habits, her activities, all are determined by strict codes which she is not allowed to break. Any defiance is certainly considered dishonour and disgrace for the family, leading to her chastisement. As in many other societies there is a common belief among the Pashtoons that the more sons a man has, the better he can withstand his enemy at the gate.

During the early decades of the twentieth century, according to the *Census Report of 1911*, the proportion of the female population in the N-WFP, was 817 women per 1000 males.[848] It reached 843 females to 1000 males in 1931[849]. Literate males of all religions were 58 per 1000 and literate females only 6 per 1000 [850] The main causes of their backwardness were the observance of strict *purdah* (seclusion), the 'secular nature' of school work, and the absence in the curriculum of subjects helpful in organising the affairs of their households.[851] The local prejudices against female education were so great that the government also gave very little attention to it.[852]

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[847]: F. No. 814, SBP, p. 271; *The Pakistan Times*, 24 June 1947; *Khyber Mail*, 6 June 1947.
[848]: *Census of India 1911, N-WFP*, vol. XIII, p. 124.
[849]: *ibid.* 1931, vol. XV, p. 77.
[850]: *ibid.* 1911, p. 177.

The KKs from the beginning stressed the need for female education. According to them, an educated woman could take care of herself better than an inexperienced and uneducated woman. The columns of *Pakhtun* were open for women to write about their problems. While in the rest of India, Gandhi and other regional leaders gave guidance and encouragement to women to participate actively in nationalist politics,[853] in the N-WFP that inspiration was provided by Abdul Ghaffar Khan and other noted KKs. In January 1929, an article contributed by Jaffar Shah appeared in the *Pakhtun* on women and their services to community and nation. He regarded it as ridiculous on the part of the Pashtoons that they regarded their females as their 'mean of entertainment' only. Women, according to him, shared many responsibilities, both in peace and war.[854] Abdul Ghaffar Khan also stressed the need for education for females and urged the Pashtoons to give their women the best modern education.[855] He emphasised that ignoring their plight would definitely result in prolonging the Pashtoons' slavery.[856]

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[851]: *ibid.* 1921, vol. XIV, p. 182.

[852]: In 1901-02 there were only 8 government-recognised primary schools for girls in the entire province, with a total number of 491 students, mostly non Muslims belonging to the families of government servants and businessmen. There was no secondary school for girls until 1906, when Arya Kanya School of D.I.Khan was raised to the status of a middle school. The number of girls primary schools reached 24 in 1920-21 and middle schools increased from 1 to 4. There was a further increase: primary schools from 24 to 45; middle schools from 4 to 23 and high schools from 0 to 2. Both girls' high schools, Church of England Zenana Mission High School at Peshawar, and Gobind Girls High School at Abbottabad, were non-governmental institutions. The demand for a government girls high school was fulfilled in 1933. On 15 May Lady Griffith High School for Girls started its classes for the female students of the province. The curriculum, besides reading and writing, consisted of needlework (knitting and embroidery). There was no college in the province, and in 1930-3 one female from the N-WFP passed her B. A examination from the Punjab. For more details see *Census of India 1921, N-WFP* vol. XIV, pp. 181-82; *Census of India 1931, N-WFP* vol. XV, p. 166; *CLAD*, 15 July 1930, pp. 384-87.

[853]: K. C. Ahmad, 'Gandhi, Women's Role and the Freedom movement', *Occasional Papers on History and Society*. No. XIX. (NMML. 1984). pp. 1-24.

During the Congress civil disobedience movement of 1930-34, the participation of women was on a limited scale. The main reason was the observance of strict *purdah*. However, the attendance of females in large numbers, of course behind walls or on the roof-tops of their houses wrapped in *chaddars*, became a common feature of Abdul Ghaffar Khan's meetings. In Swabi and Nowshera, during the campaign, elderly women actively participated, and in Pabbi, Dur Marjan and Noor-un-Nisa of Taru Jabba, two prominent women KKs, became popular for leading the processions.[857] The central leadership of the Congress helped them to organise the Frontier women on the pattern of educated Hindustani, Bengali and Maharashtrian women, who were sharing the burden of their males in every walk of life. In 1939 Bibi Amtus Salam and Mirabehn, two prominent Congress women, were sent by the Congress high command to the N-WFP to assist Abdul Ghaffar Khan in female education and social reform among the Frontier women.[858] In 1946 the KK female writers began writing directly and prominently about the pressing political issues of the day, not confining themselves to the earlier themes of 'social reform' and the 'ideal women' alone. Most of the articles that appeared that year and in the subsequent one carried the political messages of Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the KKs. The main insistence was on Indian unity and resistance to the League's Pakistan scheme. The League's 'Direct Action' day and its repercussions in the other part of India was criticised. The grouping clauses of the Cabinet Mission Plan also came under criticism. Alaf Jan Khattaka, a KK, advised the Pashtoons to follow their own leaders rather than follow the Punjabis or Hindustanis.[859] The KKs responded positively to the call of Abdul Ghaffar Khan and started sending their daughters and other female relations to schools. Abdul Malik Fida, Sarfaraz Khan and Amir M. Khan were a few among many who sent their daughters to school to acquire modern education.

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[854]: *Pakhtun*, January 1929, pp. 16-19.

[855]: *ibid*. p. 20.

[856]: Presidential Address of Abdul Ghaffar Khan at Hangu, *Pakhtun*, June-July 1931, pp. 53-61; *Pakhtun*, October 1938, pp. 4-6.

[857]: Interviews with Syeda Bushra Begum, Ziarat Ka Ka Sahib, 28 January 1985; Ghazi Khan, Pabbi, 10 November 1994; Fazal Karim, Pabbi, 10 and 14 November 1994; Rambel, Taru Jabba, 19 November 1994.

[858]: Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan*, p. 289; For more details see *Pakhtun*, March 1929, April 1929, June-July 1929, 1 November 1938, 11 December 1938, 11 December 1939, 11 January 1940, 11 August 1940, 21 August 1940, 11 October 1940, 21 October 1940, 15 August 1945, 17 October 1945, 24 October 1945, 4 December 1945. 1 February 1946. 17 February 1946 and 21 February 1946.

During the last year before partition, the League's women, also took a prominent part in the politics of the N-WFP. As there was no female college in the province, a few students from the N-WFP, including Qanita Bibi, sister of Mian Zia-ud-Din, and Nazir Tila M. Khan, went to Lahore and joined the Jinnah Islamia College of Fatima Begum. They came under the direct influence of Fatima, who imbued them with the ideas of a separate homeland for the Muslims of the sub-continent. After completing their studies at Lahore, they came back to the province and started taking an active part in politics.

The first branch of the Women ML in the N-WFP was opened in April 1939. On 19 April a meeting under the presidentship of Qanita Bibi was held at Peshawar; Begum Habibullah (UP) was the main speaker. She appealed to the Muslim women of the Frontier to join the League in order to combat the Hindu women who had formed their own societies. Begum Mufti Abdul Wadud was made the President of the nascent branch of the Frontier Women ML and Qanita became its Vice President. No further details are available of other office holders.[860] Nothing was heard of this branch of the League for a year. In April 1940 some activities by the women Leaguers were reported from Peshawar,[861] but on the whole the branch remained dormant for a long time. The first serious foray of the women's League was their participation in the elections of 1945-46. In October 1945 the AIML send a delegation to the Frontier under Lady Abdullah Haroon, President All India Zenana ML. The delegation reached Peshawar on 17 October. Meetings were addressed at Peshawar and Mardan, exhorting the Muslim women to vote for the League candidates in the elections and to contribute generously to the League's election funds.[862] When the meetings were over, a 'large number of *purdah* women' were reported as enrolling themselves as the founder members of the WML.[863] Another branch of the WML was formed at Peshawar with Begum Qazi Mir Ahmad as President and Begum Abdul Wahid as Secretary. The WML supported the official League candidates during elections.[864]

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[859]: *Pakhtun*, 24 June 1946; also 1 April 1946, 17 April 1946, 24 April 1946, 17 May 1946, 24 May 1946, 1 June 1946, 17 June 1946, 24 June 1946, 17 August 1946, 9 September 1946, 9 October 1946, 17 November 1946, 24 November 1946, 17 December 1946 and 1 June 1947.

On 2 March 1947, a small procession of women Leaguers was organised at Abbottabad by Mrs. Kamal-ud-Din, the Hazara League leader. She appealed to the Muslim women to join the League's civil disobedience against the Congress ministry.[865] On 12 March another women's procession set out in Peshawar. The procession, consisting of 25 ladies in *burqas*, marched through the main bazaars of the city and left a 'deep impression' on other Muslim women.[866]

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[860]: *Khyber Mail*, 23 April 1939; CID Diaries, F. No. 769, SBP, p. 75.

[861]: *Khyber Mail*, 28 April 1940; CID Diaries, F. No. 803, SBP, p. 3.

[862]: Other members of the delegation included Begum Salma Tassaduq, Begum Hakam, Fatima Begum, Miss Zubeda Shah, Begum Karim Dad and Begum Syed Habibullah. CID Diaries, 17 October 1945, F. No. 754, SBP, p. 125(a); *Khyber Mail*, 12 October 1945; Sarfaraz H. Mirza, *Muslim Women's Role in the Pakistan Movement* (Lahore, 1969), p. 76.

[863]: *Khyber Mail*, 19 October 1945.

[864]: Interview with Qanita Bibi, Peshawar, 7 October 1984.

[865]: CID Diaries, 3 March 1947, F. No. 803, SBP, p. 67.

During the League's civil disobedience in the Frontier, women's processions in Peshawar became a routine. Other affected towns were Mardan, Kohat and Abbottabad, but no women's demonstration was reported from Bannu or D.I.Khan. The rural areas of the province also remained untouched by the women's agitation. The main reasons were the popularity of and support for the KKs in rural areas, and the observance of a strict *purdah* system there. Since it is a significant Pashtoon value that no physical force must ever be used against women, the women Leaguers were left free to organise meetings and processions, and they enjoyed full freedom of expression and movement. After the fall of the Unionist Ministry in the Punjab, where there was a notable presence of women Leaguers, mostly from the elite, they tried to build a similar base in the N-WFP.[867] The women workers of the League came in large number from the Punjab[868] to assist the Frontier WML against the Congress ministry. The Chief Minister's policy was to arrest no women, so there was no restriction on the women Leaguers, and they acted freely against the ministry. The women agitators disrupted the government machinery to a great extent. On several occasions the provincial Secretariat was stormed and the 'Pakistan' flag hoisted. Picketing government installations, including the schools, was a routine matter.

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[866]: *Khyber Mail*, 14 March 1947. The members of the procession, according to *The Pakistan Times*, were the educated young ladies of Peshawar. 'A certain number [of people] was angry while others amused but most of the people were too stupefied to say anything. As the procession marched through the streets, shouting League slogans, the public stood and stared. The women of Peshawar watched from their house-tops and gazed at their veiled-sisters in the streets below. When the procession returned to the League office in Egerton Road, these brave women were exhausted physically, but their spirits were undaunted. They made a history for the women of the Frontier Province'. *The Pakistan Times*, 29 March 1947.

[867]: D. Willmer, 'Women as Participants in the Pakistan Movement: Modernization and the Promise of a Moral State', *MAS*, 30, 3 (1996), pp. 573-590.

[868]: Prominent women Leaguers from Punjab and other parts of India who assisted the Frontier WML against Congress ministry during the civil disobedience movement included Fatima Begum, Nasira Siddiqi, Zubeda Shah. Begum Karim Dad. Mumtaz Shahnawaz and Hassan Ara. *The Pakistan Times*. 2 April 1947.

'Pakistan Tickets' were issued at railway stations. To check the advance of the women agitators, the police linked arms to block them, and, when their lines were broken, they retreated and reformed their passive barricades. The first serious injuries to women protesters were incurred on 14 April when the women Leaguers attempted to impede the 58 Down Bombay Express coming from the Peshawar Cantonment. The protesters sat down on the railway track and the engine driver did not stop the train. Five women were seriously injured while another 30 received minor injuries. Following this incident, they were prevented by the PML from exposing themselves to serious physical danger.[869]

Thus the League successfully exploited the traditional Pashtoon values to its advantage by usefully bringing out their female workers against the Congress ministry. The women protesters were given complete freedom of speech and movement throughout the agitation; in very rare cases expulsion orders were served asking them to leave some particular locality. No women agitator was arrested, physically assaulted or tortured by the Congress ministry, as it was against Pashtoon codes to cause harm to females.

Mountbatten's Frontier Visit

The Central government did not remain idle for long in relation to the happenings in the N-WFP. It had its own plans for the 'troublesome' Frontier, based on the information and the pro-League stance of the provincial bureaucracy and the

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[869]: CID Diaries, March-May 1947, F Nos. 802, 803, 812, 813, 814 and 815, SBP; *C&MG*, April 1947; *The Pakistan Times*, April 1947; Interviews with Mumtaz Majid, Peshawar, 31 October 1984; Nazir Tila M. Khan, Peshawar, 10 December 1984; Sardar Jaffar, Peshawar, 18 November 1984; Qanita Bibi, Peshawar, 7 October 1984; Rittenberg, 'Independence Movement', p. 380.

Governor. Caroe was convinced of the 'waning influence' of the Khan Brothers and a rise in the popularity of the ML in the Frontier.[870] By December, he had no doubts that Jinnah would 'shortly turn most of his energies in this direction in an endeavour to put things right from his point of view up here'.[871] Caroe warned Khan Sahib of the growing influence of the ML and advised him to release the opposition members, to allow public meetings, to announce the holding of fresh elections, and to accommodate the Leaguers in the ministry. However, to Caroe's chagrin, Khan Sahib refused flatly to accede to his advice.[872] Caroe remained insistent on his views. He foresaw the fall of the Congress ministry within a few days.[873] Presenting a gloomy situation in the N-WFP, Caroe informed the Viceroy that 'large processions are daily parading in all cities in defiance of the ban and have begun invading cantonments. Jails are overcrowded and further arrests will compel release of ordinary criminals. Police are tired and inadequate and aid by troops may well lead to firing on demonstrations. Tribes are restive and further firing incidents may cause them to raid'. He further added that his advice to the Premier regarding an attempt at conciliation or to aim at a coalition was turned down by the former point-blank.[874]

Lord Ismay, an old friend of Caroe was sent by the Viceroy to the Frontier to apprise the Viceroy of the latest situation. After prolonged discussions with the Governor Ismay came to share Caroe's views. He recommended to the Viceroy that the Governor should be allowed to use his Special Powers, by dissolving the Frontier ministry and declaring Governor's rule in the N-WFP.[875] Ismay also suggested to the Viceroy, that to obtain a peaceful resolution of the Frontier tangle, either a coalition government of League and Congress should be formed, or an announcement should be made by the Governor for the holding of fresh general elections before the transfer of power.[876] Mountbatten next summoned Lt. Col. de la Fargue, the former Chief Secretary for the N-WFP, and asked his confidential opinion. Col. la Fargue opined that in the case of fair and free elections in the Frontier, Congress would be successful.[877] However, Mitchell, the newly appointed Chief Secretary, assessed the situation differently. He and other senior bureaucrats were convinced that unless Congress could offer some substantial proof of its change in policy to accommodate the Leaguers' demands, there would be no end to the communal violence. Khan Sahib's adamant refusal to yield to League pressure had upset Caroe.[878] According to him, the Premier 'entirely fails to appreciate the strength that lies behind the League movement'. To Caroe the best course would be 'if Khan Sahib would make overtures for a coalition under him on a guarantee that the Ministry would be a Pathan one and severed its connection with Congress'.[879] During the second and third weeks of April, deadlock between the Governor and his ministers was reported. The Leaguers opined that it would result either in the resignation of the ministers or the dismissal of the ministry by Caroe.[880] The Governor was warned to weigh both pros and cons before taking such an extreme step.[881]

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[870]: Caroe's Judgement on Nehru's Frontier Visit, Mss. EUR., F. 203/1, IOLR, pp. 4-5.
[871]: Caroe to Colville, 23 December 1946, *ibid.* p. 72.
[872]: Caroe to Wavell, 8 March 1947, *ibid.* pp. 89-91.
[873]: Caroe to Mountbatten, 22 March 1947, Mss. EUR., F. 200/96, IOLR, p. 1.
[874]: Caroe to Mountbatten, 31 March 1947, *ibid.* p. 2.

One of the most important tasks before Mountbatten was to transfer power to Indian hands peacefully. On his arrival in India he found the 'troublesome Frontier' to be the battleground between the Congress and the ML. The Governor of the N-WFP, who

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[875]: Notes on an interview between the Governor of N-WFP and Ismay, 2 April 1947, *ibid.* p. 4.

[876]: Joint Report to the Viceroy by Ismay and E. Mieville, 16 April 1947, *ibid.* p. 18.

[877]: Record of interview between Mountbatten and Lt. Col. de la Fargue, 11 April 1947, *TP*, X, pp. 196-197.

[878]: 'We are not going to be cowed down by the present civil disobedience of the Muslim League', remarked Khan Sahib, 'so long as my people want me to stay on, no body can shake this Ministry'. *C&MG*, 15 April 1947.

[879]: Caroe to Mountbatten, 7 April 1947, L/P&J/3/224, IOLR, p. 62.

[880]: *The Pakistan Times*, 10 April 1947.

had had a soft spot for the ML, was convinced of the swing of power towards the League. However, only fresh general elections would prove that the majority of the Muslims were behind the League and that they supported Pakistan. Caroe pressed his case personally in the Governors' Conference, held at Delhi on 16 April. He presented a gloomy picture of the latest situation in the N-WFP, where the administration, according to Caroe, was 'nearing the breaking point', and, inspired by the ML's civil disobedience, the tribes also were 'organising themselves on a scale which he had not seen in all his experience in the Frontier'. His proposed solution was an announcement of the holding of fresh general elections in the Frontier.[882] Nehru had earlier concurred in principle with the Viceroy's suggestion of holding fresh elections in the Frontier to obtain the real views of the electorate on whether to join a Hindustan or a Pakistan Group.[883] He now objected to the method of conducting the proposed elections, and demanded that impartial elections be conducted by the permanent staff of an election commission rather than by the Governor. He further added that it was not a proper time for the proposed announcement, as it would appear that the government was yielding to the pressure of ML agitation.[884] However, next day, Nehru changed his mind. He informed the Viceroy that in fact the proposal for fresh elections by the Governor of the N-WFP had been the demand of the PML. It would certainly be regarded as a 'triumph' for the Muslim League and as 'an open rebuff to the present Ministry'. Nehru suggested that no such statement should be made, and that a joint

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[881]: *C&MG*, 15 April 1947.

[882]: Minutes of the Viceroy's Third Miscellaneous Meeting, 16 April 1947, Delhi, *TP*, X, pp. 286-292.

[883]: Record of interview between Mountbatten and Nehru, 8 April 1947, *TP*, X, p. 154.

[884]: Minutes of Viceroy's Third Miscellaneous Meeting, 16 April 1947, *ibid.*, and of Fourth Miscellaneous Meeting, 18 April 1947, *ibid.*, pp. 315-319.

appeal for peace be made by Gandhi and Jinnah to stop the accelerating communal violence in the N-WFP.[885]

A joint peace appeal was issued by Gandhi and Jinnah condemning the acts of violence and lawlessness. They denounced 'the use of force to achieve political ends' and called upon Indians to refrain from violence of any kind resulting in the increase of hostilities between the communities.[886] As a gesture of goodwill towards reaching a peaceful settlement of the issue, the Frontier government also announced the release of those League prisoners who were not directly charged with violence.[887] The Viceroy held another meeting with Caroe, Liaquat and Nehru; the situation in the N-WFP was the main issue on the meeting agenda. No solution was reached. Mountbatten refused to yield to the League's pressure regarding Frontier affairs, and said that the ML 'will make it impossible for me to give a decision in favour of fresh elections while the programme of agitation (usually leading to violence) in the Province is allowed to continue'.[888]

To obtain a first hand assessment of the situation at the Frontier, termed by the Viceroy 'the greatest danger spot in India and the bone of contention' between Congress and the ML, he decided personally to visit the N-WFP.[889] Jinnah was requested by Mountbatten to ask his followers in the N-WFP to refrain from violence.[890] Jinnah informed the League workers in the Frontier of the intended visit of the Viceroy to study the situation personally and of his 'determination to remove the root-cause of the serious trouble and situation that has arisen in the Province'. Jinnah was convinced of Mountbatten's sense of 'fair' play, and appealed to his followers to 'maintain peace, law and order so as to give the Viceroy every opportunity to fully understand the situation'.[891] Jinnah proposed to the Viceroy that he should meet an 'orderly procession', but Mountbatten refused on the grounds that this might provoke Khan Sahib. However, he agreed to meet a League delegation in the Governor's House, Peshawar.[892]

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[885]: Nehru to Mountbatten, 17 April 1947, *ibid.* pp. 304-307.
[886]: *Khyber Mail*, 18 April 1947.
[887]: *ibid.*
[888]: Viceroy's Personal Report No. 4, 24 April 1947, *TP*, X, pp. 404-405.
[889]: *ibid.* Report No. 5, p. 534.
[890]: Minutes of Viceroy's Seventh Miscellaneous Meeting, 23 April 1947, *ibid.* pp. 378-379.

The PML with the full support of the Central organisation of the League, decided to stage a huge demonstration on the occasion of the Viceroy's Frontier visit. The main purpose was to convince the Viceroy that the overwhelming majority of the N-WFP Muslims were behind the League's demand for the dismissal of Khan Sahib's ministry and inclusion of their province in Pakistan.[893] A large number of League workers and supporters from all over the province assembled at Peshawar. At the League's call, on 28 April a *hartal* was observed at Peshawar. To show solidarity with the ML, green flags were hoisted on top of houses, shops, bicycles and *tongas*. A huge protest meeting was organised in Cunningham Park, with Badshah of Bamkhel in the chair. Other speakers included Nishtar, Noon and Khurshid Anwar. Resolutions were passed accusing the Congress ministry of interference in their religion and demanding from the Central government the immediate dismissal of Khan Sahib's ministry.[894]

The Viceroy, on his arrival to Peshawar on 28 April, was driven straightaway to the Governor's House. Mountbatten found Caroe in a state of some anxiety and agitation. He seemed to be perturbed about the League demonstration, which was less than a mile away, and which intended to place its grievances before the Viceroy. 'Although the leaders of the meeting had undertaken not to break the law by forming a procession', it was reported, however, that they 'would insist on seeing the Viceroy even at the cost of breaking the law'.[895] Mountbatten had a brief 'Council of War' with Caroe and Khan Sahib. It was agreed that the Viceroy should show himself to the League demonstrators, estimated at above 50,000, from the top of the nearby embankment. Khan Sahib informed the Viceroy that, to avoid the possibility of a direct clash between the Leaguers and the KKs, he had called off a simultaneous KK demonstration on the occasion. As any sort of speech was out of the question, Mountbatten, accompanied by Caroe and other local civil and military authorities just stood there waving to the crowds for a few minutes. The Leaguers greeted him by raising the slogans of 'Mountbatten *Zinda Bad*' and 'Pakistan *Zinda Bad*'.[896]

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[891]: Shahid, *Jinnah: Speeches, Statements, Writings, Letters*, pp. 57-58; *The Pakistan Times*, 27 April 1947.

[892]: Mountbatten to Caroe, 27 April 1947, *TP*, X, p. 471; Mountbatten to Jinnah, 27 April 1947, F. No. 22, QAP, p. 231.

[893]: CID Diaries, 26 April 1947, F. No. 762, SBP, p. 109; *The Pakistan Times*, 24 April 1947.

In Peshawar, Mountbatten held meetings with the Leaguers, the Governor, the Ministers and the tribal delegations. Out of 12 Leaguers who met him, six were from the meeting and six, including Qaiyum, Samin Jan and the Pir of Manki had been among those who had been in prison, but had come out on parole. Qaiyum began with a tirade against the ministry and demanded its dismissal. For him, the only solution to preserve peace was to divide India into Pakistan and Hindustan. Mountbatten promised that within two months time they would receive details of the procedure for the transfer of authority, but, until a decision was announced, the Leaguers should withdraw their 'unconstitutional pressure' against the Frontier ministry.[897]

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[894]: CID Diaries, 28-29 April 1947, F. No. 813, SBP, pp. 143-157.

[895]: Press note issued by the Viceroy's Camp, 28 April 1947, *The Pakistan Times*, 29 April 1947.

[896]: *The Pakistan Times*, 29 April 1947; Scott to Abell, 28 April 1947, *TP*, X, pp. 476-477; Mss. EUR., F 200/96, IOLR, p. 51; L. Collins, D. Lapierre, *Freedom at Midnight* (New York, 1975), p. 129; A. Campbell-Johnson, *Mission With Mountbatten* (London, 1953), p. 74.

[897]: Meeting between Mountbatten and 12 ML leaders at Peshawar, 28 April 1947, F. No. 22, QAP, pp. 26-27.

During his conversation with the Ministers, the Viceroy argued that since the installation of the interim government at the centre, the Frontier Muslims foresaw a Hindu-dominated future government of India; this provided the ML with a chance to seize the N-WFP. Furthermore, the ML demonstration was a sign of doubts about the popularity of Congress at the Frontier. The ministers, repudiating the claims of the League leaders about its popularity in the province, gave the example of the last general elections, which were fought on the Pakistan issue and in which the Leaguers faced a humiliating defeat. To this the Viceroy pointed out that the situation was different then: the Cabinet Mission had not come and there was no date fixed for the British departure from India. They accused Caroe of being the patron-in-chief of the PML. According to the charges, the bureaucracy, following the Governor, was also not co-operating with the ministry. Mountbatten promised to investigate the matter. He then informed them of the possibility of fresh elections. According to the Viceroy, it was not yielding to the pressure of the ML, but following the directives of the British government to 'transfer power in the manner which the Indian peoples themselves wanted'.[898]

On 29 April, the Viceroy met an Afridi Jirga at Landi Kotal, and on the same day another of Waziris in Peshawar. Both Jirgas showed concern regarding their future, and made it clear that in no way were they prepared to contemplate submitting to a State likely to be dominated by Hindus.[899] Some writers have rightly termed the Viceroy's visit of the N-WFP a 'turning point'[900] in the province's history, as it was during this visit that the Viceroy was convinced of the ML's popularity and decided on a referendum on the issue of Hindustan and Pakistan.

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[898]: Viceroy's meeting with the Governor, N-WFP and Four Ministers, 28 April 1947, *TP*, X, pp. 492-495; Mss. EUR., F. 200/96, IOLR, p. 61(A).

[899]: Mountbatten to Nehru, 30 April 1947, *TP*, X, pp. 491-492.

After his Frontier visit, Mountbatten sent Ismay to London with his partition plan, including fresh elections in the N-WFP. On 2 May the Viceroy had a meeting with Jinnah and Liaquat. They were informed of his decision to hold fresh elections and of his waiting for its approval from London. The proposed elections, according to Mountbatten, would be held on 'Pakistan or Hindustan'. He appealed to Jinnah to restrain his followers in the FP from the use of force to promote communal strife. Liaquat did not agree with the Viceroy, making the point that if civil disobedience had been called off immediately after the Viceroy's visit, the League would have been accused of following the British line. Mountbatten's next suggestion was to summon some prominent Frontier Leaguers to Delhi to advise them to stop taking out processions and to keep their meetings peaceful.[901]

The PML refused to call off its movement and vowed to continue until the demands for the dismissal of the Congress ministry were conceded, or the election was officially announced. Four League leaders, Qaiyum, Samin Jan, Arbab N. Mohammad and the Pir of Manki, were paroled, and along with Abdullah Shah were sent to Delhi to discuss the situation with Jinnah.[902] Throughout this period, Jinnah was engaged in persuading the Viceroy to dissolve the Congress ministry, but the Viceroy refused bluntly. Mountbatten was aware of Congress pressure on him if he dissolved the ministry without any valid reason. He considered dissolution not only 'wrong morally and legally' but also, according to him, it would 'shake the confidence of Congress' in Mountbatten's impartiality and might 'well invite violence in other parts of India leading to further attempts to overthrow legally constituted and popularly elected Governments'. Mountbatten's own choice was for a referendum, conducted under the

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[900]: H. V. Hodson, 'The Role of Lord Mountbatten', Philips and Wainwright, *The Partition of India*, p. 120.
[901]: Record of interview between Mountbatten, Jinnah and Liaquat, 2 May 1947, *TP*, X, pp. 566-569.
[902]: *The Pakistan Times*. 4 May 1947.

direct supervision of the Viceroy, instead of a new election, as this would cost the government less and would spare a lot of time and energy. Nehru consented to the holding of a referendum on the simple issue of Pakistan or Hindustan. Jinnah was at first upset but when informed that 'the referendum would abolish the heavy weightage (12 seats in 50) which the Hindu-Sikh minority have had in the N-WFP, he began to prefer the referendum to an election'.[903] Jinnah, after getting assurances from the provincial League leadership that they could win a referendum, reaffirmed his support for the civil disobedience, but urged his followers to desist from communal violence in the province.[904]

However, the PML continued its civil disobedience until 4 June when the partition plan of 3 June was officially announced, which included the referendum. The League circles expressed their jubilation at the announcement of HMG's partition plan, and the 'War Council' formally called off its civil disobedience, with immediate effect. Moreover, the League prisoners were directed to avail themselves of the amnesty earlier ordered by the Frontier ministry.[905]

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[903]: Viceroy's Personal Report No. 6, 8 May 1947, *TP*, X, pp. 681-688; Mountbatten to Earl of Listowel, 1 May 1947, *ibid.* P. 530; Mountbatten to Ismay, 6 May 1947, *ibid.* pp. 633-634.

[904]: Jinnah's statement of 7 May 1947, *The Pakistan Times*, 8 May 1947.

[905]: CID Diaries. 3-5 June 1947. F Nos. 814 (177-179) 783 (69-71). SBP.

The Reality of Pakistan: Third June Plan, Pashtoonistan and the Referendum

The HMG's plan of 3 June announced an immediate transfer of power into Indian hands. 15 August was chosen as the earliest possible date for that purpose. It also recommended the holding of a referendum in the N-WFP on the issue of joining Hindustan or Pakistan. On 2 June Mountbatten summoned the representatives of Congress, the AIML and the Sikhs and asked for their comments. Nehru, speaking on behalf of Congress, confirmed acceptance of the plan. Baldev Singh showed his willingness and accepted the plan. Jinnah informed the Viceroy that he would put the plan before the AIML Council and then would be able to give the exact response of his party. However, he promised his help and full support in getting the plan approved by the AIML Council.[906] The AIML Council met at Delhi on 9 June and resolved that 'although it cannot agree to the partition of Bengal and the Punjab or give its consent to such partition, it has to consider HMG's Plan for the transfer of power as a whole'. Jinnah was authorised by the Council 'to accept the fundamental principles of the Plan as a compromise', leaving it to him, 'with full authority to work out all details of the Plan in an equitable and just manner with regard to carrying out the complete division of India' on the basis and fundamental principles embodied in it.[907] The AICC met at Delhi on 14 June and approved the proposed partition plan.[908] Mountbatten next met Gandhi who was vehemently preaching against partition at his prayer meetings. The Viceroy used his tact to persuade Gandhi not to act against partition as such action would certainly lead to violence. 'To have secured the assent, however unwilling, of Mr. Gandhi, the Congress leaders and Mr. Jinnah to partition of India', Mountbatten had achieved a 'diplomatic triumph'.'[909]

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[906]: Jinnah's Broadcast of 3 June 1947, *IAR*, 1947, I, pp. 253-254.
[907]: *The Pakistan Times*, 12 June 1947.
[908]: *IAR*, 1947, I, pp. 122, 133.

The drastic changes at Delhi aroused mixed feelings in the N-WFP. While the League was jubilant, and satisfied by the announcement of the holding of a plebiscite on the choice of India or Pakistan, the KKs were indignant at it. The Frontier Congress was left with no other option but to adjust itself to the fast-changing circumstances. With the announcement of the British withdrawal from India, one of the main objectives of the KKs seemed to be fulfilled. To recapture the loyalties of its electorate and the province's population, it had to present a somewhat modified programme. Since the inception of the movement in 1921, the party leadership had been advocating the preservation of Pashtoon identity and cultural values based on Pashtoonwali and their historical heritage, which they had always put in an all-India context. From the beginning they had favoured a United India. With the new developments taking place at the all-India level, i.e., division of the sub-continent between Hindustan and Pakistan, the Frontier nationalists started re-thinking their own future. During the latter half of May and early June the KKs started an organised campaign for an autonomous Pashtoonistan.[910] To their chagrin, the Congress had accepted the partition plan, including a referendum in the N-WFP, without even consulting the Frontier leaders. There was only a token protest from Kripalani, the Congress President, who showed his dissent and protested at the holding of a referendum without the Frontier Congress being given the choice to insert a third option, i.e., an autonomous Pashtoonistan, with Hindustan and Pakistan. He informed the Viceroy of the growing demand for Pashtoonistan in the province, and demanded that the proposed referendum should also provide for this. Mountbatten flatly rejected it and replied that it was at Nehru's request that a proposal to allow every province to vote for Pakistan, Hindustan or independence had been dropped, and that they could hardly expect him to reintroduce it at this stage.[911] Rittenberg has argued that this was simply to show the Frontier Congress leaders that Congress high command had tried its best to convince the central government of the validity of their demand and exhausted 'every avenue of recourse' on behalf of the Frontier Congress.[912] Actually, they regarded the Viceroy's proposals as the best available under the circumstances, and in no way were risking the future of India on the Frontier issue.[913] On the Viceroy's negative reply regarding the inclusion of a third option, Congress withdrew its suggestions without even a slight protest and dropped the issue for ever. Probably one of the main reasons was that Patel and Nehru, two important leaders of Congress, were convinced that until the demand for Pakistan was conceded, there would be no peace.[914] Justifying the Congress' acceptance of the partition plan, a Congress historian has put it in the following words:

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[909]: Hodson, *The Great Divide*, p. 314.

[910]: On 13 May Qazi Ataullah's following statement appeared in the press:
'First of all we want to have an independent sovereign State of Pathans and then we will visualise a joint Jirga (Council) of [the] whole Pathan nation which will ultimately negotiate on equal footing either with Hindustan or Pakistan, whichever offers us better terms... we will never agree to sacrifice Pathan's interests at the altar of Pakistan. When there is no political or moral obligation, why should we sell ourselves to Hindustan or Pakistan'. Rittenberg. 'Independence Movement'. p. 386.

> The Congress was anxious to get rid of the British. The League was anxious to get power without the constant fear of Congress hegemony. Attlee was anxious that his vexed question should be settled rapidly and once for all. The Indian people wanted to be free of foreign rule. The British people were tired of war and were in no mood to send soldiers to keep under control an unwilling and hostile country. When all the parties were thus anxious for an

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[911]: Mountbatten to Earl of Listowel, 3 June 1947, *TP*, XI, (London, 1982), pp. 104-105.

[912]: Rittenberg, 'Independence Movement', pp. 388-389.

[913]: Minutes of Viceroy's Tenth Misc. Meeting, 8 May 1947, *TP*, X, pp. 670-675.

[914]: Speeches of Nehru and Patel at AICC, 15 June 1947, *IAR*, 1947, I, pp. 133-137. For more details see R. Gandhi, *Patel A Life* (Ahmadabad, 1992), pp. 403-404; Puri, *Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan*, pp. 98-99, and, A. I. Singh. *The Origins of the Partition of India 1936-1947* (Delhi. 1987). pp. 229-235.

> early settlement, it was perhaps not surprising that Mountbatten's formula should be readily accepted.[915]

Probably Congress was weary of 'almost a hopeless fight'[916] with the ML and thus was more inclined towards a separate India, of course, free from the fear of the League's interference. Moreover, the Congress leaders ultimately accepted partition because they wanted a strong unitary state not a loose federation which would be difficult to govern.

However, Gandhi, who could not see Abdul Ghaffar Khan's 'agonies and grief,'[917] opposed the referendum. He regarded it as 'dangerous',[918] and held that it might lead to violence amongst the inhabitants of the N-WFP. Gandhi suggested that the Viceroy should advise Jinnah to proceed to the FP and explain Pakistan there.[919] According to him it would be unfair to ask the Pashtoons to choose between Hindustan and Pakistan 'without knowing what each is. He should at least know where his entity will be fully protected'.[920] Differences thus emerged between Gandhi and the Congress high command on the issue of the referendum. Nehru and Patel were supporting it while Gandhi was against it.[921] The differences in 'outlook and opinion' between Gandhi and the other Congress leaders increased to such an extent that Gandhi regarded his presence at Delhi as unnecessary, and decided to go to Bihar to spend more time in the rehabilitation and relief of the victims of communal strife.[922] Nehru's replies to these letters are not available. Abdul Ghaffar Khan was summoned to Delhi so that the whole affair could be discussed with him before any final decision was reached.[923]

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[915]: H. Kabir, 'Muslim Politics, 1942-7', Philips and Wainwright, *The Partition of India*, p. 402.
[916]: Khalid Bin Sayeed, 'Pathan Regionalism', *South Atlantic Quarterly*, LXIII, 4, Autumn 1964, p. 496.
[917]: 'Talk With Manu Gandhi', *CWMG*, 88, (Ahmedabad, 1983), p. 50-52.
[918]: Gandhi to Mountbatten, 8 May 1947, *TP*, X, p. 667.
[919]: Gandhi's suggestion to the Viceroy, 6 June 1947, *CWMG*, 88, pp. 126-127.
[920]: Gandhi to Mountbatten, 10/11 June 1947, *CWMG*, 88, pp. 94-95.
[921]: Gandhi to Nehru, 7 June 1947, *CWMG*, 88, pp. 94-95.
[922]: Gandhi to Nehru, 9 June 1947, *ibid.* p. 113.

The CWC and AICC ratified the decision regarding the partition of the sub-continent and a referendum in the N-WFP. Abdul Ghaffar Khan was 'stunned' at the decision of the WC as the Congress leadership had always assured the KKs that it would not accept partition of India under any circumstances.[924] Reminding the members of the long affiliation of the KKs with the Congress, Abdul Ghaffar Khan regarded it as an act of treachery by Congress that Congress had accepted the plan without even consulting their Frontier colleagues. 'We Pakhtuns stood by you and had undergone great sacrifices for attaining freedom', complained Abdul Ghaffar Khan, 'but you have now deserted us and thrown us to the wolves'. Speaking on the referendum issue, he stated that 'we shall not agree to hold referendum because we had decisively won the elections on the issue of Hindustan versus Pakistan and proclaimed the Pakhtun view on it to the world. Now, as India has disowned us, why should we have a referendum on Hindustan and Pakistan ? Let it be on Pakhtunistan or Pakistan'.[925] Besides Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Sahajananda, Lohia and J. P. Narain also spoke against the acceptance of the partition plan but failed to reverse the decision of Nehru and his associates[926]. On 14-15 June the AICC met in Delhi and endorsed the CWC decision. P. Tandon, C. Gidwani, Hifzur Rahman and Kitchlew showed their resentment and termed it a surrender to communalism. Neither Abdul Ghaffar Khan nor Khan Sahib was invited from the N-WFP. By 157 votes to 29, with 32 remaining neutral, a resolution endorsing the CWC step was passed.[927] Abdul Ghaffar Khan was authorised by the CWC and the FPCC to negotiate with the ML for a 'honourable settlement' of the Frontier issue.[928]

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[923]: Gandhi to Abdul Ghaffar Khan, 9 June 1947, *ibid.* pp. 112-113.

[924]: B. Ray, 'A Unique Leader of a Unique Movement: Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the Pakhtun National Struggle', *Centre For Contemporary Studies*, NMML, (Delhi, 1993), p. 34; *IAR*, 1947, I, pp. 117-118, 122, 133.

[925]: Pyarelal, *Thrown to the Wolves* (Calcutta, 1966), pp. 96-97; Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan*, p. 424; Pyarelal, *Mahatma Gandhi: The Last Phase II* (Ahmedabad, 1958), pp. 258-283

[926]: *IAR*, 1947, I, pp. 115-118.

On 18 June a meeting[929] was arranged between Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Jinnah. Abdul Ghaffar Khan informed Jinnah of the readiness of the KKs to join Pakistan provided Jinnah accepted: (a) complete provincial autonomy, (b) the right for the province to secede from Pakistan if it so desired, and (c) the right to admission to the N-WFP of contiguous territories inhabited by Pashtoons. Jinnah asked them first to join the CA of Pakistan, and then to decide there all these matters with mutual understanding. Abdul Ghaffar Khan replied that after attending his party meeting at Bannu on 21 June he would inform Jinnah of the outcome.[930]

On 21 June a joint meeting of the FPCC, the Congress Parliamentary Party, KKs and Zalmai Pakhtun was held at Bannu. The members were informed of the acceptance of the partition plan by the AICC. It had caused deep disappointment and resentment amongst them. They were asked for their opinion on the matter, and it was unanimously agreed that after holding the last general elections a year before, there was no need of fresh elections on the issue of Hindustan and Pakistan. However, if Delhi insisted upon new elections, they should be on Pashtoonistan versus Pakistan. The establishment of a separate Pashtoon State was demanded, which would have its own constitution, based on the traditional Pashtoon culture and values, and would be framed on the basis of an Islamic conception of democracy, equality and social justice.[931] It was further decided to boycott the referendum because it did not include the option for Pashtoonistan.[932] Jinnah reacted sharply to the decision of the FPCC and regarded it as 'a direct breach of the acceptance by the Congress of HMG's Plan of June 3'. According to Jinnah, after the AICC acceptance of the 3 June Plan, which provided for a referendum in the N-WFP, the FPCC was bound to honour the agreement. 'This is a new stunt', remarked Jinnah, 'recently started and slogans are being invented to mislead the people of the N-WFP'. He appealed to the Muslims of the FP to work wholeheartedly for and support the referendum in favour of Pakistan, as they were Muslims first and Pashtoons afterwards.[933]

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[927]: *IAR*, 1947, I, pp. 131-137. Interview Ansar Harvani, Delhi, 13 January 1995. Harvani was then a member of the CWC. He also cast his vote against the partition of India.

[928]: *Madina*, 21 June 1947; *The Pakistan Times*, 13 June 1947.

[929]: 'Do not please build any great hopes on this', remarked Gandhi. 'But we can certainly hope that the wound that we have receive in the shape of Pakistan can be prevented from becoming still deeper'. Speech at Prayer Meeting, Delhi, 18 June 1947, *CWMG*, 88, p. 174.

[930]: *Pakhtun*, 1 July 1947, pp. 13-15; Mievelle to Mountbatten, 18 June 1947, *TP*, XI, pp. 494-495; *The Pakistan Times*. 19 June 1947: F. No. 153. SBP. p. 195.

The ML leaders called upon the Frontier Muslims to cast their votes in favour of Pakistan. Jinnah was confident that 'the people of the Frontier will give their verdict by a solid vote to join the Pakistan Constituent Assembly'.[934] The Frontier Muslims were asked not to oppose the ML at that critical juncture, as it might provide a chance for Congress to harden its opposition 'to legitimate Muslim demands' and thus pave the way for intensified mutual strife and discord. 'The Frontier can prosper only', the Leaguers opined, 'as a free partner in a progressive, democratic State as we are sure Pakistan will be'.[935] A Frontier Committee was appointed by the League high command to supervise the activities of the Leaguers in connection with the Frontier referendum.[936] The AIML directed its workers and activists from other parts of the country to help the Frontier Muslims to win the referendum in favour of Pakistan. On the directives of the League leaders, delegations and individuals thronged the province to work for the League cause.[937] Propaganda was spread through two main channels: public meetings and posters. The N-WFP Muslims were reminded of their duty: to vote for Pakistan and establish their own government. The anti-colonial sentiments of the Pashtoons were aroused by telling them that on 15 August the Union Jack would be hauled down and it 'lies now for the Pathans to decide whether they will like to replace it with the League's green and crescent, which stood for Muslim brotherhood and independence, or the Congress tri-colour, which stood for Hindu domination'.[938] Promises were made to appoint Muslim Governors after the formation of Pakistan. The League orators told the people of the Frontier that they had recommended Jinnah to rename the province Pathanistan.[939] Posters were issued exhorting the Frontier Muslims to vote for Pakistan as it 'is a vote for Islam'.[940]

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[931]: Interviews with Fazal Rahim Saqi, Wardagga, 17 November 1991; Nazim Sarfaraz Khan, Boobak, 17 November 1991; Abdul Ghani Khan, 3 February 1989; Abdul Ghaffar, *Zama Zhwand*, pp. 735-736.

[932]: Statement of Abdul Ghaffar Khan, 24 June 1947, *TP*, XI, pp. 594-595; Statement of Provincial Ministers, 26 June 1947, Lockhart to Mountbatten, 3 July 1947, *TP*, XI, pp. 847-850; Governor N-WFP to Viceroy, 23 June 1947, Mss. EUR., F. 200/97, IOLR, p. 172; *Madina*, 1 July 1947

[933]: Press statement of Jinnah, 28 June 1947, Delhi, *The Pakistan Times*, 1 and 4 July 1947.

[934]: Text of Broadcast by Mr. Jinnah, 3 June 1947, *TP*, XI, pp 97-98.

[935]: *The Pakistan Times*, 13 June 1947.

[936]: The members of the Committee included the Pir of Manki, I. I. Chundrigar, Syed Wajid Ali and Ghazanfar Ali. *The Pakistan Times*. 18 June 1947.

In pursuance of its policy of boycotting the referendum, the provincial Congress leaders started a whirlwind tour of the province. They urged their followers to support Pashtoonistan and boycott 'peacefully' the referendum.[941] As a protest against the exclusion of the Pashtoonistan question from the referendum, the FPCC decided to observe 7 July as 'Pashtoonistan Day'. More than five thousand KKs assembled at Peshawar. Large processions were taken out and the Pashtoons were exhorted to abstain from voting in the referendum.[942] Mountbatten was anxious to avoid violence at any cost and considered this harmful to the existing peace and tranquillity of the

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[937]. Prominent among those who came to the N-WFP for the referendum campaign included Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani, Maulana Abdus Sattar Niazi, Siddiq Ali Khan, M. H. Gazdar, Noon, Shaukat Hayat, Ghulam Nabi, Begum Jahan Ara Shahnawaz and Salma Tassaduq. For more details see *The Pakistan Times*, June-July 1947; F. No. 366, AFM; F Nos. 762, 763, 779, 782, 783, 786 and 804, SBP.

[938]. Ghazanfar Ali's speech at Abbottabad, 29 June 1947, *The Pakistan Times*, 1 July 1947.

[939]: Feroz K. Noon's speech at D.I.Khan, 1 July 1947, *The Pakistan Times*, 3 July 1947.

[940]: *The Pakistan Times*, 11 July 1947.

[941]: Lockhart to Mountbatten, 6 July 1947, Mss. EUR., F. 200/97, IOLR, p. 203(b); F Nos. 153, 231, SBP; *Madina*, 25 June 1947.

[942]: *Madina*, 13 July 1947; F Nos. 37 and 42, SBP.

Frontier. He requested Gandhi to ask Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his followers to curtail their activities and not to interfere with referendum affairs.[943] Gandhi advised Abdul Ghaffar Khan that there should be no demonstrations against the ML and any clash with them should be avoided. 'It was to be shown by cheerfully meeting blows or even meeting death at the hands of the opponents without the slightest sort of retaliation', remarked Gandhi. 'Boycott would certainly result in a legal victory for Pakistan, but it would be a moral defeat if without the slightest fear of violence from your side, the bulk of Pathans refrained in a dignified manner from participating in the referendum'.[944] Abdul Ghaffar Khan informed Gandhi of the provocations from the League side and the forbearance of the KKs. 'We have been working under very difficult and trying circumstances', replied Abdul Ghaffar Khan, 'but have adhered to non-violence in thought, word and deed. How long a state of affairs like this can last it is not easy for me to say'.[945]

One of the important task for Mountbatten before the holding of the referendum was to decide on the position of the Frontier Governor. Caroe, who had replaced Cunningham as Governor of the N-WFP in March 1946, was notorious in Congress circles for having used force against the KKs in 1930, in his capacity as the DC Peshawar. During the latter half of 1946 relations between Caroe and the Frontier Congress ministry deteriorated. He was accused of taking sides with the ML and of a bias against Congress. In October, on the eve of Nehru's Frontier visit, relations further worsened. The Political Department, under Caroe's direct supervision, was held accountable for all the hostile demonstrations against Nehru. During the League's civil disobedience, Caroe was criticised once again for his sympathies with the League and for acting against the advice of his Premier. The Frontier Congress was convinced that on the instigation of the Governor the bureaucracy was undermining the influence of Khan Sahib's ministry. In March 1947, the Viceroy was informed by Nehru of the lack of co-operation between the Governor and the Premier, and of their growing mutual distrust and lack of confidence in one other. The solution, according to Nehru, was the removal of Caroe.[946] The same demand was repeated by Gandhi and Abdul Ghaffar Khan.[947] Mountbatten confidentiallv asked the Chief Secretary of the N-WFP for his comments, and he 'very courageously' confirmed the above accusations.[948] The official Congress view on the matter was conveyed to the Viceroy by Nehru and Azad.[949] Mountbatten summoned Caroe and apprised him of the Congress allegations. Caroe accepted that he had many friends in the ML, but informed the Viceroy that he had many other friends who were non-Leaguers. To other charges he replied that he was trying to stop the Premier from using 'totalitarian methods' against his political opponents. Mountbatten warned Caroe of Congress' insistence on his removal, and told Caroe that the Viceroy's 'principal duty is to arrange for the peaceful and happy transfer of power to Indian hands, and that I cannot let anything or anybody stand in the way of this being achieved'.[950] In May Congress intensified its propaganda against Caroe.[951] Mountbatten informed Nehru that he was not yielding to Congress pressure. However, Mountbatten conveyed his apprehensions to Ismay, who was then in London, and asked him to apply to the India Office for a change of Governor. His own choice was for Lieutenant-General Rob McGregor Macdonald Lockhart, former

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[943]: Mountbatten to Gandhi, 4 July 1947, *TP*, XI, p. 883.

[944]: Gandhi to Abdul Ghaffar Khan, 5 July 1947, *CWMG*, 88, p. 276.

[945]: Abdul Ghaffar Khan to Gandhi, 12 July 1947, Mirza Shams ul Haq Personal Collection, Islamabad.

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[946]: Nehru to Wavell, 19 March 1947, *TP*, IX, pp. 988-989.

[947]: Record of interview between Mountbatten and Gandhi and Abdul Ghaffar Khan, 4 April 1947, *TP*, X, pp. 120-121.

[948]: Record of interview between Mountbatten and Lt. Col. de la Fargue, 11 April 1947, *TP*, X, pp. 196-197.

[949]: Record of interview between Mountbatten and Maulana Azad, 12 April 1947, *TP*, X, pp. 215-217; Mountbatten to Nehru, 10 April 1947, *ibid*. p. 182.

[950]: Record of interview between Mountbatten and Caroe, 14 April 1947, *ibid*. pp. 234-235.

Military Secretary at the India Office and the then Army Commander, as the new Frontier Governor.[952]

In early June, the demand was renewed, and the matter once again absorbed the attention of the Congress high command and the Viceroy.[953] The ML defended Caroe and showed resentment at his replacement. The intended removal of Caroe by the Viceroy was termed 'extraordinary' and 'dangerous'.[954] At last, however, Mountbatten had decided to remove Caroe. On 6 June the Frontier Governor was informed of Congress' continued insistence on his removal and the Viceroy's determination on a fair and impartial referendum. 'The time has come' Caroe was informed by Mountbatten, 'when I must, for the moment at any rate, replace you as Governor of the N-WFP'.[955] Mountbatten regarded this as the 'best solution for a difficult problem'.[956] Caroe, however, suspected his removal to be a 'package deal' between the Viceroy and Nehru. Thus Caroe was 'sacrificed' for the larger interest of a peaceful transfer of power.[957] On 18 June Lockhart replaced Caroe as the Governor of the N-WFP.[958]

Under the supervision of the army, the referendum was held between 6 and 17 July, and the referendum results were announced on 20 July. As Congress took no part in the polling, according to the official results the valid votes for Pakistan were 289,244

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[951]: Statement of A. J. Kishore, Secretary Congress, 4 May 1947, *IAR*, 1947, I, pp. 235-236.
[952]: Mountbatten t Ismay, 6 May 1947, *TP*, X, pp. 635-636.
[953]: Gandhi to Mountbatten, 2 June 1947, *CWMG*, 88, p. 60; Nehru to Mountbatten, 4 June 1947, *TP*, XI, pp. 122-123.
[954]: Liaquat Ali to Mountbatten, 11 June 1947, *ibid.* pp. 267-268.
[955]: Mountbatten to Caroe, 6 June 1947, *ibid.* pp. 172-173.
[956]: Mountbatten to Earl of Listowel, 12 June 1947, *ibid.* pp. 299-300.
[957]: Mievelle to Caroe, 19 June 1947, F. 203/2, *IOLR*, p. 22; Mss. EUR., F. 203/1, IOLR, p. 5: A. Singer. *Lords of Khyber* (London, 1984), p. 206.
[958]: *The Pakistan Times*. 19 June 1947.

and for India 2874. According to this estimate the votes polled in favour of Pakistan were 50.49% of the total electorate.[959] Lauding the 'victory' of the ML in the Frontier referendum, *The Pakistan Times* regarded the results as clear proof of the Pashtoon support for Pakistan. The Khan Brothers were advised to accept the 'verdict of the people and work shoulder to shoulder with the leaders of the ML to build a democratic Frontier Government which will not just talk about the people but genuinely look after their welfare'.[960] The Frontier Congress leaders were advised to give up their 'alliance with the Patels and Gandhis, to join hands with the Muslim League and shoulder the tremendous tasks of reconstruction facing the Pathans'.[961]

The KKs, however, regarded the referendum as a 'farce' and a 'one-sided' affair. 'As we took no part in the referendum', remarked Abdul Ghaffar Khan, 'the Muslim League had no hurdles to cross'.[962] According to Khan Sahib bogus votes were cast. Votes of Congressmen and their family members were cast in their absence. As the electoral roll had not been revised for a long time, even votes of those persons who were already dead had been recorded.[963] Surprisingly, the allegations of rigging and other fraudulent methods exercised by the Leaguers were confirmed by some prominent League leaders four decades after the actual event took place. In the absence of Congress scrutiny, they were free to act on their own behalf, of course, in most cases with the support of the Muslim polling staff. To deceive the general public, at each big polling booth a few votes were cast in support of India and the remainder went to Pakistan.[964] Some former members of the Congress criticised Abdul Ghaffar Khan for his boycott of the referendum. They were sure of their success even in the case of a referendum fought on the question of Pakistan versus Hindustan.[965] But according to political circles in the N-WFP, Abdul Ghaffar Khan could never agree to any step which might lead to violence among the inhabitants of the FP.

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[959]: Viceroy to Secretary of State, 20 July 1947, Mss. EUR., F. 200/97, IOLR, p. 221; *TP*. XII, (London, 1983), p. 277.

[960]: *The Pakistan Times*, 22 July 1947.

[961]: *The Pakistan Times*, 30 July 1947.

[962]: Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan*, p. 448.

[963]: *The Pakistan Times*. 19 July 1947.

The League's success in the Frontier referendum was regarded as an expression of the willingness of the people of the N-WFP to join Pakistan. The PML circles were jubilant at the results, but the KKs, who were the real losers in the whole drama, termed it a 'great conspiracy' against the nationalists. The KKs, against their will, were forced into joining a state against which they had quite recently been struggling. It provided the Leaguers with a chance to brand the Khan Brothers as 'traitors', who, according to them, had never reconciled themselves to the ideology and programme of the AIML and opposed the creation of Pakistan. The KKs generally, and the Khan Brothers particularly, were accused of friendship with the Hindus, and, above all, with Nehru and Gandhi, the two 'die-hard' opponents of Pakistan. The acceptance of the partition plan, and, in particular, the agreement to the holding of the referendum in the N-WFP on the issue of Hindustan versus Pakistan was a real setback to the Frontier Congressmen. They were not prepared to face the new circumstances, which they regarded as a surrender to the forces of communalism. The KKs were perturbed by the 'treachery' of Congress at the eleventh hour. Congress, after agreeing to the partition plan, had sacrificed their Frontier allies, who were forced to join Pakistan against their will. The KKs were left to the mercy of their 'enemies', who until the recent past were accusing them of friendship with the enemies of Pakistan.

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[964]: In Lachi (Kohat) due to the non-availability of females, male members of the League were brought in disguise to the female polling booths. The election staff present on the occasion took no notice of it. Interviews with Nazir Tila M. Khan, Peshawar, 10 December 1984 and 20 October 1988; Amin ul Wahab, Ziarat Ka Ka Sahib, 17 January 1986; Sardar Jamal, Peshawar, 27 November 1984; Mumtaz Majeed, Peshawar, 31 October 1984; Mir Aslam Khan, Manki Sharif, 9 September 1984.

[965]: Interview with J. R. Sahni, Delhi, 18 December 1994; also Sahni's interview in the Oral Record Section, NMML, pp. 31-34.

Dismissal of Khan Sahib's Ministry

To achieve an amicable settlement, the Frontier Governor induced Abdul Ghaffar Khan to meet Jinnah once more and discuss the future of the Pashtoons with him.[966] Jinnah was informed in advance of the Frontier leader's demands,[967] but he flatly refused even to meet Abdul Ghaffar Khan and pretended that he had no time. With regard to Abdul Ghaffar Khan's conditions, Jinnah argued that these matters could only be dealt with in the CA of Pakistan.[968] The Frontier Governor, who termed the League's 'victory' in the referendum a 'decisive vote for Pakistan', foresaw some trouble before 15 August. He noticed no change in Khan Sahib's policy regarding the coalition with the League and his unwillingness to resign. The Leaguers, according to the Governor, were eager to deprive Khan Sahib of office. The only solution, in his opinion, was the dismissal of Khan Sahib's ministry and the assumption of power under Section 93 of the Government of India Act.[969]

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[966]: Lockhart to Mountbatten, 16 July 1947, *TP*, XII, pp. 187-190; Mievelle to Jinnah, 20 July 1947, *TP*, XII, pp. 271-272; *Madina*, 21 July 1947.

[967]: Abdul Ghaffar Khan presented Jinnah the following three conditions for joining Pakistan:
(i) 'Complete provincial autonomy for the Province in all matters except defence, external affairs and communications. (ii) The right of any party to move for the secession of the Province from the Dominion, in the same way that a Dominion has the right to secede from a Commonwealth, should it so desire. (iii) That it should be open to areas contiguous to the Province, which are included in the present boundaries of the British India and are inhabited by Pathans, to ask to become part of the N-WFP and, if they do, be included in it'. Mievelle to Jinnah. 20 July 1947, *TP*, XII, pp. 271-272.

[968]: Jinnah to Mievelle, 25 July 1947, *TP*, XII, p. 340; Viceroy to Governor N-WFP, 25 July 1947. Mss. EUR., F. 200/97. IOLR, p. 228.

Mountbatten opposed the imposition of Section 93. According to him, it would be seen by the public that the last act of the British was to introduce direct rule. Jinnah demanded the dismissal of Khan Sahib's ministry and the formation of an interim ministry of PML. Mountbatten was reluctant[970] to implement a change before 15 August. The N-WFP Governor and Liaquat also insisted on immediate dismissal of the ministry. To avoid further complication of the issue and to legalise his step, the Viceroy sought the opinion of the members of the Pakistan Cabinet.[971] They confirmed the views of Jinnah. Another proposed alternative was the imposition of Section 93 with a League Council of Advisers and the installation of a League ministry on about 14 August. The Viceroy opined that the second course would place the responsibility of running the administration entirely on the British, which HMG would not like. With regard to the first course, Mountbatten promised that after consulting the relevant authorities he would let them know the exact position of the central government.[972]

Mountbatten informed the Secretary of State of the latest Frontier situation. He asked for permission for the immediate dismissal of Khan Sahib's ministry and the formation of a new League ministry. The main reasons, according to the Viceroy were the apprehensions[973]* of the League leaders concerning Khan Sahib's intended declaration of an independent Pashtoonistan on 15 August.[974] The India Office did not approve the Viceroy's suggestions. The Secretary of State regarded the dismissal as unconstitutional, because the ministry still had a majority in the legislature. Law and order were under the control of the provincial administration, therefore the imposition of Section 93 was also ruled out. On Liaquat's allegations concerning Khan Sahib's declaration, Listowel asked Mountbatten for its confirmation by other sources. Liaquat, according to the Secretary of State 'is very interested party and I do not think that we ought to accept his unsupported assertion regarding Khan Sahib's intentions particularly as you in India presumably and we in Parliament certainly would have to justify our action by reference to our knowledge that Khan Sahib was about to declare Pathanistan'. Listowel advised Mountbatten 'to leave the problem to be resolved after August 15th and this must be without intervention of yourself and '. Moreover, Mountbatten was informed that Cunningham would be taking over as the

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[969]: Lockhart to Mountbatten, 20 July 1947, *TP*, XII, p. 278.

[970]: 'It is within my legal powers', commented the Viceroy, 'to direct the Governor to dismiss the Ministry and that decision would be contrary to normal constitutional practice since the Ministry undoubtedly have a majority in the legislature, and would almost certainly be taken amiss by Congress, who wish their Ministry kept as long as possible as a matter of prestige'. Viceroy's Personal Report No. 15, 1 August 1947, *TP*, XII, p. 448.

[971]: Minutes of the Viceroy's Twenty Third Miscellaneous Meeting, 29 July 1947, *TP*, XII, pp. 405-409.

[972]: Meeting of the Pakistan Cabinet, 1 August 1947, *TP*, XII, pp. 441-443.

*** Full letter can be seen in Appendix Five**

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[973]: Jinnah was informed by Abdullah Shah of the grave situation in the FP. 'As the day of transfer of power to the Dominion of Pakistan draws nearer', remarked Shah, 'tension has also reached its peak, and unless steps on the lines suggested below are taken at once 15th of August may be a day of rejoicing in the rest of Pakistan but it will witness one of the bloodiest massacres of innocent Muslim Leaguers in the Peshawar District. All this is being arranged under the aegis of the Congress Government who are freely distributing Government rifles to their party men, issuing unlicensed arms under chits signed by Abdul Ghani Khan son of Abdul Ghaffar Khan and also openly encouraging the carrying of arms in large numbers'. The proposed suggestions were: the immediate replacement of the Congress ministry; the immediate withdrawal of all government rifles; display of troops in 'danger spots'; and 'enforcement of martial law or similar provisions in parts of the districts which may be declared as "explosive" by us'. Abdullah Shah to Jinnah, 6 August 1947, AFM, Nishtar Collection, vol. III, p. 107.

[974]: Viceroy to the Secretary of State, 8 August 1947, Mss. EUR., F. 200/97, IOLR, p. 241.

new Governor before 15 August (the latter was coming to the N-WFP because Jinnah wanted him to be Governor)[975], and 'if he believes that there is the slightest risk of such a step' he would be left with no choice but to dissolve the ministry instantly.[976]* Mountbatten informed Liaquat of his inability to dismiss the ministry, and anticipated further discussion of the matter between Jinnah and Cunningham.[977]

Cunningham arrived in Karachi on 11 August. He met Jinnah, who remained adamant on the immediate dismissal of Khan Sahib's ministry.[978] Cunningham persuaded Jinnah 'with great difficulty' to allow him to try to settle affairs in the N-WFP without 'having recourse to such drastic means'.[979] Cunningham replaced Lockhart as Governor N-WFP on 13 August; he had a meeting with Khan Sahib on the same day. Khan Sahib was informed of Jinnah's apprehensions and was warned of his dismissal from office in the event of non-co-operation with the Pakistan government. Khan Sahib assured Cunningham that he neither had any intentions of declaring an independent Pashtoonistan nor would he be jeopardising the Pakistan government. The Frontier Premier opined that if they found themselves unable to

* Full correspondence can be seen in Appendix Six.

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[975]: Detailed correspondence can be seen in Mss. EUR., D. 670/8, IOLR.

[976]: Secretary of State to Mountbatten, 8 August 1947, Mss. EUR., F. 200/97, IOLR, p. 242. Cunningham was 'horrified' at Viceroy's suggestions. 'It seemed to me', remarked Cunningham, 'in the first place, that the Viceroy, under League pressure, was putting himself wrong by taking a constitutionally improper line on the very eve of giving up office, and I also felt that local feelings would be un-necessarily embittered and that serious trouble would probably start before I could arrive and do anything to stop it. I fully agreed with the answer which the India Office sent on the evening of August 8th'. Entry for 8 August 1947, CD, Mss. EUR., D. 670/6, IOLR, p. 1 (more details can be seen in Appendix Seven).

[977]: Mountbatten to Liaquat, 10 August 1947, *TP*, XII, p. 640.

[978]: Jinnah was suspicious of Khan Sahib's assurances of 'playing fair with Pakistan'. He had no doubts that 'Khan Sahib meant to "sabotage" the whole idea of Pakistan. I asked Jinnah 3 or 4 times', recorded Cunningham, 'what he really meant by this, and how Khan Sahib could destroy the whole Constitution, but he refused, both on this and on other points, to say exactly what he meant, and confined himself to vague general statements'. Entry for 11 August, Mss. EUR., D. 670/6, IOLR, p. 2.

[979]: Viceroy's Personal Report No 17, 16 August 1947, *TP*, XII, pp. 763-764.

support the government of Pakistan, they would tender their resignations without hesitation. He promised Cunningham that they would create no problems if Jinnah dissolved the ministry.[980] Next day Cunningham had a meeting with Qaiyum, who informed him that if the government could place troops in a few particularly 'disturbed' areas, there would be no trouble.[981]

Pakistan came into being on 14 August 1947. Khan Sahib and his colleagues decided not to attend the flag-hoisting ceremony held on 15 August at Peshawar. The sole reason was that they wanted to avoid a situation where League volunteers might misbehave or become violent. This provided a *casus belli* for the dismissal of the Congress ministry; Khan Sahib and his colleagues were charged with insulting the Pakistan government by their wilful absence from the official flag-hoisting ceremony. On 21 August Jinnah authorised Cunningham to dissolve Khan Sahib's ministry, which he did accordingly. Cunningham invited Qaiyum on the same afternoon to form a League ministry in the N-WFP.[982] The Leaguers felt relieved as their concept of Pakistan accompanied by full Muslim League control was now fulfilled. On the other hand, the Frontier Congress and the KKs, who opposed the Pakistan movement from its inception, regarded it as Jinnah's first undemocratic step and a severe blow to democracy in the newly created state of Pakistan. Pakistan, which till the very recent past was regarded by them as only an electioneering slogan of the League, had become a reality. Before they could think over what their responses were to the drastic changes in the sub-continent and their attitude to their future relations with Pakistan, a campaign of intimidation and torture was initiated by Qaiyum, the new

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[980]: Meeting between Cunningham and Khan Sahib, 13 August 1947, D. 670/6, IOLR, p. 3.

[981]: Cunningham to Mountbatten, 14 August 1947, *TP*, XII, pp. 727-729. Also see Mss. EUR., D. 670/6, IOLR, p. 5.

[982]: Entry for 21 August 1947, CD, Mss. EUR., D. 670/6, pp. 5-7; CID Diaries, 23 August 1947, F. No. 231. SBP, p. 89.

Frontier Premier, which resulted in a ban on the KKs and the arrest of all the prominent leaders of Frontier Congress in the N-WFP.

Conclusion

The successful incorporation of the N-WFP in Pakistan marked the end of the Pashtoons' long struggle for non-communal nationalism and political autonomy. The support extended to the ML in the 1947 referendum was occasioned by very special, and transient conditions. It did not signify the abandonment of the Pashtoon identity on the quest for autonomy. Indian nationalism, represented by the Congress during the freedom struggle, appealed to a large body of the Pashtoons and through their active participation in it over three decades they made a remarkable contribution to its growth and enrichment. That nationalism did not go against the religious sentiment of the people, and its respect for the Pashtoon identity, made it acceptable to them. But when larger forces, developed outside the N-WFP, came into play tragically Pashtoon nationalism became their victim. However, the identity developed through history has survived and the struggle for autonomy has not been given up. Thus with the British withdrawal from the sub-continent in 1947 a new chapter of Frontier history started, but without acknowledging the sacrifices of the nationalists, who had dominated Frontier politics for nearly three decades.

CONCLUSION

In contrast to the other Muslim majority provinces in British India during the last decade of the raj, the majority of Muslims of the N-WFP supported the INC. Many factors contributed to the alliance of the regional Pashtoon nationalist forces with the main continental organisation representing Indian nationalism. As both were opposing British imperialism in South Asia, their interests at certain points were identical. For the KKs, the alliance served two purposes. Firstly, for the time being, it made it impossible to call them foreign (Bolshevik) agents, as the British intelligence did in 1930. Secondly, it gained them recognition and backing at an all-India level. Having the firm support of the KKs, Congress was able to 'prove' to its opponents, particularly to the ML during the last decade before partition, that it was not just a Hindu organisation. Before that alliance, the number of Congress members in the N-WFP was less than that formally required for a separate Congress Committee; after the alliance with KKs the number reached about eighty thousand.

As a result of their collaboration with the Congress, the KKs generally and the Khan Brothers particularly, were called 'Hindu agents', 'traitors' and 'enemies of Islam and Pakistan' by their political opponents. The opponents of the Khan Brothers missed no opportunity of harassing them. The KKs were of course not the only Muslims who opposed the creation of Pakistan. The Ahrars, Khaksars, Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Hind and Jamaat-i-Islami were a few amongst many other organisations which opposed the ML and Pakistan, but none of them except the KKs were branded as traitors or as enemies of Pakistan. Probably one of the main reasons was the misunderstanding between the KKs and the central leadership of the ML created by Qaiyum Khan, the Congress deserter, and the League's first Chief Minister of the Frontier Province after the creation of Pakistan, and his associates. After partition there was further escalation of hostilities between the two groups. The KKs showed willingness to co-operate with the Pakistan government. There was no hostile demonstration on the dismissal of the Frontier Congress ministry by Jinnah in August 1947; and the KKs formally severed their connection with INC on 3-4 September. In January 1948, Abdul Ghaffar Khan took the formal oath of allegiance to Pakistan in the Constituent Assembly at Karachi. He met Jinnah in Karachi and invited him to the KK camp at Sardaryab during his intended visit to the N-WFP, which Jinnah accepted. Qaiyum was, however, indignant at any rapprochement between Jinnah and the Frontier nationalists. Jinnah visited the N-WFP in April 1948, but on Qaiyum's advice, supported by the Frontier bureaucracy, he refused to proceed to Sardaryab, and invited Abdul Ghaffar Khan to meet him in Peshawar. Abdul Ghaffar Khan was formally invited to join the ML, which he bluntly refused because the PML, according to him, was infamous, and the provincial leadership was corrupt. This provided an excuse for the provincial authorities to deal with the KKs in their 'own way'. In June 1948 the KK organisation was banned, and the leadership incarcerated. This course of events underline starkly some of the issues at stake in India and discussed by this thesis, notably the construction of political identities in South Asia as empire drew to a close, in particular, the identities of 'nation' and 'community' and the relationship between the two.

The N-WFP had its own peculiar type of society, which distinguished it from the rest of India. While in other parts of the sub-continent, religious nationalism had acquired some appeal in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, in the FP Islam was inter-woven to such an extent with Pashtoon society that it formed an essential and integral part of it. The sense of belonging to a separate ethnicity, the Pashtoons, were infused by an understanding of Islam. Being a Muslim majority province, there was no fear of Hindu domination as was sensed by Muslims in other Hindu majority provinces, because in the N-WFP the non-Muslims were viewed as traders and businessmen. It was because of the traditional hatred of slavery that the Pashtoons regarded the colonial authorities as their main enemy. The anti-establishment Ulema provided a base for the armed resistance against the British in that part of South Asia. These were the main reasons for the initial failure of the communalist ideologies in the FP. The Pashtoons, who always took great pride in their glorious past, differed in their accounts of history and the memories of defeats and victories from other Indian Muslims. The Mughals remained heroes in Muslim India, while due to the long and chequered history of the Afghan-Mughal conflict, the Pashtoons regarded them as usurpers. Ahmad Shah Abdali, the poet warrior of 18th century, who defeated the Maratha confederacy in Panipat (1761 A.D) (a scourge to many Indian Muslims) was one of the most remarkable figures in Pashtoon history. This was another reason why at the outset the ML was unsuccessful in mobilising public opinion in its favour in the FP.

As in the rest of the Indian sub-continent, the British empire relied on local elites, the big Khans and Nawabs to establish itself firmly in the Frontier. Their services were utilised in return for granting them jagirs, titles and cash *Inams*. The smaller Khans, who found themselves being neglected by the government, took part in a number of other activities. As 'politics' in the modern sense were not allowed, most of them joined social organisations. Some, however, expressed their resentment against the authorities by taking an active part in all-India politics, but, to their chagrin, they found that neither the political parties nor the leaders were interested in the 'welfare' of the Frontier inhabitants. An alliance at the local level was reached between the Pashtoon intelligentsia and the smaller Khans and their united efforts resulted in the formation of various socio-political organisations.

The emergence of the KK movement in 1929 had its roots in the pan-Pashtoon movements of 1921 and onwards. A group of Pashtoon intelligentsia, mainly from Peshawar Valley, including some small Khans, formed various organisations, whose main aims and objectives were to educate the Pashtoon community, to encourage Pashto language, and to rid society of prevailing 'evils', i,e., to persuade the Pashtoons to give up their blood-feuds and to reform their social habits by preventing lavish spending on marriage and funeral ceremonies. Their appeals had a positive response and the majority of Pashtoons flocked to this organisation. The movement was confined to the Pashtoon dominated regions of the N-WFP as the non-Pashtoons had little interest in such pan-Pashtoonism.

The most remarkable feature of the KK movement was its strict adherence to non-violence. It was a complete departure from the earlier militant movements against imperialism. Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his followers adopted non-violence as a creed and remained firm on it. They regarded it as not only an ideal way to stop the traditional blood-feuds among the Pashtoons, but also as a form of struggle against the oppressors in which there was minimal chances of defeat. The biographers of Abdul Ghaffar Khan have wrongly attributed his non-violence to the influence of Gandhi. But did Gandhian non-violence have any effect on the Pashtoons? Careful research suggests this was not so in the N-WFP, during the early twenties, allegiance to Congress remained confined to a few educated Hindus in the urban centres. Muslim participation in Congress was minimal, and the Congress programme and Gandhian non-violence had little appeal to the Pashtoons.

'Traditional' Pashtoon society was notorious for factionalism and violence. The Pashtoon reformers' main emphasis was on the prevention of blood-feuds in Frontier society. Examples from the lives of the Holy Prophet and other true believers in Islam were cited giving details of how they faced humiliation and oppression boldly by non-violent means. The accounts of the lives of the holy men had great impact on the mind of Pashtoon. Gandhi was appreciated by Abdul Ghaffar Khan for reminding the Muslims the forgotten lessons of non-violence. The strict adherence of Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his followers to non-violence sometimes created differences between them and the Congress high command. During 1939, as a protest against the Congress support for the British war effort, Abdul Ghaffar Khan resigned from Congress, but rejoined it after the party withdrew its earlier resolution. One of the main reasons for Congress success in the Frontier province was its non-interference with Pashtoon ethnicity. The Pashtoons were left free to support policies of the Congress and were allowed to retain their own separate identity.

Only when the situation of 'Islam in crisis' was created, did a small section of the Pashtoon society consider it their religious duty to forget temporarily their sense of belonging to a separate ethnicity and set out to defend Islam from any harm. During the last few months before partition, the ML exploited the riots in northern India and appealed to the Pashtoons in the name of religion. A small but influential section of Muslims in the N-WFP was won over by the League to the ideas of the safeguarding of Muslim interests and support for Pakistan.

Initially the ML had been unsuccessful in the N-WFP, mainly because of its reliance on the big Khans and title-holders in the N-WFP. During the tenure of the first Congress ministry (1937-1939), the big Khans found themselves vulnerable to the Congress' anti-Khan measures, and they found the ML to be a bulwark against Congress. Thus they flocked into the League not from choice, but from force of circumstances. The primary image of the ML in the eyes of an average Frontier Muslim thus become that of a party of the pro-British Khans and the elites. Moreover, the Pashtoons' sense of belonging to a separate community with its own identity was very strong, so they had little interest in 'belonging to the larger Muslim community' of the sub-continent. As it was a Muslim majority province, there was no fear of Hindu domination in the N-WFP, and the majority of the Frontier inhabitants lacked interest in the League's 'communal' ideology. The demand for Pakistan on religious grounds, therefore, had no appeal and did not arouse the hoped-for support of the N-WFP Muslims. To the majority of Frontiersmen the idea was unacceptable and ambiguous; the division of India on communal grounds seemed impossible to them. Their doubts about the reality of Pakistan were strengthened during Aurangzeb's ministry. Despite being the League leader and its Chief Minister in the N-WFP, he 'shelved' the issue of Pakistan during his tenure of office. However, the last few months of the imperial rule had seen a remarkable shift in formation and reformation of alliances in the N-WFP. The League succeeded in publicising the accounts of 'Hindu atrocities against innocent Muslims' in northern India, thus creating a sense of 'Islam in danger' in the sub-continent. Alarmed at the 'Hindu domination' in India and convinced of the need to safeguard and protect wider Muslim interests in a separate Islamic state, a significant number of Frontier Ulema and *sajjada nashins* including

Badshah Gul, Abdullah Shah Mahzara, Badshah Sahib of Bamkhel and the Pir of Manki Sharif lent their full support to the PML. A few nationalist Pashtoon politicians, Arbab Ghafoor, Mian Abdullah Shah, and Khan Mir Hilali, also temporarily gave priority to their sense of belonging to a larger Indian Muslim community as well as a specific Pashtoon identity and were in the forefront of agitation against Khan Sahib's ministry during 1946-47. Some Congress leaders including Mian Mohammad Shah, G. M. Khan and Ibrahim Khan, deserted Congress and joined the League, because of their personal differences with the provincial leadership. It provided more strength to the ML civil disobedience campaign against the Congress ministry. But once Pakistan came into being, all these allegiances proved short-lived. Indignant at certain measures taken by the new Pakistan government and its policies against the KKs, a majority of the above-mentioned including Arbab Ghafoor, the Pir of Manki and Mohammad Shah reconsidered their loyalties and supported the nationalists in the N-WFP.

The political history of South Asia in the twentieth century has been shaped by an interplay of nationalism, imperialism and communal identity. Structural pluralism, constituted by religious and linguistic communities, made the political process extremely complex, with different elements pursuing their own ends, constituting transient alliances, and the colonial power having its own agenda. Nationalism in India was a movement with many enemies.

In the N-WFP Indian nationalism found an extraordinary and powerful ally in the KK movement. In this province the forces of communalism, so powerful in the rest of the sub-continent, did not find acceptance for a very long time. Islamic consciousness, which is said to be the foundation of Muslim communal identity, expressed itself here politically, in nationalistic, not communal language. The Pashtoons have a strongly developed collective identity, but it is not communal — being Islamically religions does not require them to postulate a relationship of hostility towards non-Muslims. The social structure of the province made it possible for a non-communal nationalism to be fashioned there. Its creation, however, required the fashioning of a new ideology, and this was the achievement of the Khan Brothers. They harnessed anti-imperialist sentiment to the cause of the non-violent, non-sectarian movement for freedom built elsewhere in India under the leadership of the Congress. The KK movement they built in the N-WFP dominated provincial politics, keeping the ML at bay for over two decades. Its success raises important question for understanding a) the role of religion in politics, b) the political aspect of Islamic identity in South Asia, and, c) the nature of the historical process or the historians' understanding of it.

Politics are a product of interaction between interest, skill, and circumstance, while the overall framework is supplied by social structure, political power and dominant ideology. In the N-WFP a Muslim population, deeply religious, aligned itself with Indian nationalism, thus bringing into question the conventional identification made between Islamic consciousness and Muslim communal ideology. The Pashtoon identity was neither 'nationalist' (in the Indian context) nor communalist. It was specific to the people of the N-WFP. This identity has survived the political catastrophe of partition, a fact which can be seen in the present day N-WFP where the national political movements are still popular and are dominating the politics of the province.

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