

PAKISTAN—AFGHANISTAN RELATIONS 1947—71

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The historical moorings of relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan can be traced to the very ancient times when for a short period, from 550 to 331 B.C., the region of modern Iran, Afghanistan and the greater portion of present Pakistan formed a part of the Achaemenian Empire of Persia.¹ Then, for several centuries and under different dynasties this region was under one empire. It, however, remained a melting pot where the Aryans, the Assyrians, the Medes, the Iranians, the Greeks, the Scythians, the Turks and the Turko—Mongols acquired political significance and some kind of affinity.² The conversion of these areas to Islam in the seventh century A.D., further strengthened these bonds.³ Common historical experiences, religious beliefs, geo-political compulsions and linguistic and cultural links imparted a feeling of closeness to the people of these territories. As time passed these bonds became stronger and stronger.

By the early eighth century A.D., following Muhammad bin Qasim's conquest of Sind, Islam spread far and wide in the Pakistan—Afghanistan region. Then there followed a series of invasions from the North-West which altered the whole socio-political make-up of the West and South Asia. It began in the tenth century with Subuktigin, the Turkish slave king. The next century witnessed the systematic invasions of Mahmud of Ghazna. Then there was a continuous chain of invasions. Throughout this period, the areas upto Frontier, including Afghanistan, were under one rule. From 1526 onwards, the Mughuls established their superiority over Afghanistan and India, which formed a single Empire until after the death of Aurangzib when the central authority weakened and the outlying provinces began to assume independence. It was then that the Mughul province of Kabul slipped out of their hands. Soon after, Nadir Shah, a Turk, seized the throne of Persia, overran Afghanistan and marched on Delhi, uniting these vast territories under his kingdom. But in 1747, Nadir Shah was murdered and the empire fell to pieces.⁴

After Nadir Shah's disappearance, one of his nobles, Ahmad Shah Abdali, rose to prominence and founded an Afghan Empire, separate from India which also included the Frontier, Sind, Multan and Kashmir, but not for long. Ranjit

Singh, the Sikh ruler of the Punjab, extended his control to the Frontier,⁵ which lasted until the Sikh state was torn asunder by intrigues, internal strife and wars with the British. By 1849, the Frontier districts, along with the Punjab, passed to the British. First, they consolidated their hold on the Frontier, and then concluded a treaty of friendship and peace with Amir Dost Muhammad of Kabul. Thus the British attention was turned beyond the Tribal belt to Afghanistan and yonder towards the Oxus.

Throughout the nineteenth century, the fear of Russian expansion in Central Asia was the dominant factor in the British Indian frontier policy.⁶ For strategic and similar other reasons the British were impelled to interpose a friendly buffer state between British India and Russia.⁷ This alternation between 'forward policy' and 'moderate policy', pushed Afghanistan away from them. Since Afghanistan was not strong enough to stem the rising tide of British might in India, it gradually turned to Russia. For their part, the British knew that territorial extension beyond the North Western Frontiers of India was out of question. And yet there were three wars with Afghanistan in 1839, 1878 and 1919. These wars were caused either by the British desire to have a puppet of their own on the throne at Kabul or to tear off some more territory from the Afghan State. Nevertheless, the later half of the nineteenth century saw the emergence of Afghanistan as a buffer state. The Russians moved South and the British steadily to the North.⁸ But both the Afghans and the Russians were given to understand that the British would not tolerate Russian predominance in Afghanistan⁹ and the Russians were not supposed to interfere in the British zone of influence to the north of Hindu Kush. The Great Game in Central Asia certainly coloured every aspect of British policy on the North-West and adversely affected British relations with Afghanistan.¹⁰

In theory, Afghanistan was independent but in reality, her foreign relations were controlled and managed by the British until the second decade of the present century. Sandwiched between the British and the Russians, the Afghans became conditioned to the perpetual fear of intervention from outside. The British, therefore, failed to establish any kind of permanent friendly relations with them.

During the early twentieth century the British strongly suspected Amir Amanullah Khan of being in collusion with the tribes on the British side of the border and sympathetic to the Indian Nationalists.¹¹ But the Third Afghan War (1919), even when it was fought in the midst of political upheavals in the Frontier and the Punjab, did not produce any explosion. However, it did give Afghanistan its independence. Amanullah continued to pose as a champion of pan-Islamism and helper of nationalist movements. During the Khilafat Movement in 1920, for instance, when India was declared *darul-harb* and the *ulama* advised the Muslims to migrate to a Muslim land, Amanullah Khan

welcomed the intending *muhajirin*. With the result that the *hijrat* to Afghanistan of Indian Muslims proceeded on a stupendous scale.

The Indian leaders could not realize that the Amir was merely using them as pawns in his game with the British. As a consequence the *hijrat* ended in a fiasco when the Afghans, assured of British recognition of the independence, put a stop to further immigration. Out of the sixty thousand *muhajirin* about seventy five percent were forced to come back to India. Others either perished or scattered in Northern Afghanistan, Turkey and Russia.¹² But in spite of the failure of the *hijrat* and the dismaying attitude of the Afghans, the Indian Muslims, particularly of North-Western India continued to express sympathy with the Amir of Kabul. Especially on the reforms issue, the All India Muslim League was full of praise for the Afghan King. In December 1928, for instance, it extended to him its 'sincere and warm appreciation' of the efforts for the progress of Afghanistan which, it thought, would place that country in the front of the nations of the World.¹³ The same feelings continued to be expressed for the successors of Amanullah.¹⁴

But in spite of the apparent bonds of affinity and the pan-Islamic pull of the Muslims of South Asia, Afghan government never seemed to reciprocate such feelings except when it suited its own interests. Historical, demographic and economic realities were also lost sight of. And since the Afghan ruling family was the direct descendent of the Peshawar Sardars, 'the lure of Peshawar was always a passion, deep in their hearts.'¹⁵ As such, the Afghan rulers always entertained hopes of creating one day a greater Afghanistan which would include the Pakhtoons living on both sides of the Durand Line. Therefore, whenever there was talk of freedom of India, the Afghans hastened to protect their interests. For instance, at the Round Table Conferences in London in the 1930s, when the question of future of India came up for discussion, the Afghans lost no time in intimating the British that by sentiment and history the territories to the West of the Indus belonged to Afghanistan and that those should be considered on a separate basis from the rest of India.¹⁶ Again in March, 1942, the Afghan Government evinced nervousness on the issue of the Dominion Status. They were obviously getting worried about the outcome of the British withdrawal from India and the political and administrative changes that would subsequently accrue therefrom. Consequently, Shah Mahmud, the Afghan Minister for War, explicitly declared in 1942, that the Afghan treaties had been concluded not with the Indians but with the Government of Great Britain.¹⁷ Similarly, the Afghan Foreign Minister Ali Mohammad Khan Mirza made it known that the question of direct access to the sea would become prominent if control of the Indian ports passed into Indian hands.¹⁸ The issue cropped up again in March 1942 when the Cripps Mission came to India to discuss the plan of Indian freedom.¹⁹ However, when it became clear that the British would not concede their demands, the Afghans modified their stance in favour of a corridor to the sea through Baluchistan.²⁰

Obviously, the Afghan attitude to the whole problem of the partition of India had been that the obligations of the Afghan Government towards the various treaties with the British Government should not be ignored. In the event of India achieving independent status, those parts of India which they claimed should, under the treaty obligations, revert to Afghanistan.²¹ Their claim was based on (a) the preservation of the security of the Afghan State against external aggression by the maintenance of stable conditions on their Indian frontier, and (b) the removal of all possible causes of friction between Afghanistan and the India of the future.²² The Afghans were not only pessimistic about the stability of the future states without British support, but were also conscious of the possibility of a tribal revolt against their autocratic rule. The Afghan suggestion, therefore, was that unless the British Government intended to retain these territories under their own control, they must be given the option of self-determination before being incorporated in an independent Pakistan or India. They envisaged two alternatives, namely these territories should either be constituted into a separate Pathan State or they should voluntarily join Afghanistan.²³

These demands were reiterated time and again after the June Partition Plan of 1947 by the Afghan Prime Minister Muhammad Hashim Khan.²⁴ But the areas claimed by Afghanistan had been a part of the British India since 1893, when the Durand Line was agreed upon both by Afghanistan and the British. It was, therefore, irrational now to give them the option of joining Afghanistan, which would have led to the opening up of fresh problems for Pakistan and caused instability in the region. Thus the British Government refused to accede to the Afghan demands.²⁵ Meanwhile, the referendum of 1947, had shattered the expectations of any independent Pakhtoon State which the Afghans wanted to create. The Frontier Province was a Muslim majority Province (92 percent), but because of the activities of Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his Khudai Khidmatgars it had been under the Congress Ministry. Its fate was to be decided by the elections to the provincial legislative assembly. From 6 to 17 July 1947, a referendum was conducted under Sir William Lockhart, the new Governor of the Frontier.²⁶ In response to the Quaid-i-Azam's call, the Muslim Leaguers threw themselves heart and soul into the campaign for the referendum. The result was that over sixty eight percent took part in the elections. As many as 289,244 (50.49 percent) voters out of the total 572,798 registered voters opted for joining Pakistan and only 2,874 (0.5 percent) voted for remaining with India.²⁷ No plebiscite was held in the tribal areas, because they had no legislature. But early in November 1946, the *jirgas* of every big tribe up and down the Frontier gave Sir Olaf, the Governor of the Frontier, their solemn assurance, confirmed by written agreements, that they wished to remain part of Pakistan and to continue the same relations as they had with the British.²⁸

Among those who did not participate in the voting, some had responded

to the call of Abdul Ghaffar Khan, whose demand for an independent Pakhtoonistan had not been included in the Partition Plan. Abdul Ghaffar Khan, who was rabidly anti-British somehow believed that the Muslim League was pro-British and ought therefore to be opposed.²⁹ Naturally, he felt at ease with the Congress leaders who were supposed to be anti-British. Abdul Ghaffar Khan probably thought that the dominant Hindu leadership in the Congress party would not be able to establish any direct foothold in the Pakhtoon areas,³⁰ but when the Congress accepted the June Partition Plan without consulting him, and Mountbatten shunned the Pakhtoonistan demand, Abdul Ghaffar Khan was extremely annoyed.³¹ In consonance with the demands of the situation and realizing that the Pathans of the Frontier were not really in favour of joining India, the Khan brothers modified their attitude. They decided 'that the issues should be amended on the basis of Pakistan and free Pathan State within Pakistan'.³² In other words, instead of a free Pakhtoonistan state, they now demanded the formation of an autonomous province within the dominion of Pakistan.³³ But Abdul Ghaffar Khan's conditions of joining Pakistan were not accepted by the Quaid-i-Azam who knew that the Frontier was coming to the new state in any case.³⁴ Abdul Ghaffar Khan, in his first speech in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan on 5 March 1948, indicated that a mere change of name of the Frontier Province to 'Pakhtoonistan' would satisfy him,³⁵ but the Quaid-i-Azam, realizing the Khan brothers' "insidious and spurious"³⁶ designs, did not accept the idea.³⁷

After the 1947 referendum, Afghanistan realized that there was no desire among the Pathans on the Indian side of the Durand Line to join Afghanistan. Even the Khan brothers also stopped considering union with Afghanistan as an acceptable alternative.³⁸ The Khudai Khidmatgars were placed in an unenviable position as the Afghans by taking advantage of them were exploiting the situation. But because of the Afghan claim on Pakistan territory the Durand Line, which had proved a factor of stability in Central Asia during the two World Wars, had become a vulnerable boundary. In fact, the Durand Line had been the result of the British reaction to interference from the North-West. Between 1848 and 1898, as many as fifty four expeditions were jittered out to tackle the revolts in the area. Therefore, in order to avoid direct confrontation with Afghanistan, Sir Mortimer Durand, the British emissary, was sent to the Subcontinent to demarcate boundary between India and Afghanistan. The settlement of the Durand Line was reached after protracted discussions between the two governments from 1894 to 1896.³⁹ As no true ethnic line could possibly be drawn for the border tribes because of their migratory habits,⁴⁰ it was the best solution under the circumstances. The line generally follows the tribal boundaries separating those tribes which go to market in Peshawar, Kohat, Bannu, Tank and Quetta from those who had commercial links with Khorasan, having Kabul, Ghazni and Qandhar as their market towns. Only in two cases, that of the Mohmands and the Waziris, the tribes are divided.⁴¹

The evidence of Sir Percy Sykes shows clearly that Amir Abdur Rahman had approved the treaty without any pressures.⁴² And it is on record that the successive Afghan rulers had repeatedly affirmed the agreement in 1908, 1909, 1921 and 1930.⁴³ The Line had remained as established International boundary, until it was unilaterally repudiated by the Afghan Government in 1947. The basis of the Afghan repudiation was that the Durand Line and the former district boundary had interposed the tribal territory in the internal administration in which the British Government did not interfere. During the British period the Afghan claims tended to be quiescent or at least muted.⁴⁴ They also maintained that with the withdrawal of the British all the treaties had become null and void. After the British had transferred power to India and Pakistan, the British Government continued to support the legality of the Durand Line, a legacy which was fraught with much danger to Pakistan.⁴⁵ As such, the Afghan disputation of the Durand Line and its claim on Pakistan territory was in contravention with the legalities and provisions of the U.N. Charter. So far as the Pakhtoonistan demand is concerned, Afghanistan never spelt its claim in clear terms. Abdur Rahman Pazhwak, however, in his book *Pakhtunistan*, maintained that proposed "state" was to include the whole area from Chitral and Swat down to Las Bela on the Arabian Sea, roughly comprising, Pakistan's two provinces, namely the Frontier and Baluchistan.⁴⁶ To the Afghan rulers' Pakhtoonistan demand was an obsession. They considered it crucial for the survival of Afghanistan. The basic aspect was security and for that the central authority needed to build a consensus upon some unifying issue. The choices, in view of the tribal system, however, were limited.⁴⁷ Pakhtoon nationalism was the only basis on which all the factions seemed to have consensus.⁴⁸ It was in this light that in September 1947, when the question of Pakistan's membership came up for consideration before the United Nations, Hosayn Aziz, the Afghan representative, opposed it tooth and nail. He stated that Afghanistan could not recognize the North-West Frontier as part of Pakistan so long as the people of that area were not given an opportunity, free from any kind of influence, to determine for themselves whether they wished to be independent or to become part of Pakistan.⁴⁹ The Afghan claim on the Pakistan territory had also the tacit support of India and Russia. Though it was much later that their attitude towards Pak-Afghan dispute crystallized into a specific policy. One of the foremost points in the demand for Pakhtoonistan was the linguistic basis, i.e., Pashto, which according to Olaf Caroe, 'few in Kabul could speak or read'.⁵⁰ As two-thirds of all the Pakhtoons lived in Pakistan and only one-third lived in Afghanistan, it would have been more rational to expect the minority to join the majority rather than the other way round. And if the Afghan claim of linguistic and ethnic criteria of division were accepted then France, Switzerland, Britain and many other countries could be redivided and the World map could change entirely.⁵¹ For Pakistan, the Durand Line, despite its geographical absurdi-

ties, constituted an internationally recognized frontier. Being the successor state of the British in India, Pakistan considered itself the legal heir to the political boundaries.

The situation, however, improved when on 20 October 1947, Hosayn Aziz, the Afghan delegate to the United Nations, withdrew the negative vote and congratulated Pakistan on its admission to the world body. But Afghanistan had made this move without dropping its demands. Nevertheless, by November 1947, formal discussion between Pakistan and Afghanistan on resumption of relations through formal diplomatic channels had begun. A few months later, Sardar Najibullah Khan, the special envoy of His Majesty King Zahir Shah in a broadcast from Kabul thus summarized the proposals presented to the Pakistan Government: (i) that the tribal area inhabited by the Pukhtoons must be constituted into a free, sovereign province; (ii) that Pakistan must provide an access to the sea either by the creation of an Afghan zone in Karachi, and (iii) that Afghanistan and Pakistan should remain neutral if one of them was attacked by a third party.⁵² The Pakistan's position in regard to these demands was clarified by the Foreign Minister Sir Zafrullah Khan, when he categorically stated that the tribes of the Frontier had contributed greatly towards the establishment of Pakistan and as such they were equal partners in having self-government with the people of any other part or province of Pakistan.⁵³ The Quaid-i-Azam also made it clear that the Pathans were independent in all matters except those relating to Defence, Foreign Relations and Communications. As for the suggestion of changing the name of that Province to Pakhtoonistan, he stated that only the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan was empowered to take a decision and that the Government of Pakistan could do nothing in the matter.⁵⁴

Despite mutual suspicions, however, in the middle of 1948, Pakistan and Afghanistan agreed to establish diplomatic relations. Colonel A.S.B. Shah went to Kabul as Pakistan's Ambassador while, Marshal Shah Wali Khan, the uncle of King Zahir Shah, was appointed as the first Afghan Ambassador to Pakistan.⁵⁵ Obviously, this was an evidence of marked improvement in relations. In June 1948, the new Afghan Ambassador welcomed the creation of Pakistan, the biggest Muslim State in the world, and tried to allay misunderstandings by declaring that Afghanistan had no claim on the frontier territory and even if there were any in the past, they had been given up. He further stated that in the future anything to the contrary should be given no credence.⁵⁶ But these diplomatic platitudes were compromised by the Government in Kabul which was less diplomatic than its Ambassador. The latter time and again had to reassure Pakistan as to the intentions of his country.⁵⁷ Obviously there was a wide gap between the declarations of the Ambassador and those of the men in power in Kabul. The result was that in January 1949, the Ambassador was transferred to another country. Thereafter, the attitude on both sides hardened and the relations remained strained.

Meanwhile, in September 1948, the Quaid-i-Azam died and the resultant political changes in Pakistan encouraged the Afghan leadership to intensify its propaganda against Pakistan. In June 1949, the Afghan Parliament declined to recognize, what it called, the imaginary Durand Line.⁵⁸ A period of cold war led to hostilities resulting in a Pakistani Air Force plane bombing an Afghan village (Moghalgai) near the border. A joint commission of enquiry found that the bombing had been accidental and Pakistan agreed to pay the damages. But the main problem remained unresolved. In August 1949, the Afghan sources asserted that a number of Afridi tribesmen had inaugurated a 'National Assembly of Pakhtoonistan'⁵⁹. Another *jirga* was stated to have met at Razmak and elected the *Faqir* of Ipi, Haji Mirza Ali Khan, as the President of Southern Pakhtoonistan.⁶⁰ Yet another group, the Young Afridi Party, called *Sarishhta*, announced the formation of an independent Pakhtoonistan.⁶¹ On its part, the Government of Pakistan denied the formation of such "National Assemblies" or the killings of Pakhtoons and Baluchis. It also denied the economic blockade of the tribal area or the arrest of any leaders, except, of course, of Abdul Ghaffar Khan.⁶² Independent and knowledgeable observers also testified to the fact that Afghan accusations were largely exaggerated and that the idea of Pakhtoonistan existed in theory only.⁶³

Nevertheless, throughout 1950, the situation remained tense. On several occasions the Afghan *Lashkars* and Pakistani irregulars and troops were engaged in skirmishes. In August 1950, on the occasion of the *Jashn* celebrations in Kabul, the Afghan King and Prime Minister made particularly strong anti-Pakistan statements and propaganda leaflets were dropped from aeroplanes⁶⁴. A month later, Afghan regular troops under Brigadier Ghaffar Khan crossed the border at Dohandi area to destroy Quetta and Chaman railway lines but the Pakistan army chased them out. There were charges and counter-charges and each country expressed innocence.⁶⁵ The Pakhtoonistan issue was the crux of the matter. Naturally, Pakistan turned to the international support. The British Government responded favourably when in June 1950, Noel Baker, Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations, reaffirmed that 'Pakistan is in International Law the inheritor of the rights and duties of the old Government of India' and that 'the Durand Line is the International Frontier'.⁶⁶ But beyond that the British refused to render any help, especially in the event of an Afghan aggression against Pakistan.⁶⁷

The United States, on the other hand, proposed a Conference of British and American officials with the representatives of Afghanistan and Pakistan. The American interest was to use Afghanistan as *bulwark* against Soviet Russia, but the Afghans would not agree unless a free and independent Pakhtoonistan was created.⁶⁸ Naturally, Pakistan took the American suggestions as unacceptable, especially when Soviet Russia had already declared open support to the Afghan demands.⁶⁹ Thus, the relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan continued to be marred by mutual hostility.

By August 1952, however, there was a certain reorientation in the policies of the two neighbours. As a result, tension subsided to some extent. The improvement in internal situation in Pakistan had a lot to do with it. The December 1951 election in the Frontier had given the Muslim League an overwhelming majority. This gave a blow to the Pakhtoonistan movement and Afghanistan was left with no option but to reopen the negotiations. During 1953, some important Afghan dignitaries visited Pakistan as if to sniff the air. But the Afghan Government made the improvement of relations with Pakistan dependent on the abrogation of the Anglo-Afghan Treaty of 1921. Only then they were prepared to drop the demand for an independent Pakhtoonistan. In addition, the Afghans asked to concede several economic rights.⁷⁰ The coming to power of Daud Khan as Prime Minister of Afghanistan further complicated the issues. Daud had strong feelings on the Pakhtoonistan question. Besides, his policies were taking Afghanistan nearer to the Russian bloc. It happened at a time when Pakistan was showing a clear bend towards the American bloc. Therefore, the worsening relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan could also be attributed to the growing Super Power rivalry in this region. In November 1953, the visit of Richard Nixon, the Vice President of the United States, to Karachi and Kabul served no purpose.

The Pak—American military pact of 1954, instead of improving the situation in the region, pushed Afghanistan away from Pakistan and into the arms of the Soviet Union.⁷¹ In order to neutralize the Russian influence in the region, Pakistan sent Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar to Kabul.⁷² The Shah of Iran also mediated. But these efforts brought no fruitful result. Rather, the decision of the Muhammad Ali Government in 1955 to create One Unit by amalgamating the four provinces of West Pakistan, made the Afghans more intransigent. The Afghan Prime Minister Daud Khan, in a public speech condemned the scheme. He thought that the One Unit idea would lead to the merger of the tribal areas into the rest of the West Pakistan.⁷³ The Afghan Charge d'Affaires in Karachi was instructed to lodge a strong protest with Pakistan and if his efforts met with no success he should return to Kabul.⁷⁴ Following Daud's speech, widespread anti-Pakistan demonstrations took place in Kabul and an angry mob broke into the Pakistan Embassy building and completely ransacked it. The Pakistan flag was also torn down and trampled upon. The Pakistan Consulates at Qandhar and Jalalabad were similarly attacked.⁷⁵ In consequence, there were counter demonstrations in Pakistan. Pakistan demanded from Afghanistan an unqualified apology for manhandling the Pakistani nationals and an assurance for adequate protection of the Embassy and Consulates in future, with restitution of property and making amends for the indignity to the Pakistan flag. Afghanistan was willing to agree to some of the demands provided Pakistan accepted identical counter-demands. Pakistan held that the two cases were very different. Since no solution was forthcoming from Kabul, Pakistan on 5 May 1955 delivered an ultimatum

that if its demands were not accepted, it would take proper action. This panicked the Afghan Government which declared a state of emergency and ordered a general mobilization of its forces.⁷⁶ The situation rapidly deteriorated. At this juncture, some of the Muslim countries, namely Egypt, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Iran and Turkey, offered their good offices for mediation. Fearing that pressure from Pakistan might push Afghanistan into closer relations with the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States also intervened.⁷⁷ The Pakistan Government was adamant that under no circumstances would it discuss the so-called Pakhtoonistan issue. In the end, however, Afghanistan agreed not to press the issue. On 14 May 1955, King Saud's uncle, Prince Abdul Rahman, visited Kabul and Karachi and succeeded in persuading Afghanistan to accept Pakistan's main demands. At first the Afghanis refused to put an end to their propaganda for Pakhtoonistan,⁷⁸ but the trade embargo on Afghan goods clamped by Pakistan, obliged them to have second thoughts. After the May talks the Pakistan flag was rehoisted with ceremonial honours in Kabul.⁷⁹ This put the issue to rest, at least, temporarily.

And yet on 11 May, the Afghan Foreign Minister declared that whatever might be the result of mediation, Afghanistan would stand by her Pakhtoonistan demand.⁸⁰ In December 1955, Marshal Bulganin, the Soviet Premier, and Khrushchev, the Communist Party Chief, visited Kabul. They extended economic and technical aid to Afghanistan and while supporting the Afghan demand declared that Pakistan's northwest must be given the right of independence.⁸¹ Pakistan on its side naturally wanted its Western allies to support it against the Afghan demand. Such a support came from Sir Anthony Eden, the British Prime Minister, who in 1956, declared that the United Kingdom fully supported Pakistan's sovereignty over the areas east of the Durand Line and regarded this Line as the International frontier.⁸² The SEATO conference, held in March 1956 at Karachi also endorsed this view.⁸³ But the SEATO allies of Pakistan did not go beyond these verbal assurances as they felt that it was not their function to intervene in such areas which were more properly in the competence of the United Nations.⁸⁴ Pakistan's Western allies withheld the crucial support for they feared that any action to the contrary might push Afghanistan into the outstretched Soviet arms.

Turkey, however, with the history of close relations with the Muslims of South Asia, offered to mediate. Consequently, in December 1956, the Prime Minister Adnan Menderes of Turkey, brought Pakistan and Afghanistan back to the starting line. The visits of President Iskandar Mirza, and the Prime Minister Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy, to Kabul and of King Zahir Shah and the Afghan Premier Sardar Daud Khan to Karachi helped further to promote understanding between the two countries. Talks on cooperation in trade and communications centred on transit facilities for Afghan goods by Pakistan. The talks, however, failed to make much headway because Sardar Daud wanted to discuss the Pakhtoonistan issue before concluding any trade agreement.

In spite of these setbacks, Pakistan restored the storage and transit facilities to Afghan goods.⁸⁵ It also offered to reserve one-third of the railway wagons on relevant routes for the transportation of Afghan goods. Plans of cooperation in other fields, such as the construction of two highways, one for Torkham to Kabul on the eastern border, and the other from Kabul to the north across the Hindu Kush range, were also proposed.⁸⁶

In October 1958, Pakistan passed under Military rule. The first Martial Law was imposed jointly by Sikandar Mirza and General Ayub Khan. But twenty days later, on 27 October Ayub Khan brought about a peaceful revolution, sent Iskandar Mirza on a long journey abroad and took over the government. After coming to power, Ayub Khan did not lose much time in expressing his anxiety regarding Afghanistan which had been busy in strategic road and airfield construction activity. Ayub Khan considered these activities as a threat to the entire Subcontinent.⁸⁷ To neutralize the perceived danger, Ayub Khan invited Afghanistan to join the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO), but Afghanistan refused. In 1959, there was again an increase in Pakhtoonistan propaganda by Afghanistan. King Zahir and Prime Minister Daud Khan were reported to have made strong speeches.⁸⁸ Pakistan protested but to no avail. On the contrary, the Afghan Government refused to renew the visas of Pakistanis living in Afghanistan. Once again Iran mediated and in 1960, President Ayub Khan and Sardar Naim, the Afghan Foreign Minister, tried to resolve the misunderstandings but the talks again failed. It was a crucial year for Pak-Afghan relations for the U-2 incident, blown over by the downing of an American spy plane in Russia, became the cause of strained relations not only between Pakistan and Afghanistan but also between Pakistan and Russia. The fact that the plane had flown from a base in Peshawar gave Nikita Khrushchev, the Russian Prime Minister, enough reason to threaten Pakistan of dire consequences. After the U-2 incident the question of Pakhtoonistan was made a part of a joint Russo-Afghan communique, issued after the conclusion of the Premier Khrushchev's visit to Afghanistan in the late sixties.

Naturally, therefore, the Pak-Afghan relations reached their lowest ebb, resulting in armed clashes, particularly in Pakistan's Bajaur area. Afghanistan also exploited the unrest created by an internal dispute between the Nawab of Dir and his feudatory the Khan of Khar and bribed the Nawab of Dir to foment trouble. Afghan planes widely distributed posters and handbills in Pushto inciting the tribesmen to rise against the Pakistan Government.⁸⁹ Pakistan had to use its air force to crush the Afghan attacks. Diplomatic relations between the two countries were broken off and Afghanistan refused to avail itself of the transit facilities. Side by side, the Pakistan Government rallied the tribal leaders behind it. Many leaders were reported to have pledged their loyalty and offered to fight to death to defend Pakistan's sovereignty.⁹⁰

In March 1961, the Afghan forces were again found inside the Mohmand

territory. Ayub Khan took the opportunity to warn the Afghans that if they were foolish enough to cross the border 'we will do the needful'.⁹¹ But Afghan incursions continued and their agents infiltrated into the Pakistan territory. As a precaution, the Pakistan Government arrested Abdul Ghaffar Khan and a number of his followers allegedly for carrying out subversive activities.⁹² Tension increased to such an extent that Pakistan closed its Consulates in Jalalabad and Qandhar and its trade agencies in Afghanistan and asked the latter to remove its Missions from Pakistan. The Consulates were also closed on the plea that the Pakistani staff there was being harassed, insulted and abused by the Afghans. In retaliation Afghanistan stopped fresh fruit supply to Pakistan and refused to avail itself of the transit facilities through Pakistan unless the latter agreed to reopen the Afghan Consulates.⁹³ President Ayub Khan was of the view that Afghanistan had never honoured its commitments to Pakistan and he would not resume diplomatic relations until there were positive guarantees from Kabul. They could not allow once again the Afghan Consulates and trade offices to engage in acts of sabotage and subversion in Pakistan. Pakistan took a firm stand and demanded visas, passports and health certificates from the seasonal migrants (*Pawindas*) while entering the Pakistan territory. The Afghan Government was asked to clear Pakistani ports and warehouses of large shipments of American and German aid which were still lying there.

America once again took the initiative in solving the conflict between the two neighbours. The Americans believed that only the Communists were benefiting from the whole trouble. Moreover, it was the American aid goods that were being wasted. Therefore, in October 1961, the American representative, Livingstone Merchants, visited Karachi to help resolve the Pak-Afghan transit trade issue. The Kennedy administration did not want to indulge in the political aspect of the problem for it would have thrown America into direct confrontation with Russia. But the Merchant Mission was unsuccessful and it was again the Iranian mediation which in May 1963 finally broke the deadlock. Pak-Afghan borders were opened for eight weeks to clear the American and German aid goods. The talks which were held in Tehran re-established the diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan, but it did not mean that Afghanistan had given up its stand on the Durand Line and Pakhtoonistan. Far from that, it continued to push its claim and on its part Pakistan continued to view the whole problem as a dead issue particularly after the Tehran accord.⁹⁴

The situation improved somewhat when in March 1963, Prime Minister Daud Khan, the architect of the Afghan hardline policy on Pakhtoonistan was replaced by Muhammad Yusuf. This change of an important office from the royal family to a commoner aroused hopes in Pakistan. And the change seemed to augur well, for on assuming the office of the Prime Minister Muhammad Yusuf, took special care not to provoke the Pakistanis⁹⁵ and

toned down his remarks about the Pakhtoonistan issue. He declared that the problem was not necessarily linked with the border closure and that Afghanistan would like to restore diplomatic relations with Pakistan.⁹⁶ Other developments in South Asia also helped to ease the tension between the two neighbours. The Soviet policy in South Asia changed a little as a result of the Cuban crisis of 1962 and the worsening Sino-Soviet relations. The Soviet support for the Indians in the Sino-Indian clash revealed that the Soviets and the Chinese were at cross purposes in South Asia.⁹⁷ At the same time the Western military aid to India turned Pakistan towards China. When in August 1963, Pakistan signed a trade pact and an air agreement with China.⁹⁸ Soviet Union rushed in to improve its relations with Pakistan. As a concession, she even appeared ready to change her pro-Indian stance on Kashmir, but unfortunately Pakistan did not take any advantage of these overtures.⁹⁹

From 1963, Pak—Afghan relations were generally friendly, especially because this was a period of increasing Pakistan—Soviet friendship. In January 1964, Pakistan and Afghanistan re-established the Kabul-Karachi air service. In June of the same year, a direct telephone and teleprinter link between Quetta and Qandhar was established. In July 1964, on his way to London to attend the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference, President Ayub stopped in Kabul and held talks with King Zahir Shah on issues of mutual interest.¹⁰⁰ Earlier, Ayub Khan had expressed satisfaction over the distinct improvement in the Pak—Afghan relations.¹⁰¹

Thus, in September 1965 during the Indo-Pakistan war over the Kashmir issue, the Afghan Government adopted a neutral stance. The public sympathy, however, was manifestly with Pakistan.¹⁰² There was a widespread feeling in Afghanistan that Pakistan was fighting to hold back Indian expansionism to the Hindu Kush.¹⁰³ And yet, in spite of her declared neutrality, the Afghan Government celebrated the Pakhtoonistan Day as usual and the Afghan Representative at the United Nations referred to the question of Pakhtoonistan in his speech in the General Assembly.¹⁰⁴ Nevertheless, the Afghan neutrality did help Pakistan to concentrate on its war with India and worry less about Afghanistan. The Soviets, too, because of their improved relations with Pakistan, were willing to lend a helping hand in bringing the 1965 war to a close. Aleksei Kosygin, the Soviet Prime Minister, offered his services to mediate. Obviously, it was a marked departure in the Soviet policy of supporting India and Afghanistan on every count. Especially, after the Tashkent Agreement, the Soviet Union not only began to play a neutral role in India-Pakistan dispute,¹⁰⁵ but also whittled down its support for the Afghan stand on the Pakhtoonistan¹⁰⁶ issue.

In 1968, King Zahir Shah visited Pakistan on the invitation of President Ayub Khan and was given a warm welcome. But towards the end of 1968, the situation within Pakistan rapidly deteriorated and became somewhat

chaotic. Forced by the mass movement led by the Opposition Ayub Khan resigned and handed over the power to Yahya Khan, the Commander-in-Chief of the Pakistan Army. In the general elections that followed, Shaikh Mujibur Rehman's Awami League won a clear majority in East Pakistan and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's Peoples Party obtained the majority of seats in West Pakistan. But unfortunately, both the leaders failed to arrive at a compromise with regard to the modalities of the transfer of power. This caused great confusion and disillusionment in the country which culminated in the dismemberment of Pakistan. The separation of the Eastern Wing had a far reaching impact on Pakistan. Yahya's Government fell, and Bhutto succeeded him at the time of the worst crisis confronting the country.

But during this period of turmoil, the Pak-Afghan relations had not been neglected. Both the countries had continued their efforts to strengthen relations in the fields of trade and commerce in May 1970, a delegation headed by Pakistan's Finance Minister Muzaffar Ali Khan Qizilbash, visited Afghanistan to explore possibilities of increasing trade and economic collaboration.¹⁰⁷ The two countries identified certain areas where expansion in the exchange of commodities on a bilateral basis was possible.¹⁰⁸ The new Afghan Prime Minister, Nur Ahmad Etemadi, hoped that a 'new era of mutual understanding' between Afghanistan and Pakistan had begun.¹⁰⁹ With the annulment of the One Unit and the restoration of the former provinces of West Pakistan another cause of friction between the two countries was removed. The Afghans welcomed this step.¹¹⁰ Thus all through the year 1970, there was a consistent improvement in cooperation between the two countries, unmarred by any Pakhtoonistan slogans.

And despite the fact that 'Afghanistan had not explicitly indicated its recognition of the Durand Line'¹¹¹, there was more and more practical expression of goodwill in certain areas. But this climate of cooperation could not continue for long because the internal instability in Pakistan and rapid changes in governments between 1947 and 1971 and almost identical factors in Afghanistan during the same period, did not provide a favourable atmosphere for any effective settlement. Every time that some understanding seemed to have been reached there was change in the government or political situation either in Pakistan or Afghanistan. Repeatedly the issues had to be taken up from square one. The Indian machinations and Super Powers rivalry also effected the course of the negotiations.

NOTES

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3. Caroe, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

4. Sirdar Iqbal Ali Shah, *Afghanistan of the Afghan*, Quetta, 1978, pp. 19-25.
5. *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, London, 1960, Vol. I, pp. 226-230.
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7. Donald N. Wilber, *Afghanistan*, New Haven, 1962, p. 177.
8. Abdul Qayyum Khan, *Gold and Guns on the Pathan Frontier*, Bombay, 1945, p. 49. Also see Mohammad Anwar Khan, *England, Russia and Central Asia*, Peshawar, 1963, p. 307.
9. Anwar Khan, *England, Russia and Central Asia*, Peshawar, 1963, p. 308.
10. Munawar Khan, *Anglo-Afghan Relations 1798-1878*, Peshawar, 1964, p.1. Also see Fraser Tytler, *Afghanistan*, London, 1950, p. 81.
11. T.A Heathcote, *The Afghan Wars: 1839-1919*, London, 1980, pp. 166-171. Also see Leon Poulada, *Reform and Rebellion in Afghanistan 1919-19129*, Ithaca, 1973, pp. 237-240.
12. M. Naeem Qureshi, 'The Indian Khilafat Movement 1918-1924', *Journal of Asian History*, Vol. XII, No.2, 1978, p. 159.
13. Sharifuddin Pirzada, ed., *Foundations of Pakistan*, Karachi, 1970, Vol. II, p. 151.
14. In 1933, when Nadir Khan was assassinated, the Muslim League expressed condolence, see *Ibid.*, p. 224.
15. Caroe, *op. cit.*, p. 435.
16. Sisir Gupta, 'Relations Between Pakistan and Afghanistan', *Foreign Affairs Report*, Vol. IV, No. 5, July 1955, p. 75.
17. Nicholas Mansergh, ed., *The Transfer of Power 1942-1947*, Vol. I, London, 1970, p. 307.
18. *Ibid.*
19. *Ibid.*, p. 306.
20. S.M. Burke, *Pakistan's Foreign Policy*, Karachi, 1973, p. 72. Also see Wilber, *op. cit.*, p. 193.
21. Mansergh, *op. cit.*, Vol. VII, p. 34.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 34.
23. *Ibid.*
24. Mujtaba Razvi, 'Pak-Afghan Relations since 1947', *Pakistan Horizon*, Vol. XXXII, No. 4, 1979, p.136.
25. Burke, *op. cit.*, p. 73.
26. Chaudhry Muhammad Ali, *The Emergence of Pakistan*, London, 1967, p. 167.
27. V.P. Menon, *The Transfer of Power in India*, London, 1957, p. 389.
28. Cunningham's interview to *Guardian*, Manchester, 2 February 1951, cited in S.K. Karamat, 'The Western Frontier of West Pakistan. A Study in Political Geography', unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Michigan, 1958, pp. 182-183.
29. Khalid Bin Sayeed, *Politics in Pakistan*, New York, 1980, p. 19.
30. *Ibid.*
31. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, *India Wins Freedom*, Bombay, 1959, p. 193.
32. Abd'ul Ghaffar Khan to Gandhi, 11 June 1947, quoted in Pyarelal, *Mahatma Gandhi: The Last Phase*, Vol. II, Ahmedabad, 1958, p. 273. Also see Azad, *op. cit.*, p. 194.
33. Azad, *op. cit.*, p. 195.
34. Pyarelal, *op. cit.*, pp. 273-74.
35. D.G. Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan*, Bombay, 1967, pp. 451-456.
36. Quoted in G. Allana, *Quaid-i-Azam. The Story of a Nation*, Karachi, 1967, p. 462.

37. Muhammad Ali, *op. cit.*, p. 165.
38. Burke, *op. cit.*, p. 72.
39. C. Collin Davies, *The Problems of the North-West Frontier 1890-1908*, London, 1932, pp. 80-89.
40. Shireen Mazari, 'The Durand Line: Evolution of an International Frontier; *Strategic Studies*, No. 3, Spring 1979, p. 37. Also see Tytler, *op. cit.*, p. 188; And Ludwig Adamec, *Afghanistan, 1900-1923: A Diplomatic History*, Berkeley, 1968, pp. 175-178.
41. Sultan Mahomed Khan, ed., *The Life of Abdur Rahman*, Vol. II, London, 1900, p. 161. Also see Sir George MacMunn, *Afghanistan from Darius to Amanullah*, Quetta, 1928, p.233, and Burke, *op. cit.*, p. 87.
42. Sir Percy Sykes, *Sir Mortimar Durand*, Lahore, 1977, p. 217. Also see Sultan Mahomed Khan, *op. cit.*, pp. 154-164.
43. Relevant extracts of these agreements are given in Caroe, *op. cit.*, pp. 464-465. Also see Hasan Kakar, *Afghanistan: A Study in International Political Development 1880-1896*, Lahore, 1971, pp. 286-288.
44. Leon Poullada, 'Pushtunistan: Afghan Domestic Politics and Relations with Pakistan', in Ainslie T. Embree ed., *Pakistan's Western Borderlands*, Karachi, 1979, p.128.
45. Tytler, *op. cit.*, p. 270.
46. Pazhwak was serving in the Afghan Embassy in London when he wrote the book, cited in Burke, *op. cit.*, p. 76. Also see Dilip Mukerjee, 'Afghanistan under Daud: Relations with Neighbouring State', *Asian Survey*, Vol. XV. No. 4, 1975, p. 302.
47. Historically, the tribes have been king-makers and king-breakers, and any government that wants to rule in Kabul has had to make peace with the tribes. To understand the dynamics of tribal connection see *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, pp. 237-238, and Mountstuart Elphinstone, *Kingdom of Caubul*, Vol. I & II, London, 1972.
48. Poullada, *op. cit.*, p. 13.
49. A.F.K. Organski, *World Politics*, New York, 1958, p. 258.
50. Caroe, *op. cit.*, 435.
51. Organski, *op. cit.*, p. 258.
52. Burke, *op. cit.*, p. 74.
53. Gupta, *op. cit.*, p. 76.
54. *Pakistan Times*, Lahore, 30 December 1947.
55. Razvi, *op. cit.*, p. 37.
56. *Pakistan Times*, Lahore, 15 June 1948. Also see *Pakistan News*, 16 June, 1948.
57. *Pakistan Times*, Lahore, 15 June 1948. Also see Razvi, *op. cit.*, p. 37.
58. *Dawn*, Karachi, 15 July 1949.
59. Rahman Pazhwak, *Pakhtunistan*, London, 1957, p. 124, quoted in Burke, *op. cit.*, p. 74.
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61. S.M.M. Qureshi, 'Pakhtunistan: The Frontier Dispute between Afghanistan and Pakistan', *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. XXXIX, No. 1 & 2, Spring-Summer 1966, p. 105.
62. See *Dawn*, 23 March 1950; and *Pakistan Constituent Assembly Debates*, Vol. VIII, 9 July, 1950, pp. 531-535.
63. See for instance, James W. Spain, 'The Pathan Borderland', *The Middle East Journal*, Vol. IX, No. 3, 1961, p. 337.
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65. *Dawn*, 5 October 1950.
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70. Sisir Gupta, *op. cit.*, p. 80.
71. See the articles by Peter G. Frank, 'Afghanistan Between East and West: An Evaluation' and 'The Political Environment of International Economic Relations', *The Economics of Competitive Coexistence*, National Planning Association, Columbia, 1960, pp. 67-83, and pp. 12, respectively.
72. S.A. Quddus, *op. cit.*, p. 106.
73. Sisir Gupta, *op. cit.*, p. 81.
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75. *Dawn*, 13 May 1955. Also referred in Mujtaba Razvi, 'Pak-Afghan Relations since 1947', p. 40.
76. *Pakistan Times*, Lahore, 20 June, 1955.
77. Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan*, New Jersey, 1980, p. 538.
78. *Pakistan Times*, and *Dawn*, 8 May 1955.
79. Dupree, *op. cit.*, p. 539.
80. *Pakistan Times*, Lahore, 15 May 1955.
81. *Guardian*, Manchester, 1 February, 1956, cited in Abdul Quddus, *op. cit.*, p. 110.
82. *Guardian*, Manchester, 2 March 1956. Anthony Eden's Successor, Harold Mac-Millan reaffirmed this in 1960. Also see *Dawn*, 21 May 1960.
83. *National Assembly Debates*, Vol. I, 26 March 1956, p. 96. Also quoted in Abdul Quddus, *op. cit.*, p. 111.
84. Burke, *op. cit.*, pp. 147-240.
85. *Guardian*, Manchester, 1 February 1958, cited in Abdul Quddus, *op. cit.*, p. 112.
86. *Dawn*, 10 December 1959.
87. *Pakistan Times*, Lahore, 2 December 1959.
88. *Dawn*, 10 December 1959.
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103. *Ibid.*, p. 355.
104. *Dawn*, 13 October 1968.

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- 106. Burke, *Pakistan's Foreign Policy*, p. 352.
- 107. *Dawn*, 17 May 1970.
- 108. *Dawn*, 29 May 1970.
- 109. *Dawn*, 26 August 1970.
- 110. *Dawn*, 26 August and *Morning News*, 14 September 1970.
- 111. Abdul Quddus, *op. cit.*, p. 119.