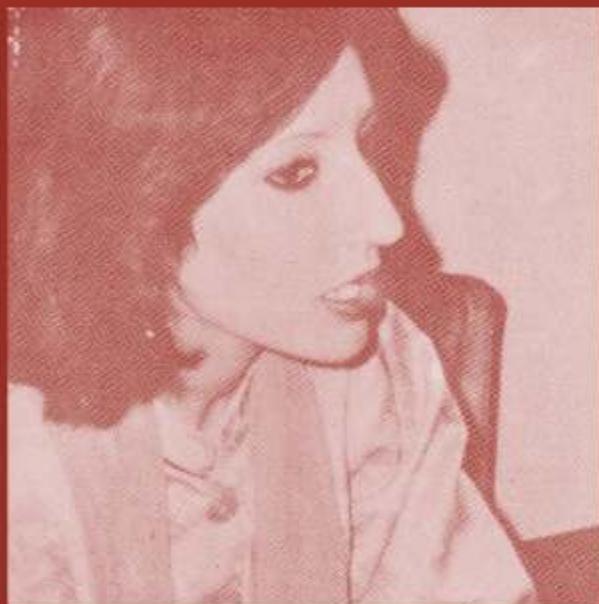


Benazir Bhutto



**Pakistan
The Gathering Storm
1983**

**Reproduced By
Sani Hussain Panhwar
Member Sindh Council, PPP**

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Preface

This is a statement of my beliefs which, I have no reason to doubt, represents the thinking of my own father, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, executed in jail in 1979 by Pakistani Generals, and of my mother, Nusrat Bhutto, now abroad for treatment of suspected cancer. I have no reason to doubt, either, that it reflects the aspirations, yearnings and idealistic urges of the vast bulk of the activists of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP).

Accordingly, I recommend this statement (*i*) to my own party to adopt as its own, and (*ii*) to the Movement for Restoration of Democracy (MRD), insofar as the minimum programme of action is concerned. I am confident they will.

The political life of the country is in a frozen state. Parties do not exist except in name. The PPP is an exception in many ways: it has shown itself to be a latent force and is making itself felt as an all pervasive sentiment. This, inspite of the fact that people are in fetters: they cannot assemble, demonstrate, march in protest or in any way raise their voices.

Everywhere, the Pakistan armed forces reign supreme. Since their chief, Gen. Zia-ul Haq, seized power in a treasonous *coup d'état* in the early hours of July 5, 1977, the army has subverted the entire mechanism of a civilised and democratic government. It has virtually destroyed the freedom and autonomy of every institution of value: press, parties, judiciary, bar, Parliament (abolished), trade unions, universities and even innocuous associations. Indeed, the painstakingly written (1973) Constitution has been subverted, prostituted and finally consigned to the dustbin. Whatever the Pakistan army touches, withers or turns rancid; the murderous army rule, the martial law, sit strident on people's chests, throttling them.

For the time being the people's voice has been drowned under the thumping of more than half a million military boots marching on Zia's orders. He muffles even the groans and squeaks. The officially-owned and tightly controlled radio and television make sure that reality is not reflected in what they broadcast. Daily papers are compelled into self-censoring on pain of draconian punishment (including whipping), laid down in a plethora of Martial Law Orders (MLOs) and Martial Law Regulations (MLRs), cruelly enforced by Kangaroo (military) courts.

But this long night of oppression — now well into its sixth year — cannot continue indefinitely. A people cannot be kept down by the jackboot for all time. They will revolt some day - and before very long. The freedom-loving people of Pakistan have shown how in 1968-69 and in 1971, when the oppressors appeared

all powerful, they rose in revolt. Once the brute force is challenged openly in the streets, as was the case in Iran in 1978, it will dissolve into thin air.

The price of freedom may be heavy but the people of Pakistan will pay it.

Come what may, we shall overcome.

BENAZIR BHUTTO

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1. The Perfidy of the Generals

I am heading the Pakistan People's Party at the moment, having been nominated by Begum Nusrat Bhutto, now abroad for treatment of suspected cancer. She happens to be my mother. She was appointed, on an interim basis, to head the party organisation in the darkest hour of Pakistan's history by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the PPP Chairman, when the Generals arrested him on a false murder charge.

I do not wish to go into the details of that travesty of justice which, as the whole world now knows, was a dishonest trial gone through with the collusion of the Pakistan army Generals and some judges.

The important consequences are two: the Generals were, and still are, bent upon destroying the PPP because it is the biggest and most powerful party which enjoys the people's trust — and love. Secondly, I am also the daughter of the man who made the PPP what it was and still is. A bit of explanation is called for.

The Generals' junta that overthrew the elected government of the PPP headed by the now-executed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto are using these personal relationships to discredit Begum Nusrat Bhutto's and my leadership. This is intended to harm the PPP. We are pained at the government-orchestrated propaganda that holds that we are desirous of keeping party leadership within the family. We are supposed to want to establish dynastic rule over the country.

I wish formally to repudiate any such designs. The PPP is party of the poor and the underprivileged. It stands for social justice. Its main slogan is: *roti* (bread), *kapra* (clothing) and *makan* (shelter) for all, through a socialistic economy. The PPP's politics is democratic and its faith is Islamic.

Now, how can there be scope for a dynastic succession in such a party?

Why then did my late father entrust the leadership to my mother? And why did my mother ask me to assume the onerous task? The explanation is simple.

Terrorise or Seduce

The Generals and their government are terrified by the popularity of the PPP; they have been moving heaven and earth to destroy and somehow discredit this party. Their chief tactics are two: terrorise the ordinary worker and activist at the grassroots, and seduce the more prominent leaders at district, divisional, provincial and central levels with offers of office, favours (individual and group), and, it is rumoured, bribes of various kinds.

These were employed to create schisms and groups among prominent ex-ministers of the previous PPP government to intensify their personal rivalries. Then, there was the unfortunate fact that there were a few individuals in the PPP governments who had been in cahoots with the army. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto saw what the design was: to split the party into so many warring groups that each should cancel the other out. His decision to entrust the Acting-Chairmanship of the party to his widow-to-be was intended solely to frustrate the Generals' designs and to save the PPP. There was, and could be, no other reason. He was far above self and family.

Why Nusrat, my mother, chose me to head the party is for the same reasons. The Generals have intensified their machinations and have succeeded in enticing a few odd individuals into cooperating with them. But by the grace of God, the party as a whole remains intact, completely unaffected. Any individual, as soon as he begins to serve the regime or is otherwise seen to cooperate with it, loses all esteem amongst the people; I hold the office – despite all manner of restrictions and the obvious cost to me in the form of continued persecution – solely to provide an unblurred focus for the unity of the party. No one can distrust or suspect my integrity; none can believe that the Generals' regime can lure me into either recognising it as legitimate or otherwise betraying the common people.

I have no personal aims or ambitions. I will presently give a programme to set at rest any doubts that any of us wishes to grab power in future and retain it in the family.

Another charge that is levelled is against the party as a whole. It is that we promote and wish to profit by the mystique of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto – the martyr for democracy and socialism. In a sense, it is true; but in a meaningful sense, it is totally false. Let me explain.

ZAB was the chief author of the PPP's programme, though he was ably assisted by others whose contribution cannot be denied. The primary motive force behind the programme was his sense of dedication to the poor and the dispossessed. He was a leader who lived, worked and died for a programme that sought to improve the common man's lot. Without him, we in the PPP are greatly handicapped; there is no other person, the whole family included, who can quite play his role.

It is also a fact that holding up his example before the people, who loved him so well, is indeed necessary. The people's love for him explains why the Generals had to murder him in order to survive and bring back the exploiters' rule. To that extent we gladly accept the charge.

No Claim to Privilege

But none of us wishes to make it a basis for claiming any privilege at all, much less permanent power; it is a bogus charge; malicious propaganda. The people, at any rate, are not fooled. In a democratic and socialist party, this charge cannot stick.

Another charge levelled against us is that the PPP is not a democratic party. The proof? It has never held elections within itself to elect its office bearers. Let me confess that the specific charge is superficially true. There have been no elections at local, district and provincial levels. Does that finally prove that ours is not a democratic party or that there is a family dictatorship within the party? I hold it to be untrue: we are imbued with the spirit of democracy. Let me explain.

The party was formed late in 1967 and was immediately subjected to intense persecution by the dictator of the day, Ayub Khan. His regime hardly permitted the party to conduct normal political activity.

It must be borne in mind that it was a revolutionary party, dedicated to destroy the rule of and by feudal lords and to break the power of capitalism. The new revolutionary message began to spread like wildfire. The people began to rise in virtual revolt by the end of 1978. Within the space of six months the imposing edifice of Ayub Khan's eleven-year-old authoritarian rule came crashing down.

What ensued was the Generals' holding operation. The new Martial Law Chief was the scheming Gen. Yahya Khan, whom the world press called Yahoo, who kept everyone campaigning through press and publications alone. No actual political work at the popular level was permitted. The reason why Yahya succeeded initially was that he began to concede popular demands, though at the leisurely pace of once every four months. Then he announced an election date and permitted full political activity. That phase lasted almost a year.

After the elections the country was in the grip of the East Pakistan Crisis. That sad story is well known. The Pakistan army did not accept the election results and resorted to military suppression in East Pakistan. At the same time its regime banned political activity and expression in West Pakistan with terrible harshness. The country was stunned.

In quick succession came the war with India, a humiliating military defeat and an unconditional surrender of the entire Eastern Command of the Pakistan armed forces. Pakistan was dismembered and India took 91,000 prisoners of war. Not only was East Pakistan finally lost but 5,000 square miles of West Pakistan territory were occupied by India. The Pakistan army's performance on the western front was also dismal.

All this was a devastating trauma for all Pakistani's. In the dark hour of defeat, dismemberment and dejection, the army artfully made over power in the new Pakistan to the PPP – which had had neither the time nor the opportunity to organise itself. In fact, the PPP was a movement, and a stormy and revolutionary one at that. But the country was in a state of political shock and seemed to be prostrate. Many doubted that West Pakistan alone could hold together; they thought the East Pakistan civil war would, in some form, continue. The army was thought to be nursing ideas of cracking down on West Pakistan's victorious party: the PPP. ZAB's book, Great Tragedy, and his statements at the time can be reread now to see what subsequently transpired.

When it took charge the Peoples Government was led naturally by none other than the PPP's Chairman. His first priority was not the party; it was to pick up the pieces. The nation had to be pulled together and a theoretical basis found for its unity and survival. The people had to be reassured and encouraged. Even the armed forces had to be rescued from their demoralisation and again made a fighting force which they were not at that time. The country had no constitution or political institutions that could resolve the issues facing the nation in that hour of shame. Above all, the people were groaning under the iniquities and oppression of the feudal-capitalist order; they needed immediate relief.

Party Preoccupations

The PPP government had to undertake all these tasks simultaneously. It went in for revolutionary reforms; all the leading lights of the economy were nationalised; land reforms were taken in hand without loss of time. But above all, Pakistan's fair name had to be redeemed; Yahoo's and the Pakistan army's misdeeds had rubbed the noses of Pakistanis in the dust. Pakistan's international standing had sunk to an all-time low.

Much of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's time was taken up by attending to international matters: It was the compulsions of the situation: 5,000 square miles of the nation's territory were under enemy occupation; there were 91,000 Pakistani POWs in Indian jails; Pakistan was friendless; its economy was in shambles.

Relations with India and Bangladesh had to be established on a sound footing. The country had no legal, ideological or other bases to hold together as a nation; a new nation-building covenant had to be drawn up. Each of these was a tricky and difficult task. All these matters kept ZAB working 18 hours a day and to his regret prevented him from devoting any time to party matters. And then it was time to go to the polls again. Meanwhile, he had alienated the American CIA; his nuclear and other policies cost him dear. The story of how the CIA masterminded the process of ZAB's downfall is well known.

Here, one is only interested in pinpointing the reasons why party elections were not held. Ever since the day the Generals took over on July 5, 1977 no political activity was legally possible. While none of us wishes to make light of the importance of internal democracy within a party, or lay claim to any privileges, facts have to be seen in the perspective of the circumstances of the day.

I wish to go on record as pledging for party polls at all levels – from bottom to the very top – as soon as circumstances warrant. This is no caveat. As soon as political activity becomes legally possible, we in the PPP shall go in for these internal elections. All leadership at all levels shall and should always be elected. Let there be no misunderstanding on that score.

Ours is a party of the left: it is liberal in its outlook and spirit; it is socialist in its programme, and it is also wedded to Islamic values in spiritual matters. Let me at the same time make it clear that it repudiates the Islamic pretensions of military dictators on all counts: ideological, political and, of course, economic, for their talk of an Islamic or Pakistan ideology is a cloak to hide, with the help of the civil and military bureaucracy, the ugly face of the tyranny of the feudal and capitalist classes.

PPP's Priorities

The PPP is under no illusions about the social face of most of the components of the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy (MRD). But, as I have argued elsewhere in this programme, the present situation dictates a broad national front of all democratic forces. All who stand for people's right to determine their own future, and wish to deprive the army of any opportunity or power for imposing its will (and rule) over the people, should come together over the minimum programme of sending the army back to where it belongs: the barracks. It has to be done by any and all means available.

The PPP recognises that this particular objective, in the present abnormal times, overrides every other programme. Not that the PPP's own programme is irrelevant. But for those who ordinarily ignore the social dynamics of political action, the statement I am making means that we have agreed to subordinate our party's programme to the immediate or overriding objective of bringing down the present military-fascist dictatorship by whatever means necessary.

When this statement is examined, it will be found different from all other MRD members: my formulation says by whatever means necessary or possible; others specify only the traditional or constitutional means. Since the present regime calls itself one of Martial Law and permits no political activity or free press or other civic rights or free courts, the desire to do anything to achieve the desired

overriding objective by only constitutional means is reduced to a pious wish. Nothing will ever get done: no popular mass action will be possible because the Generals will never countenance people violating or foiling the Martial Law's prohibitions.

On the other hand we, the PPP, take both programmes seriously: the immediate as well as the party programme. We pledge ourselves to achieving both. Others who wish actually to do anything shall have to listen to us; probably the workers of other parties, who do care about human freedom, shall have no option but to join hands with our activists in the field. Looked at closely, and keeping in mind the psychological underpinning of political idealism, one should have no difficulty in seeing that only a deeper commitment to human values and rights – the essence of our programme – can compel people to fix the objective of bringing down the fascist regime of the Pakistan military to be an overriding one.

People cannot go on shouting about the objective of democracy without translating what they proclaim into action. And, if they do not, they would be seen as being politically inadequate. We believe that if we do what we believe to be right, it will force people to come out of their self-imposed limitation. This will not happen if we only organise and address a political rally or march when the Martial Law government permits us to do so.

As it is, our programme of a humanistic transformation of society and the immediate objective of restoring freedom do not conflict. In fact both are stations on the same road; one leads to the other. I go further: without commitment to a programme like ours no one can be enthused to struggle and suffer for the cause represented by the immediate objective. This is not cheap one-upmanship or cynical realpolitik. We have sincerely offered our hand of cooperation to others for the given purpose of pulling down the inhuman military regime. We shall go along with them all the way to the realisation of the objective – even if they do not make it to the end of the road. Either they will drop out and make up with the tyrants at some stage, or they will continue with us till the objective is achieved.

In the latter case, the momentum of the struggle shall be carried on by us – till our programme is achieved. This should be clear to all; let no one say they did not know what we stood for. We are, as I will argue elsewhere, not lovers of violence in politics; we want peaceful political action in the streets, factories and fields in which all public-spirited Pakistanis should participate. It is mass action we want. But we shall refuse to wait indefinitely for Gen. Zia-ul Haq to issue us a permit to do this or a licence to do that. We will, with the people, do whatever is necessary without endangering the people needlessly or inviting a clash with the

troops. But this fear of a clash shall not be allowed to make us acquiesce in the military's dictatorship.

Our alliance with the MRD, sincere as it is, is for the given purpose of bringing about the downfall of the military government. This means breaking the stranglehold of the Pakistan army on the political and social life of the country. We are serious about the purpose and expect the other MRD components to be equally serious. But their lack of seriousness or interest or any squeamishness shall not hold us back indefinitely. We shall take with us those in the MRD who share with us the objective in all seriousness. The other components of the MRD are at liberty to stop when the immediate programme is achieved. But we shall push on — to our goals.

This means as soon as the minimum objective is achieved — downfall of the Martial Law or military regime, whether presided over by Zia or any other General — the MRD's *raison d'être* shall cease to be. All parties will then be free to pursue their own goals. When we are in the MRD, we shall abide by its objective and shall try all the time to make it an active and effective organisation. We have laid all our cards on the table. We do not hide anything. People prefer to ventilate their grievances peacefully and through peaceful demonstrations. Given sufficient opposition, it graduates into a (peaceful) struggle. We, too, do not like any blood being shed. Zia should know the longer he delays in acceding to the people's demand for elections — and the taking over of power and their rights from him - the more is he making sure that the struggle against his armed hordes will be long, bitter and bloody. As so many examples show, the closest being Iran, a few oppressors can never win in such a struggle Zia, being obstinate, is making sure his punishment will visit him. It is open to him to get off relatively lightly.

If he hurries up and unconditionally retreats, that is, agrees quickly (before July 31, 1983) to hold free elections and makes over power to the people, thus throwing himself and his accomplices at the mercy of the people, I am sure the Assembly probably would not execute him and his co-criminals. I am ready to recommend the punishment of forfeiture of nationality and exile only, and plead for it, provided he stops his clever games and accedes to popular demand within the deadline. Continued obduracy and resorting to active oppression, including the use of bullets, beyond this date, will mean burning his boats: he must steel himself for the worst.

For the present, I regard myself as a component of the MRD, as a representative of the PPP — accepting its discipline and keeping our party programme as the next stage of political evolution. My present position in the party is *ad interim*.

When Begum Nusrat Bhutto returns she will head the PPP and, as soon as party polls can be held, there will be an elected leader.

2. A Political Wasteland

We, the people of this dear land of ours, Pakistan, gained our independence by a political struggle that climaxed through free voting. We love freedom and democracy. Our dearest wish is to solve the problems of poverty and economic backwardness through democratic methods: a freely elected government shall lead the people into the exciting endeavour of improving the economic and cultural conditions of 85 million people through basic reforms. Let us remember the 1970 elections: the people had mandated the PPP for breaking their age-old shackles.

Today, the same Pakistanis are being cruelly oppressed and brutally ground down. The ruling classes have intensified the exploitation of the common people: tenants (both part-owners and wholly landless farm hands), workers, artisans and urban lower income group consumers. The capitalists, modern mechanised farmers who own or operate large farms, and rich traders have long plundered the country's population and resources. The military's officer class and the senior bureaucrats and their other hangers-on have forced the older masters to accept them as senior partners.

They have taken away even theoretical rights and all protest is suppressed. The Martial Law Orders and Regulations are barbaric even on paper – 10 to 14 years' imprisonment and 10, 20 or 30 lashes are being dispensed by military courts as a matter of routine. And who are found guilty? These courts exist to mete out brutal punishment on innocent political workers who dare to protest in some form or other.

These hapless people, often members of the PPP and other leftist parties and groups, have no real legal remedy available: recourse to ordinary courts – themselves prostituted and denied either the jurisdiction or the authority to come to the aid of aggrieved citizens – is rendered impossible by the military dictator's fiat.

Zia, the tyrant, in March 1981 unceremoniously took away even the theoretical right of superior courts to entertain complaints against any action of the military. Not that they could do much earlier; now even the pretence has been dropped.

Earlier, the military dictator used unctuously to boast that there are higher courts working under the 1973 Constitution - actually, this was a lie – but after his March 1981 Provisional Constitution Order (PCO), even this pretence was abandoned. The PCO, in fact, substituted even the idea of the Constitution that the people of Pakistan gave themselves in April 1973, and took away all the

autonomy, authority and legitimacy from, among others, the higher judiciary. Nine supreme and high court judges were dismissed for refusing to take oath under this monumental treason, so clearly defined in the 19 ... Constitution. Zia re-subverted and buried deep, even in theory, the 1973 Constitution.

The fair land of Pakistan is now a political wasteland. Pakistan's military dictators have spared no free or autonomous institution that characterises a minimally civilised society. Trade unions are not permitted to do their work freely. Industrial workers face the direct threat of losing the rights the democratic (PPP) government gave them before 1977. The Peasants' Rights Charter, given by Premier Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in 1976, is a dead letter. Universities and colleges are in straitjackets; the teaching fraternity is being split and dissenters are under tremendous pressure.

The bar is now being deprived, in fact, of the right to meet and discuss civil rights questions even inside court buildings. The Journalists' Union is under constant pressure and a fake rival is being unashamedly promoted. The efforts to corrupt journalists continue.

The Real Enemy

This is what Martial Law means: total denial of all the rights of the people. Let us be quite clear who the enemy is. It is not one man, Zia, who is the nominal ruler. It is the entire military officer class who today stands solidly behind Gen. Zia, sustaining his rule, and may tomorrow put up another General. Let us guard against that danger. Zia is also being supported by the entire bureaucracy, as well as by all the exploiting classes — those who benefit from his rule. They will happily serve a substitute Zia.

Zia's is a government *of, by and for* vested interests; the nature of the regime is clear from what the military government is doing in various fields. It keeps on harping that terrible dangers are gathering on Pakistan's borders. What does it mean? It does not spell out the dangers. But hints are clear: given a chance, the Indians will pounce on us from the east, while the Russians, now entrenched in Afghanistan, will start from the west, active subversion, and foment insurgency in Baluchistan and the NWFP. There is even a hint of a possible full-scale Russian invasion.

Iran is highly disturbed and engaged in a war with Iraq. That has a potential for mischief, also in the west. Iran's very future may be at stake in which both superpowers can easily get involved, maybe face to face, unless the Americans can quickly find local or local-looking proxies. But the rulers do not appear to be overly perturbed. They are not worried also about the superpower naval rivalry in the Indian Ocean to their south.

Zia's foreign policy – I shall deal with it later – is not designed to lessen the risks to Pakistan's security. On the contrary, he is either foolish (which he is not) or knavish; he is intensifying the risks in an effort at brinkmanship designed to win for him "serviceable" American support. Zia constantly appeals to the people to sink their differences and be united to face these dangers. What he means is: support me and do not ask for your own rights; I will lead the nation through these multiplying dangers.

Let us not allow the Generals to pull a fast one on us; let us focus on what they are doing. Anyone can see the game: they want to split the people and set one section against another. They first raised the bogey of a left-right polarisation. To be fair, this did exist from the 1968-69 period, to an extent. Throughout the period that the PPP ruled Pakistan (1972-77), the right-wing or "Islam-loving" parties (that the PPP in the west and the Awami League in the east had trounced in the "only" free elections (1970) as the rightists call them) continued to intrigue with the army. The rightists wanted the army's help to meet the "red menace" that would supposedly destroy Islam and Pakistan's traditional values and culture.

Connivance of Reactionaries

Everyone knows now that the military was in collusion with the right-wing Islamic reactionaries who mounted an agitation in 1977 with its connivance. This was used as an excuse by the military to stage its 5 July, 1977 *coup d'état*. It was welcome opportunity, anyhow. The reactionaries astonishingly, were so naive as to expect the army to make over power to them after it had overthrown a functioning democratic order. However, their minds were soon disabused and the Generals decided they deserved to rule themselves.

Curiously, after five and a half years of stringent Martial Law, this left-right confrontation threat is still, ostensibly, preventing the military government from holding elections and transferring power to the people. There is some truth in what it says. Hold elections tomorrow and the dreaded leftists – meaning mainly the PPP – will win. Among the others who will return will be either liberal nationalists seeking autonomy for their regions or outright Marxists. The right may even disappear altogether.

Strangely, the military's identification with right-wing parties is unmistakable. These parties were cynically made use of for initially going back on the promise of holding elections in 90 days: the excuse proffered was that these leaders were insisting upon completing the process of accountability (of the previous rulers) first. For a time it looked as if these right-wingers later realised the hoax: they

took over 17 months to make Zia fix another election date and to quit from his Cabinet. One hoped they had learned their lesson.

Belied Hopes

But the hope was soon belied. The dictator began to beat the Islamic drum louder and louder. Some rightists felt pulled in his direction; others, like the J.I. and Muslim League, despite their resignation from his Cabinet, remained in his pocket. One of them, the JUP, is looking both ways. But the military is even now able to use them to disinform and confuse the people, though these rightist leaders keep talking of what the people and all democrats want: holding early elections. But they predicate it with one or more conditions that do not fail to divide popular ranks.

It is a calculated fraud. I shall not name names; there is unending talk of a united front, though nothing seems to get settled. Why?

We, the PPP made the MRD possible by agreeing on 16 February, 1981 to work together with the PNA, the dupes of the military who had helped overthrow the democratic order. But the military continued for over a year to manage to break away parts of signatory parties. Even now it often succeeds in creating uncertainty. At any rate, there are always some others ready to join on certain "terms".

The discussion on these conditions is interminable among right-wing leaders; it is so conducted as to multiply points of friction among the various schools of thought and parties. That has been the experience in the MRD during these two years. Is it without design?

The military dearly wants to go on prolonging disagreements on forms of government: Three non-MRD rightist parties - Muslim League of Pagara, Jamiat ul Ulema Islam (JUP) and Jamiat Islami (JI) — are separately echoing this line of agreement. *It is assumed by them* that (a) a new agreement on a new form of government is necessary; (b) everyone else should agree upon it as a condition prior to the military agreeing to hold the elections.

This is, in fact, Zia's new condition: bury the democratic Constitution of 1973. These parties are now anxious to pull his chestnuts out of the fire for him.

Dictator Zia keeps on saying different things to different audiences, and at various times and places. He said the other day that he will have to provide a new legal framework before elections can be held. These parties echo his purposes in different styles and idioms, and while being disarmingly critical of

Zia personally, the operative part of what they say is the same as what the hated dictator wants.

Witness how all the three parties say: Let us agree on the form of future government. This is only an euphemism for saying: Let us accept the new constitution Zia wants to give - under which he will agree to hold elections and which, in order to yield his famous "positive results", will make for pliable Assemblies that will elect him. Why do we want a new Constitution or a new form of government? Have we not an unanimously accepted one which is still regarded by all as satisfactory?

Seeds of Confusion

What happened to the (1973) Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, which the tyrant Zia never tires of saying is the last hope of the country and is still intact? Most other parties too said, and still say, breaking it will open a Pandora's box; maybe the Pakistanis shall never be able to agree upon another constitution.

Pakistan has had a long sad history of constitution-making about which I shall have something to say later. What is notable here is that the military rulers are raising ever new constitutional issues with the clear intention of sowing seeds of maximum confusion among the people. Why are they doing it? To prolong their hated rule by not letting the opposition unite. First, we should be talking of how things are.

Let us see what face the Martial Law shows daily to the common people. It is the totally unlimited powers of the armed forces and the police. Any citizen can be arrested without warrant and detained indefinitely by any soldier or constable (who do so in thousands of cases, presumably on their superiors' orders). It is a government of the Generals, by the soldiers and civil bureaucracy, and for the Generals.

What is the impact of this government on the people? Such an unending and spiralling plunder by both the civil and military bureaucracies has never been seen before; corruption from the very top to the bottom has become absolutely unbelievable. Even the governors take bribes and are involved in drug trafficking; the reliable word of mouth speaks of a level of corruption far surpassing that of Kuomintang China.

The Economic Morass

One would be less concerned with what the top people did if only the common people did not suffer. But the corruption at the top is only the visible tip of the gigantic iceberg with which the ordinary folk have to contend all the time. Their

life has become a living hell; the rapacity of the state's smaller minions and the traders' exploitation of consumers always go hand in hand — it has now touched unbelievable limits.

Coupled with extensive unemployment — the explosiveness of which is reduced by emigration to the Persian Gulf — high prices have made the life of the common man an unmitigated misery. Even the small amount of industrialisation that had been achieved is at risk. The industrial sector is now beset with a leaping sickness: it is impossible to give the figures of capacity utilisation (or employment) for the simple reason that the government either does not release them or has no reporting system in place.

Unofficial guesstimates put capacity utilisation at no more than between 50-60 per cent. But even this average is maintained entirely because a few large projects, like fertilisers, cement, sugar, steel mills and refineries, are working at reasonably satisfactory capacity. The light consumer goods industry is in dire straits. Domestic production continues to decline as the market is flooded with freely imported goods, simply because the foreign creditors, with the IMF leading them, so insist. Private entrepreneurs have managed to siphon off most of their capital and have stashed it abroad. Economists have been talking of a veritable deindustrialising process.

Despite this bleak backdrop, the Zia government has continued to pursue a free import policy — which has more or less helped kill local industry. It is an open secret that the military has to follow this policy because it is dictated by the IMF and World Bank. The number of IMF and World Bank missions sitting in various official agencies for detailed monitoring at any given time, is much too large for comfort. The fact is that the Pakistan military has mortgaged the country for a mess of pottage: for an uncertain quantity of military hardware. The result is that Pakistan's independence of action has been lost: most economic policies are now made for us — in the IMF-IBRD offices in Washington.

The military regime has failed to check the incidence of smuggling. Our cities are flooded with the products of developed countries; recession-hit countries are unloading their unsold goods on poor Pakistan.

Why has smuggling spread so fast that almost every city has a known market for purely smuggled goods? And what of the much tom-tommed fight to stop smuggling? The results speak for themselves.

The truth is that anti-social activity is being encouraged in the interests of the high and mighty — just as drug-trafficking, despite elaborate window-dressing, is being organised by the Generals in power.

It is not surprising that a black-market economy and smuggling should become a parallel economy. Its size is anyone's guess. Some put it at the mind-boggling figure of 30 to 35 per cent of the urban economy. Creation of black money, flight of capital, bribes taken abroad, drug-trafficking and the old evil of over-invoicing of imports and under-invoicing of exports are estimated by some at three to four billion dollars every year. This finances unofficial imports and, in part, is kept abroad as an edge against future uncertainties.

Workers Under Threat

The industrial labour is under threat. All the rights it had won during the democratic era of the PPP are now at risk. On the anvil for the last two years is a new labour policy which will purportedly take away most of its rights and privileges, including the right to strike. The dictator is awaiting a suitable opportunity to announce his new (raw) deal to the worker. It is only the fear of the backlash that is holding him back, temporarily.

The rural economy is being claimed as the greatest success story of the dictatorial regime. True, wheat production has gone up to nearly 11 million tonnes. But who benefits? I shall take up the question in some detail elsewhere. Here it suffices to note: actual producers of so much wealth are decaying and being impoverished so that they are trekking to burgeoning slums around all towns and cities where there is nothing for them to do but await an opportunity to emigrate. Yet the big landlords continue to prosper.

Capitalist agriculture is being officially promoted at the expense of small peasants and tenants. Zia is allowing land to be alienated in favour of new gentlemen farmers at a catastrophic rate. The 1982-83 budget began official encouragement to what is plantation farming. Arab sheikhs and multinationals are being invited to own and operate large farms (5,000 to 10,000 acres). Meantime it is Generals and bureaucrats, serving as well as retired, who are going in for the big farms. The state gives all sorts of incentives to these big guys.

All this at the expense of poor citizens.

An increasing proportion of the village population is landless. It has no jobs, help or hope. It has no option but to first go to the sprouting or expanding shanty towns. The flight of slum dwellers in urban centres is pitiable. Malnutrition, tuberculosis, crime, prostitution and other evils are rampant. In these slums social services or the necessary civic infrastructure of water, roads, schools, houses, hospitals and the rest do not exist. The government altogether ignores this horrible misery in which so many masses live, and prattles about imaginary achievements.

In the din of the propaganda for agricultural progress – measured in overall production of *selected* crops – returns to small farmers whether owner-cultivators or tenants or part-owner-part-tenant cultivators, is forgotten. Small farmers are generally too poor to get or make use of the incentives or facilities the government provides, all of which are cornered by the rich landowners.

Rural Hardship

All this adds up to extreme poverty and perennial hardship for the vast majority of the rural population, with unemployed landless farm hands being at the bottom of the rural pyramid. The latter are in desperate straits and nobody mentions them.

Zia is making much of Islamising the economy. It is actually throwing small farmers to the capitalist wolves. I will take up its economics in a later section. All that is necessary to say here is: this Islamisation is grist to his propaganda mill. He wants to confuse and confound the opposition and desperately hopes to win some legitimacy – and support. He wants people to forget he is an usurper who has disinheritied the whole nation.

This state of affairs explains why the people feel powerless. Inevitably, they begin losing interest and become apathetic. In any case, the many pressing problems of everyday living preempt much of their time, energy and attention.

The traditional political leadership has, it is abundantly clear, failed the people in several ways. First, when people are deprived of all their rights, being ground down and ruthlessly exploited, the leaders are necessarily conspicuous by their absence; they are busy writing books or memoirs or gossiping in their well-appointed drawing rooms.

Secondly, these leaders are bleating like lost sheep. "Please, Sir, Gen. Zia-ul Haq, listen If you will not permit us to engage in the only kind of politics we know" – the so-called constitutional or democratic politics of protest – "the people will start listening to a new type of politician who can operate underground and who talks of revolution we and you both will soon become irrelevant." And true enough, popular revolution will surely sweep away both Zia and this gentry.

End of the Tether

The situation thus has clearly gone beyond the ability of dictatorship to manage but it has too much at stake. It cannot give up and permit elections. It has blundered too much; it has played out all scenarios.

That is why when the 1973 Constitution was being made, everyone, from Premier Bhutto down to opposition backbenchers, was determined to make another military takeover impossible; they said so unanimously, and wrote in the Constitution that another General guilty of subverting the democratic government shall be (under Section 6) tried for high treason (punishment of which will be death). Thus, Zia sees a noose hanging loose, waiting for him.

Some of Zia's sycophants deplore the -politics of violence; they think, say or imply that we of the PPP — who, like the entire spectrum of political leadership (except the regime's stooges), insist on restoring the 1973 Constitution in full — want to avenge the death of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. It is a lie. No doubt, that judicial murder was an outrage — a crime against humanity. I grieve for him — as an individual and as his daughter. But not everyone else in the country or in such a diverse opposition can be personally motivated.

The entire nation wants that Constitution to be restored, because that Constitution was the only one that a fully representative Assembly made. Even Zia was forced to admit repeatedly, "it was the last hope of the country". If we do not bring back that Constitution, we shall be doing a disservice to the country. So thinks every other public-spirited person and says so. What if a noose also hangs thereby? If that will fit snugly around Zia's neck, so be it. It was designed, made and attached long before Zia was made the Army's Chief of Staff. Even so, hanging Zia is not the motivation, though he richly deserves it. If he is too anxious, let him act and come to us in a contrite frame of mind. Perhaps, some way can be found for sparing his life. For revenge is not our politics. But that particular reprieve must not cheat the law, which will, and must, take its course.

Forms of Protest

As for indulging in whatever politics is possible and relevant, let me say so firmly, formally and finally: we do not like violent politics. We prefer democratic means of protest — and elections. But if all constitutional avenues are blocked — as Zia has done these past six years — we shall not sit idle, as some others are doing. We shall do what is possible; that which will do the job; and in the most effective way.

Let there be no mistake about it. The choice is Zia's. Either he allows free electioneering, leading to free elections or he does not. In the latter case, he is challenging the people to come and overthrow him by defeating his army. If there is no choice, we shall pick up the gauntlet and fight.

I will be sorry. For, it will be a long and bloody struggle; many will have to sacrifice their life, limb and property. But we shall not let the usurping Generals go on plundering this fair land of ours. True, we shall grieve for Pakistanis

killing Pakistanis – the soldiery too are our kith and kin. But patriotic and moral duty is duty. We shall not flinch from it. All I can say to Zia is: We do not ask for mercy and shall show none.

The philosophical debate of ends and means requires time and plenty of time – and no preoccupations. Here, we have a job of work to do: it is to drive away the Generals from seats of power. We shall not sit down indefinitely to discuss the finer points of political and ethical theory. We shall apply our minds to what is the most effective way of achieving what we have undertaken to do in the shortest time. As I have mentioned elsewhere also, to a large extent we are not free to adopt the means we like. They are being determined by the enemy.

The enemy insists that we fight. We shall fight to the bitter end (his). If he compels us to use violent means, we shall. Otherwise let him allow scope for peaceful means of setting up a popular (democratic) government. The choice is really his.

Let me also say a word to our allies and allies-to-be on this subject. It is no use repeating ad nauseam that our preference is for peaceful ways of organising the people and to struggle against the Generals. We, the younger lot, shall not sit with folded hands, if Zia does not lift his hateful restrictions. We shall do what we must to unseat him. We shall do so through popular action, not through terrorist activity.

This distinction is important. It is popular action we want not terrorism. But we are not Gandhians. Besides, Gandhi succeeded, because his adversaries were shamefaced bullies like the British, who were not entirely insensitive to the costs they paid for objectives they sought and we're nimble-witted enough to settle for friendship with Congress-dominated India. Moreover, the Congress was the handmaid of Indian capitalists in cahoots with British capitalists which found it more profitable to compromise with British rule without paying a high cost in blood and wealth. Our Generals are neither so intelligent nor have they room for so much manoeuvre. They are now with their backs to the wall and mean to fight mindlessly.

To repeat: we do not love or prefer violence. But we shall flinch from nothing if it becomes essential in the ensuing fight for people's rights. We shall not sit and wait until Zia or his successor General lifts the restrictions.

For the rest, we shall go along with the older political leadership – so long as they engage in the struggle. I promise sincerely to learn from their experience and wisdom in so far as they agree to act and lead the struggle. But not sit back at home and do nothing under high-sounding names.

The Dictator's Ways

Enemy tactics have to be watched. There are three main traits. First, the Generals' regime — that includes Zia's successor Generals also — relies chiefly on a divide-and-rule policy. I have dealt with it in detail elsewhere. Suffice it to say here that his designs have to be exposed. The second means is sowing confusion. Every day a new red herring is drawn across the nation's bath. His habit of raising a new, usually irrelevant and divisive, issue has to be shown for what it is. Thirdly, he is very efficiently using the media, after regimenting them. The regime permits no opposition viewpoint being heard by the people. This has to be countered somehow. This third is the dictatorship's strongest tool, which, in the short run, disheartens immature young minds the most.

A bit of history will help. Dictator Ayub Khan, the self-appointed and peacetime Field Marshal, had done the same even more efficiently or at least more thoroughly. Zia's minions are trying to go one better on their Ayubian predecessors by calibrated intervals of "freedom" to print sanitised versions of political news and mildly critical comment. They clamp down soon enough before any momentum is built up, while their campaign to corrupt and coerce the journalistic profession goes on. Ayub tried it for 10 years. But what happened? Eventually, the people united in action for overthrowing the hateful dictatorship, though the unity did not extend to all political questions. In a way, even in this sphere, much unity had been achieved in and through popular action; disunity was amongst parties and their activists. People voted for parties — both in East and West Pakistan — that stood for a socialist economy, promised improvement in the common man's life, democratic rights for all citizens and a politics that safeguards their religion and culture. People voted for only those parties which promised these — and rejected those that frothed at the mouth over pseudo-religious (Islamic) ideological clap-trap. Let there be another election: the people will throw out the new witch doctors, who are constantly chanting Islamic mumbo-jumbo. So, let us not worry too much about what the Generals can do with their totalitarian control of the media.

3. Zia's Siren Song

Dictators love to be seen as dare-devil great men; they strike a heroic pose. It is usually in the foreign-affairs field. Zia is acting true to type. He is playing brinkmanship with some finesse. The Russian intervention in Afghanistan has provided him a fine opportunity. He acts the champion of the anticommunist and Islam-loving Afghan freedom fighters (the Mujahideens) and, in collusion with the US, Saudi Arabia and Egypt, permits foreigners to give money, supplies, guns and explosives – and now anti-gunship rocket launchers – to the Mujahideens. He does so for gaining American goodwill support and economic and military aid, and has succeeded. This American support is vital for his staying in power.

But he does so in such a way that the Russians do not become overly hostile. He keeps assuring them that he cannot stop the Americans and others from doing what they are doing because in the strip of tribal territory all along the actual border, his writ does not run. It is a lie, of course, wherever the regime's vital interests are concerned, it acts as decisively in these areas as may be necessary; it has all the influence, organisation and force available in these areas. That they are still superficially autonomous is a relic of the Raj and serves many of bureaucracy's purposes, including opportunities of institutionalised graft – and playing dirty tricks in Afghanistan.

Nevertheless, the pretence serves the purpose. The Russians, for their own ends choose to accept this fiction. For, they too can play at this game from the Afghanistan side of the border. And these Afghan tribesmen are very good at playing both sides of the street; traditionally, the same secret agent, during the nineteenth century, used to give the British the intelligence he thought they would like to hear and quite the opposite to the "other side". But for Zia to rely on this flimsy – and risky – stratagem is foolhardy. However, he must strut on the international stage heroically. (He has already accepted three million refugees, who can cause no end of trouble.)

I will deal with the dangers inherent in this policy elsewhere. Here it is sufficient to say it divides the political life, especially in the sensitive North Western Frontier Province (NWFP) and Baluchistan – and all for the sake of striking a pose (that will look good to Caspar Weinberger and Ronald Reagan).

The full enormity of the military's crime in this interval exceeds anything known so far about others; even the patently intensified exploitation does not cover their transgressions. Its cupidity has brought Pakistan back to square one: it has reopened all the problems that kept Pakistan disunited and unstable in all the

first 25 years (before the civil war defeat and dismemberment in 1971). The country and its people face untold dangers from many sources and on many counts. What were those divisive issues? They were (i) ideology; (ii) the question of dividing powers and functions between the federation and units; (iii) the basis of representation in the federal Parliament; (iv) special powers of the head of state; and (v) strangely enough, foreign policy.

These issues have remained controversial all through the life of united Pakistan. Between 1947 and 1954, between independence and the assumption of total power by an ex-bureaucrat-dictator, through the three constitutional draft constitutions that were presented, and the third had been agreed to. But before its formal passage, the authoritarian head of state preempted it by a palace revolution because it threatened his own power and he was in cahoots with the army, bureaucracy and West Pakistan's aristocracy. This combination, to which captains of business, finance and industry were coopted, continues to provide the basis of dictatorial regimes to this day.

Another Assembly was, however, put together which made a constitution on the non-democratic basis of East Pakistan's 54 per cent population returning the same number of deputies as West Pakistan's 46 per cent in the new Parliament. The constitution, that gave extraordinary powers to the President, was, however, formally implemented. But it lasted just over 30 months. As soon as the government decided upon the date of holding the first general elections (February 1959), the head of state, with the Pakistan army's active assistance, staged yet another palace coup and destroyed every bit of constitutional order that had been so painfully rebuilt only three years earlier.

The Pakistan army soon decided it could operate on its own. Its chief ruled as the ex-officio President and the practice has been in vogue except for the Bhutto interregnum. He imposed a constitution of his own choice which was aptly called Martial Law in Mufti. It lasted six years before people rebelled. When that happened, the army put up its Chief as another Chief Martial Law Administrator (CMLA) – President, Gen. Yahya Khan. The "Yahoo's" Generals ably led the country into civil war, defeat at India's hands, and dismemberment.

Bhutto picked up the shattered pieces and rebuilt Pakistan. How "did he accomplish the task? Because he was the people's choice and had their active support. He asked and got the support of all elected (including right-wing) parties in settling those perennial issues of constitution-making through ordinary political give and take. The Permanent Constitution was made by the unanimous agreement of a democratically-elected Assembly. All political schools accepted it. The achievement was unique and even Zia is on record as having called it the last hope of Pakistan. He nevertheless subverted it and, in fact, tore it up.

The problems of 1947 are facing us again. One of the four provinces, the Punjab, is a permanent majority. Its population is 63 per cent of the country (as against the earlier 54 per cent permanent of East Pakistan). It is the richest. It provides 75 per cent of the army and 85 per cent of senior civil bureaucracy. The Punjabis have now displaced the original trading, banking, industrial elites; they have bought up nearly all big non-nationalised industries and big business undertakings. The nationalised sector is also controlled mostly by Punjabi bureaucrats and all their orders, it is alleged, are placed on Punjabi firms.

The Punjabis occupy commanding heights of all professions and constitute most of the economic and political elites. A close-up of Zia's nominated Parliament (1982), the *Majlis-i-Shoora*, shows the physiognomy and interpenetration of our economic and political elites. It is also known that even in smuggling and drug trafficking, the ultimate financing and organising is said to be in Punjabi hands, for the most part, though not entirely.

This explains why One Unit – the creation of one province by suppressing all the four West Pakistan provinces in 1955 that lasted until 1969 – was so universally hated in the smaller provinces (ethnic-linguistic minority areas) but so loved in the Punjab. Minority representatives were, and are, loud in condemning the Punjabi exploitation. They have always demanded, in exactly the same way as the Bengalis used to insist upon, full provincial autonomy. The Punjabi elites, as always, still reply with emphasis on Islam, Pakistan ideology, Muslim nationalism or the Islamic system and say Islamic solidarity somehow demands more power to the Centre (and not the other way around).

Fake Islamisation

It is remarkable how right-wing parties claim to be strong in the Punjab and how all make Islamic or Pakistan ideology – now called the Islamic System – their stock-in-trade. Their politics has no other content; urban middle classes in the Punjab, except for the PPP supporters, like it. But this politics had no appeal in other provinces in East Pakistan before 1971 nor, after that, has it any appeal in Sind, the NWFP and Baluchistan. True, the NWFP and Baluchistan have also voted, in part, for one orthodox Islamic party, the JUI. But that is a special case. While it is a genuinely orthodox religious party, its stance on the autonomy issue and land tenure system – land can belong only to those who actually till it with their own hands – are remarkably dissimilar to all other right-wing and religiously-oriented parties, and are akin to secular and leftist parties.

In simple words, the exploiters have used Islam as a cloak for their nefarious designs to go on looting the people. This is what Zia and his cohorts are doing.

Their insistence on the Islamic system is a manoeuvre to preserve the social and economic status quo that will leave their privileges – and power – unaffected.

We have to fight this cynical exploitation of Islam. In a country which is 93 per cent Muslim, no democratic government can dream of making a law or doing anything that will actually infringe Islamic precepts; no democratic politician can be so dim-witted as to propose anything against the people's religious susceptibilities. Islam can only be a non-issue in Pakistan. In any case, the 1973 Constitution embodies all the Islam that can be realistically written into a constitution. So much so, all orthodox religious parties still regard it as quite Islamic and adequate. Let us prevent Zia and other reactionaries from raising Islamic slogans.

4. Contours of a New System

To all intents and purposes the 1973 Constitution has been destroyed. This lays wide open all the older issues: the basis on which provinces will get representation in Parliament, division of powers and functions between the Centre and provinces, special powers of the head of state. Indeed Zia is introducing some new issues: armed forces must have a constitutional role.

What does he mean? Like Gen. H.M. Ershad of Bangladesh, he wants to give the Generals a veto power over the civil government. This means making the Generals the super government for all times. This obnoxious proposal must be shot down without ceremony.

As for the reopened older issues, the fact is that the Punjabi dominated army has re-established the One Unit – the only difference being, its capital is now Islamabad instead of Lahore. The Generals decide everything everywhere. The people of the smaller areas have no say. For that matter, the people of the Punjab are unnecessarily maligned for the misdeeds of their masters; they have no share in how things are managed by their elites. But they do share some responsibility for this state of affairs for they have yet to wake up to their true position and prevent their elites from continuing to act in their name. They are as intensely exploited and abused as any Sindhi, Baluchi or Pathan. So, they have to forge a strong united front with the exploited people of minority areas – the united front of the common people for common aspirations: a better life and equal rights.

Given this common people's unity under the banner of democratic parties – or an alliance of them like MRD – those issues can simply disappear. If this could happen in 1973, it can happen again. But it will not be easy.

Last time, two factors were responsible: in the 1970 elections the people gave an overwhelming mandate to the PPP, the party that kept popular interests in sharp focus; not being a party of exploiters, it had no interest in preventing minority areas from getting their fair share. So it would help solve intractable constitutional problems. Now, the right for elections itself has to be fought for. As there are no parties with established representative character the Generals continue to create misunderstandings.

Some representatives of smaller provinces, especially Bizenjo's PNP, are now demanding iron-clad guarantees against the "Punjabi Army's" propensity to take over and destroy the constitutional order. The army wants to make the Centre

all-powerful. The PNP wants even more powers for provinces in future than the 1973 Constitution granted them.

While most leftists would be willing to countenance more powers for provinces, other MRD parties, including also some PPP members, find it difficult to accept this demand. In terms of old memories and pettifogging arguments, there is unlikely to be an agreement between the Punjab and smaller provinces on a greater quantum of powers for provincial governments (as the issue could never be-resolved satisfactorily with East Pakistan). The more right-inclined MRD parties share the army's ideas on a strong Centre, and unthinking insistence on provincial autonomy can split the MRD. But the issue in reality is not difficult, if people's true interests are the criterion.

Here, one question needs to be sorted out. Many politicians, including occasionally Zia himself, pretend the 1973 Constitution is alive; it is only in abeyance. This is nonsense. A constitution is either respected or not respected. Once its essential provisions have been violated, it is as dead as the dodo. Let us not pretend that the Constitution survives. What survives is only its memory, and possibly some draft clauses that may serve as a model for a future effort. The fact is, we are constitutionally quite naked.

The Main Issue

Many begin fainting at the thought of having to make another constitution. Given political sense and a healthy realisation of what awaits them, if they fail to make a new constitution within a very short time, say a week or fortnight, the task is not at all difficult. At one extreme all that a new elected Assembly – and nobody else – has to do is to pass a more or less simple resolution that the provisions of the 1973 Constitution (with or without any unanimously agreed amendments) are hereby enacted without much discussion.

At the other end of the spectrum, some time – but again no more than a fortnight – may be needed to agree to a redistribution of powers and functions between the Federal Centre and provinces (and drafting of amending clauses). Those perfectionists who think that the 1973 Constitution could be improved upon in this or that particular should await their turn in the future. We have first to get the nation on constitutional rails again. That is the top priority.

A second issue on which ballyhoo is being made is Zia's balloon: elections cannot be held under the 1973 Constitution because it is dead; he will have to give his own model. He has variously described this as a Legal Framework Order (LFO a la Yahoo's April 1970 LFO), a new political structure or framework. Of late he has been emphasising the latter. This simply translates as, giving an Ayub Khan constitution on his own authority.

Let us recognise that there is a problem: under what instrument can the elections be held when nothing survives? But let us be sure it is a question of political mechanics. The real question is to ensure a truly free election to an unfettered and sovereign Assembly. Let no one attach conditions that will bind the elected deputies to any extraneous commitments.

This question can be settled among politicians on an ad hoc basis. Although the judiciary has been much prostituted, it can supervise them. But let me give the negative imperatives. Zia cannot give a constitution of his own. That will be anathema to the people. He cannot lay down preconditions of any kind; no LFO, of any description, that seeks to bind the elected representatives of the people to any course of action.

Zia has to hold elections unconditionally and has to surrender power unconditionally. We are told he wants to escape punishment under Section 6 of the 1973 Constitution; the "moderates" tell us, why prolong the people's agony, why not reduce it by credibly assuring him his security — that is, in a manner that satisfies Zia. This is plausible. We are not thinking of revenge. But on a matter of fundamental importance like the integrity of the constitution no compromises on principles are possible. Besides it is not for any of us to decide Zia's fate: it will be for the next "free" Assembly to do so. For us to bind it to any course would be as wrong as for Zia to try to lay down its course. Anyway, it is for Zia to throw himself to the mercy of the Assembly and it will judge him by his concrete actions. If he and his colleagues behave, even from now onward and put no needless obstacles in the path of free elections to a sovereign Assembly, it might for all I know, take a lenient view of his transgressions. We in the PPP are not motivated by ideas of revenge, but we do intend to follow Zia's accountability policy. For the rest, we shall re-establish the true rule of law.

The real way of resolving the issue is to interpose a truly popular programme to end all exploitation. The MRD must be persuaded to have as popular a programme as possible. Even if its right-wing components refuse to go beyond its minimum political programme, let the PPP adopt a programme to end all exploitation, as the basis on which people of all areas, in the Punjab as well as smaller provinces, will choose it. That will enable it to wage an effective struggle against the military's tyranny and become the really powerful instrument that the people in smaller areas can trust. The PPP will solve the issue by giving the people all the powers they want at all levels.

In the PPP-led struggle, the banner will remain the MRD's without any cheating. But it will, by itself, create conditions in which the PNP and other Baluchistan parties will agree objectively and freely to discuss the proposition after elections

(with the PPP and other victors including themselves) without slackening their cooperation during the struggle.

Focus on Problems

A programme of this nature can have magic political properties. That would mean keeping the focus on people's real problems and finding solutions for them by breaking the power of tyrants and exploiters. Without such a programme we cannot wage a struggle against the military rulers, with their penchant for raising ever new Islamic slogans and political racketeering, nor can we solve the plethora of issues they are creating to confuse and confound the political parties. We in the PPP must keep our vision clear, draw up such a programme, and lead others out of the present quagmire.

This magic of a popular programme has to be understood. To begin with, its constituents must be identified. There have to be some people — the aware minority — who perceive and analyse the situation from the popular angle. They provide an essential leadership function. Their degree of awareness, indeed, should be such as to carry with it a commitment to change: to pull down the tyrannical social and economic structures and work for building a new and more egalitarian - indeed revolutionary — society.

Now, the commitment of this intellectually aware minority, once a correct programme is delineated, becomes one with the aspirations and yearnings of the people. A charismatic personality from amongst this minority energises the people by forging a living and active alliance between that minority and the people. This political fusion releases a tremendous amount of popular energy, such as Bhutto was able to bring about between 1968 and 1970.

We can do that again. I am not advocating a personality cult. All I am saying is that a charismatic personality finds it easy to become a symbol or focus for the people, with a given message. It should be remembered that I do not think such a programme can be dreamed up by such a person, or that the aware minority — the party activists or cadres — has no collective role. The personality of the chief, the party workers and the programme are all separately necessary and must evolve into a unity through activity which, in its turn, must activise and merge with the people to produce the desired explosion of popular political creativity.

Having said that, for removing the misconceptions being promoted by the Generals' propaganda of a personality cult, it is necessary to concentrate on the two-faceted political reality that faces us: as noted earlier, there has been a certain amount of genuine, and a certain amount of media-created, bogus polarisation between the left and the right. The simple fact is that in an underdeveloped economy like Pakistan's the scope for a true leftist programme is rather limited;

the basic social structure being feudal, what we need is, first of all, the bourgeois democracy, though, in deference to the spirit of the age and a given degree of industrialisation and political consciousness, an old-style capitalist system is no longer an option.

Need for Socialism

A mixed economy, informed with an egalitarian spirit, is the inevitable need. That is all. But the autocratic rulers, supported by feudal elements, have called genuine democrats leftists. That was how the PPP was dubbed leftist in 1968-69. That is how they are doing it now. So be it. Some of us, including me, are socialists, though we are prepared to give capitalism all the reasonable chance it should expect. But the existence of the right – an evil from every progressive viewpoint – is there alright.

Let us fight the right. If we are called leftists, despite our alliance with the MRD, our adherence to its common minimum programme – for a maximum period of one year (after which we shall ask for another election in which we shall go with our own, the PPP's, full programme) – so be it. The MRD or no MRD, we will fight this evil force of the Pakistani right. First of all we should call it by its proper name: fascism. For, simple capitalism that has gone with classical liberalism and capitalism in history is precluded by the social origins of the Pakistani bourgeoisie. Capitalism in Pakistan cannot survive, much less flourish, except with the help of fascist tactics.

The second political reality has already been mentioned: the alienation of the people. It is said, and rightly, that the country has become vulnerable because of it, mainly through the multiple dangers facing it on the borders. The assumption is, if the Indians were to mount an attack from the east, the people, especially in Sind, the NWFP and Baluchistan, (and also the common folk in the Punjab under the influence of the PPP) will not actively resist. The Indians can then have a walk-over or some equivalent of it. Similarly, it is claimed, if the Russians were to do any real mischief-mongering from the north, much the same would happen. Those who say this ought to query the Generals who have caused this alienation. Insofar as we (and the MRD) are concerned, our position is clear.

Foreign Policy

We do not believe the Russians and the Indians have any aggressive designs on Pakistan; in any case, we should befriend them by forging a workable deal with the Karmal government, accept the Indian offer of a friendship treaty and maintain equidistant friendship with both superpowers (with readiness to engage in as much of mutually beneficial economic and social cooperation as possible).

Secondly, we should, through joint effort, throw the Generals out without much loss of time. That is the best way of reducing that alienation and also of reducing the dangers. So long as the Generals remain in power, they will so conduct the foreign policy as to maintain, indeed intensify, the dangers on the borders to "justify" their refusal to do the right thing: hold elections and quit.

Let us not enable them to hold the country hostage to their power, hijacker fashion. Let us overcome these political hijackers, who may turn out, once the issue is joined, to be high jokers — as Yahoo proved to be in East Pakistan.

In short, the task is negatively clear. We in the MRD, and especially the PPP, must not allow Zia, his possible successor or other Generals to split the people. Zia's efforts to discredit the opposition parties and sow seeds of suspicion among them must constantly be exposed — as this is the most effective means of achieving his chief aim of splitting the people. The first major task we all face is to defeat the Generals and the elites that support them. That can only be done through a hard struggle. How long it will be and how peaceful or violent it will be, will depend upon the Generals. I have elaborated on this theme elsewhere.

The question is: how do we defeat them?

The first and theoretical answer is by mobilising and organising the people and to bring to bear on the Pakistan armed forces' regime the full force of people's powers through a mass struggle.

The main means of doing so have already been mentioned. Having said that, the main question remains, how do we bell the cat? While the Generals are in power, they are using brute force on a large scale. Even for minor and ineffectual political activity, their MLRs and MLOs inflict savage punishments — so many years in prison, so many brutish lashes and, above all, the most obnoxious use of "interrogation" (meaning tortures before trial before military courts). The common people, engaged in their daily grind, cannot ordinarily be expected to go on suffering these punishments for any length of time, especially where routine actions are involved. In other words, how do we operate during Martial Law?

Expose the Generals

Before one goes into this question, there is the second major and basically negative task: it is to counter and defeat the day-to-day political mischief of the Generals' propaganda. This can only be done by exposing the games they are constantly playing and letting the people know. Let us remember they control all the media of communication. The political leadership is denied all means or opportunity of informing the people or contacting them physically. This is the setting in which we have to operate, mobilise and organise the people and

conduct a massive struggle against an enemy that refuses to permit civilised politics. And we refuse to sit at home bemoaning our fate. Ergo, we must find ways of operating in this bleak situation.

But first, their games. It is only a question of simply enumerating them and most of them have been mentioned. The army came to power in what Zia called Operation Fairplay: with the promise of holding elections within 90 days and quitting. Before many weeks were out, he drew the red herring of accountability (of the PPP Government) across the nation's track and indefinitely postponed elections. But Zia felt compelled to announce another election date (November 1979).

This time he talked of the possibility of a civil war if the election campaign were to be started. After postponing elections the second time, he took upon himself the task of enforcing Islam: since elections could be held soon, he would go ahead with the task of Islamising society and the government. Since he did not require any mandate for it, he would do it. He also continued raising a lot of ideological dust: Is democracy compatible with Islam? Are parties and party politics Islamic? Becoming bolder, Zia finally came clean: the people and God like him. So he will soldier on. And, in any case, he would hold elections when he was sure they would yield "positive results". What would be the "positive results"?

Positive results, it became clear, meant an Assembly that would be sure to elect him. To make that sure he says he will have to give his own political structure a new constitution under which the elections can be held. And for good measure, (and to please the military brass) he lays stress on giving the armed forces a permanent or constitutional role.

As can be easily seen, these are all excuses for staying on in power. But the army has not relied only on excuses and talking points. It has created instruments that, given a favourable political climate, may serve its purposes. These range from the ridiculous nominated Parliament, the so-called *Majlis-i-Shoora*, (which in an extremity can be asked to approve Zia's political structure, his laws, other schemes or even straightforwardly give him a mandate to go on ruling), to even more ludicrous letterhead organisations like Support Zia Committees, Pakistan Integrity Movement (sic), etc.

In between are the "elected" local government bodies for which elections are planned for late in 1983. There is not much of governing that these bodies do, for they are effectively under the thumb of officials. A previous dictator, Ayub Khan, had used these local bodies (christened Basic Democracies) as electoral colleges to elect him and his Assemblies.

In order to make sure these BDs will elect Zia (in case he has to fall back on this stratagem) he has given them ad hoc funds "for development" that are not subject to normal audit obligatory for public funds. The BDs served Ayub well. Zia is taking the same road: promising increasing function and money and the same freedom from normal public audit. The *Shoora*'s complexion is also telltale: it shows which classes rule Pakistan. The local bodies' workings show that Zia is keeping open the option of using Ayub's instrument. He forgets that times have changed, though; people had already risen in revolt against Ayub's Bogus Democracies.

Referendum Stratagem

Another of Zia's options is to rely on referendum. The trick will be so to frame the question as to make it extremely difficult for a common man to say no to the proposition. It is commonly surmised that he might opt for putting up a *Shoora*-approved Islamic political structure, complete with a *Shoora* mandate for himself, to a referendum. Who will say no to an Islamic political structure? But so exposed is he that it is unlikely he will have the courage to go to the people even behind the veil of Islamic rhetoric.

These are the games we have to expose and defeat. In a restricted sense, the answers are in no doubt. Getting down to brass tacks, the MRD, and especially the PPP, has to have an organisation that will go on working with and among the people after the government has arrested or otherwise removed its national, provincial or even district leaders. That is the crux of the problem. Associated with it, and even more important, is the question of evolving a mechanism through which the people can be kept constantly informed of what is happening in the country and what we are doing and saying -- which the military government does not let be known through the controlled media. Both tasks are closely linked.

An Action Programme

Here, let us remember the basic strategy. It is the people who can defeat the military dictators. We have to trust the people and involve them in all we do. The basic methodology of work must be to involve the maximum number of people in such *unorthodox but demonstrative actions that are so far not liable under MLRs or MLO* (or are such that it is inherently difficult to pinpoint the persons who do them). If there are such actions in the background, a system of keeping the people informed is not difficult. Much the same people will do the job anyhow. As an example, one knows of a tactic used by the people of Karachi against Ayub's armed goons after his 1965 victory over Miss Fatima Jinnah in the Presidential "election": vigilantes used to take turns in keeping a round-the-clock vigil. The approach of troops or gangs was notified from one end of the

concerned locality to the other by tapping the electricity or telephone poles. Or, during the anti-Bhutto movement, the protesters kept shouting, *azans*, slogans or religious texts from their roofs late into the night.

It is the involvement of the people that will be decisive, anyhow. If truly large numbers become involved, they will keep themselves involved as well as remain active, with one proviso: that the national leadership has to evolve a method of continuously replacing itself with new persons, and all the while keeping the people informed of all it does. The traditional method in this subcontinent, is- for a person incharge of the struggle, at any given time or place, to notify a number of successive successors (at every level) and in the knowledge of as many people as possible. Through a chain of chits or even word of mouth, messages have to be conveyed all the time and mosques, with their 5-times-a-day assemblage of the people, can usefully serve as the ideal locale for sitting the invisible information bureau and even leadership seat. This is intended to indicate the kind of thing I mean. It is not an actual blueprint for action. This latter cannot be transmitted through print; it will have to be mostly through word of mouth or in some other unorthodox way. For, no one can foresee all the changing circumstances in every locality in an uncertain future; nor should flexibility of action of the local leaders be foreclosed.

To repeat, a dynamic command structure, continually replacing itself, and an information system (for the people) are not so much the prerequisites as the functional expressions of the people's implacable struggle against the Pakistan armed forces' deep-seated proclivity to interfere in the political life, on behalf of the exploiting classes. The struggle will comprise the natural and actually available means to be employed by the people to enable the people to defeat their enemies and rule themselves, or doing that which will end their exploitation. The armed forces' power to interfere in politics has to be cut down, sharply. Basically, it will disappear when the exploiters disappear and the people begin ruling themselves. But the success of the people's struggle will finally rest on the implementation of our long-term programme, and correct foreign, political, economic and defence policies by future democratic governments; the totality of these things will finally save the people from these deceitful so-called saviours.

5. Reordering the Economy

Ever since the army take-over on 5 July, 1977, the Generals' economic policy has been an anti-people one. Let us see what they have been doing and saying.

Fortunately, they do not claim to have carried out any reforms. What they set out to do was to *consolidate*. Even the term was borrowed from what Premier Bhutto had told his Party and Cabinet colleagues he intended to engage in after the 1977 elections. The Generals claim, merely, they are managing it more *efficiently*.

Consolidation and efficiency are, or rather were, their watchwords. The only other new idea they hit upon is Islam. They say they are enforcing Islam in stages. They hope to win God knows what from all this song and dance about what is after all everybody's duty: to do what God is supposed to have ordered. Perhaps they hope to win some legitimacy for what is obviously a crassly illegal and illegitimate regime that came about through a General's *coup d'état*.

The first thing we need to do is to try and have an overview of the actions of the corrupt Generals – at least politically corrupt in not having had any compunctions about breaking their oath of allegiance to the economy and the people of Pakistan.

An Overview

Emphasis on consolidation and greater efficiency hide the fact that they are attempting to preserve the social and economic status quo as far as possible. This clearly emerges from two simple facts: who the new rulers are; and what the history has been. The late Mr. Bhutto himself confessed, while in office, that landlords had more or less succeeded in cheating his government's land reforms and had largely defeated its aim of cutting down the maximum size of individual holdings. What the landed gentry could not do then has been done by the Generals. They have torpedoed most other reforms. We shall examine the social origins of today's rulers later.

In 1975, Prime Minister Bhutto announced a tenants' Charter of rights and privileges. Does anyone remember it today? The military regime has gone back on every word of it. The landlords are treating their tenants the way they have always been doing: there are the same exactions, the same readiness to evict them on the slightest pretext, the same forced labour and the same stranglehold through loaned inputs,(which was made the landlord's responsibility under the Charter). Nothing has survived of the reform.

Industrial labour's rights are being nibbled away. True, there is no wholesale going back here on what the Bhutto government had done for fear of total industrial shut-down. But the process of whittling away has been set in motion – largely through layoff policies in both nationalised and private undertakings. Premier Bhutto, except in 1976-77, did not permit real wages to fall. But under the Generals they have been constantly falling below the cost of living increases. The military is unable to frame and enforce a new labour policy for fear of widespread strikes.

Bhutto had spread a safety net below the educated unemployed; that has now been withdrawn. Low-paid state employees' real wages are lagging behind price rises; and whenever they have given any salary and wage increases, the Generals have cheated: on each occasion they gave much more to the senior ranks of the bureaucracy (both civil and military) proportionally as well as absolutely, (especially in the shape of perks). The lower ranks or class IV and III are being ground down by rampant inflationary pressures and near-static wages.

The ordinary consumer is going to the wall. The unemployed and the slum dwellers have no hope. Nearly half the village population, in all provinces, is unemployed. They are leaving the countryside. Each city now has an accretion of growing slums, the *katchi abadis*: where there is no water, electricity, sewerage, health care, school or any other amenity, not even a health visitor giving advice on family planning. This is true of all *katchi abadis* everywhere. And more than half of all the urban population now lives in them.

The Bhutto government started a Five Marla Scheme, under which each villager who did not own a house of his own – most tenants' homes are legally the property of landlords and, on eviction, they lose their homes also – was to be given a five marla (about 150 sq. yds.) plot of land from the village common. That scheme has been all but put on ice. It is not revoked, for fear of reaction. But no one talks of it. No one implements it. No one dare ask about it.

The Generals have reversed all the reformist policies of the People's Government of Mr. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. They are going back to the bad old days of the 1960s and 1950s – the same bad conditions as had always been recorded in history. Even the Raj had done nothing, except to give larger holdings to their toadies or suppressing those who opposed them. Neither the British nor any subsequent government changed the land tenure system or the tenants' legal and actual condition.

The first military dictator, Ayub Khan, talked of reforms in the sixties but his fraudulent reforms did not even claim to touch upon the tenants' condition. No one ever did anything concrete for tenants and farm hands before the People's

Government's Charter and the Five Marla Scheme. The Generals are making the country take a leap backward.

In a word, the military regime is running a system of exploitation. Who is exploiting whom? It is writ large on the face of Pakistan's cities and villages as to who is being exploited. It is the vast bulk of the people, who are poor. As we shall see presently, they are being made poorer. Who is the exploiter? Let us see.

Exploitative Economy

To begin with, there is the age-old depredation of landlords. The shrinking minority of farmers who are owner-cultivators are outside the exploitation game. But the landowners' power over their tenants is absolute. All tenants are liable to be evicted from their lands — even those lands they have tilled for generations — at the whim of the landlords. (To be sure there are social, traditional and feudal (paternalistic) constraints; but they work both ways and on the whole confer more power on landlords). Since three-fourths of Pakistanis are engaged in agriculture, in one way or another, the maximum exploitation takes place here. We will take a closer look at the phenomenon when we examine the way the economy is being reoriented.

Among the exploiters the capitalists are, of course, well known. Not much need be said about them, except that their rapacity has not decreased. It is a different matter that they are no longer lionised by the government and media and protected the way they used to be in the 1960s. International finance men — who have acquired the final say — have decreed that there should be free imports into Pakistan and that protection for local industry should be reduced. The result is that foreign capitalists have begun to take a larger role in exploiting the Pakistani consumer.

The situation in respect of the common man in villages and cities is calamitous. He is hardest hit by unemployment. In villages, from 30 to 35 per cent of all the working age population is wholly unemployed: they neither own land nor can they lease it; there are no jobs available. They drift to towns and cities where they expand the frontiers of the slum-land. In city slums, unemployment, prostitution, crime and drug-pushing, thrive. Men are losing self-respect and women their dignity. Their numbers? Who knows?

Everyone, in the enveloping despair, thinks of going to the Persian Gulf — the new El Dorado. On the one hand, this emigration, actual or intended (by focusing attention on distant lands), serves as a safety valve for the Generals and, on the other, makes Pakistan's future the more perilous, by making such a large proportion of the people psychologically turn their backs on their own country and look up to others. Those who look elsewhere for making a fortune or even

living well will not bother much about what may be going on in their homeland. The country loses, though the Generals' government thinks it gains, because 'every day more and more people become apathetic.

The hiatus between the production increases and money supply increments, in fact, indicates inflation. Its impact is not seen in price indices because the latter's coverage excludes items like rents, transportation and black market prices of scarce goods and services, especially the latter. (Police and administrative corruption, black market prices of medicines, unofficial payments for official services like water are all part of the true cost of living for the poor man.

The third major category of exploiters are big traders. They mark up prices according to opportunity and the volume of transaction. During the period of rapid money supply expansion and when investment activity is very small, surplus funds accumulating in the hands of businessmen are utilised for speculative buying and selling, for cornering relatively scarce goods and other forms of racketeering. Businessmen in this atmosphere manage to make profits – indeed excessive profit, a 30 to 40 per cent return being regarded as just so-so. Who pays through the nose? Why, the people, of course.

The fourth major exploiting group is the bureaucracy: both civil servants and soldiers. The absence of representative government means all policies are made and executed (without any overseeing by popular representatives) by bureaucrats – both civil and military. They have run the economy in a manner that has (a) impoverished the people, and (b) enriched the higher echelons.

Forms of Corruption

The many faces of bureaucratic corruption are well known. But the core ones need to be focused on. At the heart of all bureaucratic corruption is the army. A good 20 to 30 per cent of that part of the defence budget that provides for the purchase of goods and services – about two-thirds in all – goes straight into the black or parallel economy. About half of this sum goes to line the pockets of senior military officers who award the contracts; the rest is the share of the defence contractors – in this case nephews, brothers-in-law, etc. of the very officers who award the contracts.

This is traditional practice and quite independent of Martial Law. Martial Law does two things: first it enhances the overall size of the defence budget every year, offering greater opportunities for graft to decision-making officers. Second, the larger economic contracts for purchasing large plants or other machinery, equipment or big construction jobs – are now actually being negotiated by the Generals themselves.

This Martial Law has opened new avenues. It is supposed to have embarked on a policy of denationalisation. It has not laid down definite criteria: such as that original owners or anyone who fulfils certain conditions can take the factories or mills back. Not at all. There are no laid down criteria or procedures. Each prospective buyer of an industrial unit, now being run by a state-owned corporation, must individually negotiate with the government – in fact with the top Generals. Everybody knows what happens. The civil and military bureaucrats running the industrial units – a very large number of retiring military officers are being seconded for such sinecures – oppose the sales and lobby hard with all the means at their disposal. The intending buyer offers some unstated consideration also. The balance of advantage (to the Generals) in either course decides the case.

The way nationalised industries are being worked – buying dear, often deliberately, and pricing the product irresponsibly to cover both their inefficiency and corruption – opens the floodgates of corruption. Bureaucrats have given a bad name to state takeover of key industries in public interest. Civil servants are assigned to such jobs for a few years; as there is no special managerial cadre, the officers keep their seniors or colleagues happy by any means. It is regular plunder. The purpose of nationalising all the commanding heights of the economy has been subverted – to enable the bureaucracy to take the cream off the industrial sector.

Today no one can get anything done without paying a bribe. This is true at all levels, right down to the police station in the neighbourhood. Not really new. Indeed, the bureaucratic exploitation, an old institution in itself, now includes the dimension of uncertainty. Bribing a civil servant to do what he probably was bound to do in any case, is now no guarantee that the job will be done: there may be a Martial Law official lurking in the wings who may scuttle the deal and he, being a military officer, can override. The result may be that the hapless citizen may have to bribe again or forego the benefit of his earlier bribe.

Oppression of the Poor

At the grassroots the situation has become intolerable for all those poor illiterate people who happen to fall foul of the police or any soldier attached to the Martial Law's countrywide network of administration, transportation and military courts. (Thousands of military men of all ranks are assigned "civilian" duties under the Martial Law administration; they treat these jobs as so many opportunities for making a pretty penny.) A policeman may arrest a citizen and threaten to proceed against him in (a) a military court of swift justice of a rough-and-ready kind; (b) a *Shariat* (religious) court where laws of evidence are a trifle uncertainly applied; or (c) old civil courts.

Military courts are feared the most not only because of their powers to mete out horrible punishment in a matter of half an hour – long terms in prison and lashes but also because the bribes to escape punishment are very heavy.

The *Shariat* courts are feared a little less but more than ordinary civil courts – punishments here, too, are terrible but proving them is not easy for the police. An accused, if he is able to bribe and is not a political case (which has necessarily to go to a military court), can bribe and choose under which judicial system he would like to be proceeded against.

The main thrust of the military government is to spend as much as possible on defence and security services, without seriously curtailing two other major items of outlay: the so-called economic development and pure administration (which includes the recurrent expenses of some socially useful services and some that directly and mainly benefit the landlords). The crucially important point is this blurring of priorities; the Generals want all of everything. This has led the economy downhill.

Increased Tax Burdens

The first result is the continuing expansion of government spending. This has necessitated (i) constantly increasing taxes on the people, usually several times during the year under various guises, mainly by increasing the price of goods and services supplied by state-controlled departments and corporations; (ii) heavy borrowing both internally and externally; (iii) following a free-import policy with a view to maximising revenues through high customs duties; and (iv) resorting to printing currency notes year after year. (That the democratic government also did some of these things to keep the army in good humour is no justification for continuing the ruinous policy.) All these policies, and their inexorably suicidal results, are in fact a compulsion for the military rulers, largely because they share the interests of all those who are exploiting the people: landlords (most senior army officers are good-sized landlords), contractors, traders and industrialists (through kickbacks and bribes).

Interesting correlations can be seen. When Zia took over, the allocation for defence and security services was Rs. 10,502.2 million (1977-78); it shot up to over Rs. 23,500 million in 1982-83 – a rise of well over 120 per cent in six years. And this is on revenue account only. As a proportion of total revenues the defence and security services allocation is still a little over half the total revenues, when both sums have more than doubled in six years.

We have also seen that up to a quarter to one-third of the defence outlays – up to Rs. 7,855 million in the current year – goes straight into four or five thousand

pockets, wholly untaxed and often in numbered accounts in Switzerland with nearly half of it in those of the five hundred or so uniformed officers.

Now a somewhat similar percentage of the sums actually spent on so-called economic development ends up in bureaucrats' and contractors' pockets, with the same results. The Generals' junta is now a shareholder in the larger (civilian) kickbacks also. There is, however, one circumstance that depresses the quanta of these civilian sector bribes: the number of projects is very large and the funds are not enough to go round. The result is that they are spread too thin and most of the allocations are spent on the salaries of (civilian) officials, their transport, residence and upkeep, leaving little for actual work. Much of the so-called economic development is just an excuse to keep the bloated bureaucracy in business – and in good humour.

A not negligible proportion of general administrative allocations goes for subsidies, some open, some hidden. Thus farmers are provided openly subsidised fertilisers, seeds, pesticides, tractors, tubewells, other equipment and even credit. Everybody knows that the small farmers, whether owner-cultivators or tenants are unable to obtain these facilities, except for being able to buy improved seeds and now, perhaps, fertilisers also; all the rest are beyond their reach for the simple reason that they cannot afford tubewells or modern agricultural machinery; obtaining pesticides or cheaper bank credit requires political influence which they do not possess. Then the higher floor prices fixed by the government also benefit only rich (big) farmers, those who have a surplus to sell. The small holders, practising subsistence farming, have little to sell.

The Loot of the Rich

The rich, larger landholders, earning a minimum 50 to 70 per cent on their actual investments, have very high incomes. This class is both living it up and has begun acquiring (otherwise) moribund industrial units. Family connections, old school and regimental ties or, if necessary, cash incentives, enable them to get what they want, and cheaply. They are also the people, apart from contractors, who have been investing in the service industries and real estate development or in other businesses.

It is remarkable that most first generation "robber barons" – generally immigrants – are selling out and are trying to set themselves up in business in foreign lands. The local variant of the Lutifondia, Junkers or Samurai class is graduating into industry and contracting business, especially those connected with defence.

Some subsidies are paid to exporters, the ultimate benefit of which is reaped by industries of the major industrial nations like the EEC and the U.S. that import

cheaper raw material or semi-processed goods. The cost of the subsidy is borne by the Pakistani consumer.

There is also one subsidy for the urban poor consumer: on wheat flour. The better-off buy from the open market, while the urban rationing system, still in force from the Second World War days – partly as jobs and opportunities for bureaucrats and partly due to the realisation that suddenly fluctuating bread prices may cause political upheaval – is meant for lower income groups and slum dwellers. Not that petty officials cannot or do not make a hit of money in this field; but this particular subsidy is not aimed at the higher classes.

The government's budgetary behaviour – heavy borrowing, persistent deficit financing, escalating taxation, increasing defence and other expenditure – directly result in three things: expansion in money supply ever-higher incomes among the social and economic elites (thus increasing the disparities of income between the upper and lower classes) and strong inflationary pressures. The Generals' other economic policies, chiefly that of free import now being forced down the Pakistanis' throats by the international moneymen in the IMF and IBRD, have depressed, almost choked, local industry. The latter was spoon-fed by the government in the 1960s and was never efficient; it needs nearly total protection in order to survive.

The free import policy (with some inevitable restrictions on the ceiling of the quanta and high duties) suits both the rulers and their foreign creditors who are anxious to unload their consumer durables and bric-a-brac. It suits them all in as much as the inflationary pressures create a certain demand that must somehow be satisfied.

The social chemistry of inflation is seldom inquired into: who gets all the newly-created money?

The small farmers, much less the totally unemployed rural labourer, get little of it, if anything. The same goes for the urban poor masses. The new money goes into the pockets of very few groups or classes: big business, contractors, capitalists, senior bureaucrats, especially the uniformed ones. Its percolation effect is fairly small and is restricted to the urban middle classes.

An altogether different facet of inflation can now be seen in the form of the recipients of remittances from Pakistani workers labouring in the Gulf states. Recipients are families of urban or rural poor who have emigrated at considerable cost to themselves and their relatives, usually to the tune of 15 to 20 thousand rupees (paid mostly in bribes). Most of this remitted money is spent on acquiring bits of land adjacent to ancestral places, improving the family

residence, marrying daughters and sisters or buying the latter-day trinkets: a TV set (if electricity is available) or other consumer durables.

The rest of the ever-rising flood of new money goes to the rich. They want the best of consumer goods: a Karachi supermarket was recently seen to display an imported cake, complete with an expiry date! An unceasing flow of all manner of foreign goods — both imported through regular channels and smuggled — continues unabated. Originally, smuggling mainly from Afghanistan and Iran was acquiesced to by almost all previous governments as a means of keeping the tribal leaders happy and in money. That was a strategy; a way to keep them out of political harm's way. Its aim was to prevent the unruly tribals of the NWFP and Baluchistan from entering the political mainstream. But the results have been disastrous.

Markets in Pakistan are now chockful of goods from every part of the globe. It is big business. Annual imports through this informal channel are thought to be of the order of half a billion dollars; several important items, automobile spares, for instance, are mainly smuggled in for half a million vehicles. How is this paid for? By unofficial exports, of course. How else can foreign exporters go on sending goods without receiving payment?

In contrast with the past — when most requirements of eastern and southern Afghanistan and southwest Iran used to be supplied from Pakistan — the chief item of Pakistan's unofficial export and re-export was opium-based drugs and cannabis, while older items are on a diminished scale. The Generals are directly involved in the narcotics trade. (American magazines are known to have mentioned both Zia and his close associate Gen. Fazle Haq the NWFP Governor.)

Depressed Domestic Industry

The free availability of all manner of goods has killed most light industry at home. Only the larger units producing agricultural inputs, defence equipment or processing agricultural commodities are in near-full production. Even so, unofficial estimates put the idle industrial capacity at 40 to 50 per cent. Unemployment rates are unprecedented, and mostly unreported, because there is no documentation or social security.

The new *zakat* distribution — a total of Rs. 2,600 million (\$ 200 million) in three years — is a cruel joke; in a nation of 85 million with up to 25 to 30 per cent of its work force, idle, it is not even a flea-bite (this is quite apart from the known fact that the distributors are mostly police touts who pocket most of the funds).

Free imports keep the upper and middle classes happy. They enable the government to collect a lot of money by way of customs duties and sales taxes on

legal imports. Indeed customs duties are the largest single item of government revenue. Through this mechanism the big western multinationals succeed in recycling even that portion of petrodollars which reach Pakistan via home remittances. They are a clever device in the hands of international moneymen for keeping Pakistan in bondage.

A few figures will illustrate this well: Pakistan's import and export figures during the last few years will show how vulnerable the country is becoming, year after year.

Year	Exports	Imports	Trade deficit	Net remittances	Real deficit (million \$)
1976-77	1,140.80	2,324.50	816.3	584.5	231.8
1977-78	1,311.20	2,809.60	1,498.40	1,213.50	284.9
1978-79	1,709.60	3,675.60	1,966.00	1,481.20	484.8
1979-80	2,364.70	4,740.30	2,375.60	1,875.90	499.7
1980-81	2,957.50	5,408.50	2,451.00	2,219.60	231.4
1981-82	2,452.00	5,525.30	3,073.00	2,400.00	673

But this is not the whole story, for one major payment liability is not included. (One is talking mainly of hard items that impinge on national solvency.) This is the debt-servicing liability. Its figures must be added to this net deficit.

Year	Real deficit	Debt servicing liability	Total liability (million \$)
1976-77	231.8	355	586.8
1977-78	284.9	374	658.9
1978-79	484.8	494	978.8
1979-80	499.7	656	1,155.70
1980-81	231.4	676	907.4
1981-82	673	631	1,304.00

This too does not reveal the real extent of our vulnerability. To begin with, the debt liabilities are net of several debt reschedulings. Even so, this records only the "funded debt" of the Federation of Pakistan. There are several other credits and their repayments are not included here. All short-term loans from IMF are not covered.

During 1981-82 over \$ 375 million had to be paid in addition to the above. Then, for all the short-term loans from private international banks, that are usually rolled over a lot of money is paid as interest that is not shown in these accounts.

The actual balance of payments deficit that could not be covered by any aid was \$ 1.6 billion on 30 June, 1982.

But the next few years will be even more perilous. In 1982-83, when several previously rescheduled payments fall due, the true deficit in balance of payments is unofficially being estimated at \$ 3 billion or so. The IMF alone would want back nearly \$500 million in all. How is anyone going to cover it when export earnings do not even cover half the imports?

The plain fact is that Zia and his Generals have bankrupted Pakistan. In order to escape being called defaulters, the Generals will do anything – anything that the IMF and IBRD bosses in the State Department and the Pentagon tell them to do. That was why Zia first called on the World Bank chief even before he met Ronald Reagan when he visited Washington in December 1982. The creditors, led by the U.S. have got the Pakistan rulers where they want them. The latter have no option but to cringe and surrender their true independence.

The Americans have shown who the boss is and they mean to call the tune. Pakistan must not even pursue a political settlement of the Afghanistan dispute that does not meet with American approval. It must do what the State Department thinks best for it. Its economic policies must be those that win the approval of the IMF and IBRD, and none else.

An Economy of Servitude

The Zia government has followed exactly the very policies that were prescribed by the IMF. The result is the utter servitude of 85 million Pakistanis. Servitude to whom?

In the first instance, it is to the IMF and IBRD-led creditors. But in political terms, it boils down to just one power: the U.S. Things came to a head in December 1982 when Gen. Zia, in company with his chief colleagues including the Governor of Baluchistan (an area the Pentagon has been viewing with greed for locating bases for its RDF or Central Command) trekked to Washington to deliver up.

Although Zia and the Generals have no options left, they have been unable to sign on the dotted line. Giving bases to the Americans is not really possible: Pakistanis will have none of it. Nor can they sign away their right to make the Bomb: the junior officers in the army will boo them in the messes. Hence, the continuing friction between Reagan's men and the Generals in Islamabad. The proof is that they could not get a moratorium on debt repayments that fell due on 30 June, 1982.

All said then, not only is Pakistan's economy going downhill but also the Generals are pawning the country and its future generations – and for what? To obtain more foreign credit for (i) buying more defence equipment (because the foreign contractors' kickbacks to the Generals now amount to 8 per cent or more); (ii) importing more industrial machinery and other development equipment (that again benefit them through kickbacks and payments for permits and licences); (iii) permitting an open-door trade policy that enriches the traders and smuggling magnates, often ex-Generals, (who flourish because they do not have to pay the high duties that official importers have to) and that caters to, and promotes, the increasing propensity of the middle classes for imported goods and helps keep foreign manufacturers in profits.

Iniquitous Social Order

These policies, together with a periodical tightening of screws on the people in the shape of higher prices for government-supplied goods and services as well as devaluation of the rupee, are intended to keep their overlords in the U.S. happy. Keeping the inhuman and inequitable social structure intact is the main aim, which again warms the U.S. Administration's heart. By frequent devaluations of the rupee and keeping the prices of Pakistan's exports low, a large part of the fruit of 85 million Pakistanis' labour is soaked up by western economies. U.S. moneymen are now the true policy-makers (rulers) of Pakistan, even if they are not entirely satisfied with the nominal rulers' performance.

At this stage, it is proper to talk of the social provenance of our rulers: in the most direct functional sense, they are Generals and civil servants. They are basically landlords, but functionally and economically linked to capitalists, compradors, contractors, leaders, smugglers; above all, they act as agents of the Pentagon and the State Department. That also describes Pakistan's economic and social elites.

Islamic Window Dressing

Gen. Zia never tires of claiming credit for Islamising the economy. Now, one says nothing about its doctrinal position. But what these measures have done to the economy, or promise to, can be objectively assessed. All one can say about the doctrinal position of the various measures, is just in the form of a few general remarks.

The measures themselves are just a few: (i) introduction of *zakat* and *ushr* (or tithes) on incomes and agricultural production respectively, (ii) starting a new window in commercial banks for deposits and advances, on which no interest is given or charged; they are called Profit and Loss Accounts (PLS); (iii) the House Building Finance Corporation now makes its loans not for interest but on sharing the profit and loss on the basis of a complicated, if arbitrary, formula; (iv) one of

the hundreds of state-owned corporations engaged in trading has been prohibited from obtaining any accommodation from a bank, on interest. It must obtain it on the PLS basis, for which a given ceiling, a 3.5 per cent markup on the sum advanced for nine days, has been arbitrarily imposed. This works out to 15 per cent per annum, quite close to the ruling 15 to 16 per cent interest the banks effectively charge on most advances. This is about all.

While the Holy Koran does lay down the duty of paying *zakat* and *ushr*, there is no unanimity over whether the state can collect it. Islam has so many sects; several make the duty entirely individual and the Pakistan government had to make exceptions for certain sects who may not pay the *Zia Cut*, as it has been irreverently dubbed.

The mode of its collection is also open to question; it is entirely arbitrary. On a given day, 2.5 per cent of all savings banks deposits – all interest-bearing – or the same percentage on the payable sums of the various small savings schemes – also all interest-bearing – is deducted. Those declaring that their faith does not oblige them to pay *zakat* in this fashion may not pay. Those who have current accounts need not pay anything.

The Koranic injunction is for each individual to compute his own income and the tithe at the rate of 1/40th of the assets. This state-enforced collection is on just one form of asset – viz., deposits in savings banks, small savings schemes or other assets untouched. The collection and distribution among the poor widows, orphans, etc. till 30 June, 1982 was Rs.9,160 million and Rs. 2,600 million respectively. *Ushr* collection and distribution have yet to take off: rules made for it, yet again, are bound to prove even more controversial.

Nothing much can be said about this so-called progress of Islamisation of the country's financial system. This admittedly small size of the PLS deposits can be argued as being a small beginning. But what needs to be pointed out and faced is that the entire monetised sector of the economy, from the monetary framework downward, including all government and public sector business, works on the basis of interest. The PLS returns do not come out of any inherently different sets of activity. It is only the government organisations that borrow from, and repay, the advances, to the PLS (but wholly arbitrarily marked-up); there is no objective or rational basis available for such mark-ups.

A Fraudulent System

The whole thing is a gimmick. All banks pay out these PLS profits regularly and they have always been more than ordinary interest rates. The banks have no conceivable basis for computing the profits; all the money that comes into them is put to the same overriding work: making more money by lending it to those

thought to be safe bets. They lend mostly on interest. It is only one (powerful) borrower, the government, which says it will return the money after a mark-up of its own choice. It is generally one or two percentage points less than the commercial lending rate. The banks can do pretty little, for all of them are owned by that one borrower. The government forces the banks to give a higher mark-up, or so-called profits, to those pious individual depositors (who do not want interest) compared to those Mammon-loving depositors who want dirty interest!

The Generals are constantly borrowing. All of it is on the promise of interest, in fact at variable interest rates that lenders can periodically change. They are integrating the Pakistan economy ever more closely into the world economy – all of which is interest-based. Is that the way to promote an interest-free economy? But more fundamentally, there is no sector of the Pakistan economy that is isolated from the infection of interest-bearing money, in which people can give money without actually knowing what benefit it will bring, if any, and people taking money on trust and returning an honest profit from an operation in which interest payment or receipt plays no part. There is no such sphere in existence, let alone separated and marked out. All the talk of PLS schemes is a fraud because these schemes simply do not exist. Some money is paid out by the banks as profit because their masters in Islamabad order them to do so. That is all there is to it.

As for Islam's clear injunctions of completely prohibiting the *riba*, translated and understood variously as usury and interest, it is clear enough. So it is in Judaism and Christianity. The difficulty today is that these right-wing democracy-killers, in order to beg, borrow or steal a fig-leaf of legitimacy have hit upon enforcing (sic) Islam as the line of least resistance. I, my party, and every freedom-loving individual in the opposition acknowledges it as the ideal. We shall strive after due research of the facts of today's life and understanding the mechanism of honestly implementing it in the modern world. There is no point in not calling the spade of the Generals' fraud, the spade that it is.

Islam is not to be allowed to become a plaything for dictators. There are no short-cuts to Islamic verities and let no one impose one's nostrums on others. The economic teachings of Islam are for all Muslims. But the fact cannot be denied that interpretations differ. About this there should be no haste or ignoring of the minority sects' views. Even non-Muslim minorities' rights should not be hurt. That is a prerequisite for making a start. Thoughtless haste can be dangerous for national unity. (Democratic governments in the past have implemented only those Islamic provisions over which there was consensus, both on what they meant and on how they were to be acted upon.)

Let Pakistanis say, with one voice, that they will not let any dictator raise intellectual dust or play gimmicks in Islam's or patriotism's name to hide the

ugly reality of ever-ruthless exploitation of the people by the landlord-bureaucratic-capitalist-imperialist combine.

Priorities Needed

The economy has to be reoriented to put an end to the merciless exploitation of common people in Pakistan. That is the aim. How are we to achieve it? It is by first giving the right to as decent a living as possible to each citizen in terms of Pakistan's own resources. While we are poor, it is not true that we do not possess any notable resources. That will involve large expenditures. Money has to be raised for this Top Priority Objective. Everything else comes later. We must get our priorities right. Without this change, a change of government will be a change of faces, not of regime.

What we want is a true change of regime; the anti-people coterie of vested interests that have seized hold of power for so long have to be dethroned — as peacefully as possible, through a popular movement. The people who are going to struggle must know what the next regime will be like and what it will do. Spelling out its economic programme is an essential means of galvanising and enthusing them to make the required big sacrifices. An appropriate programme could itself be a causative factor for the tremendous popular effort necessary for dislodging the entrenched military that possesses huge fire power and enjoys the active support of all the exploiting classes and the media.

Let us not forget that what we are talking about is a sea-change in social and economic conditions for the common people. It involves the essence of revolution: a wholly different formula for distributing national income. While such a change will be welcomed by common people, it will be fiercely resisted by the vested interests. This is why a spelling out will itself become a means of mobilising and organising the people to struggle — indeed a means of struggle. As soon as the idea of giving all the common people the right to a modicum of civilised existence in political, social and economic spheres is mooted, a cacophony of objections about the paucity of resources is raised. A third world country cannot apparently think in terms of social justice. That, it is asserted would be distributing poverty. Supposing this is absolutely correct, the answer is: so what? Equality of misery will definitely be preferable to the obscene inequalities that prevail today. Let us loudly assert this.

Not that this is absolutely true, though it cannot be denied that Pakistan is an underdeveloped country. But the very attempt to redistribute national income more equitably will itself initiate a process of genuine development that will be self-generating and self-sustaining. This idea, that a more equitable redistribution of national wealth will itself generate a new and more worthwhile kind of development, is the foundation-stone of the future edifice of true

prosperity for Pakistan that we all want. This is the light in which the question of limited resources must be seen.

A Socialist Orientation

As it is, given the reordering of priorities in favour of giving a minimum of social security and amenities of civilised life by involving the people themselves in the effort, a notably worthwhile beginning (in comparison to what obtains) can be made right away.

The main thrust of planning should be for the following objectives:

1. A job to every able-bodied adult Pakistani, failing which a minimum maintenance allowance of Rs. 50 per month will be payable to him or her.
2. All educated unemployed are to be recruited in an educational brigade to be trained in training or teaching techniques.
3. A five year programme of (1) total eradication of illiteracy in both sexes; (ii) a wide scale vocational training programme to impart and improve skills and productivity in making, processing, transporting or distributing useful goods and services, employing, initially, local resources of all kinds; (iii) potable water to be brought to every village and *katchi abadi* within three years and elements of sanitation that will go with it.
4. A primary school and health unit facilities, including family welfare advice, must be available within a radius of three to four miles within four years. Both are to be totally free.
5. A middle school for a population of 10,000, and high school for 25,000 has to be available to every boy and girl within a radius of three miles. Similarly, a proper health unit headed by a doctor with as many beds as the local population's cooperative efforts can manage, must come into being within four years. Both facilities to be wholly free and admission to high school, restricted to those who do well in the secondary school's final examination and show aptitude. The rest go into vocations.
6. Every village and neighbourhood corresponding to the area of a union council is to have a planning committee elected separately by universal suffrage and a local government authority and mayor to

head it within a month of the popular government coming into being.

7. Planning committees to have one member per two thousand of the population in comparison with the present day union councils (the local government bodies have one member per one thousand of the population). The two together will form the local variant of parliament while the elected mayor will be like the Prime Minister, who can form a small cabinet from amongst the members to run the local government. No non-elected government servant can interfere in the day-to-day working. Provincial government officials, under appropriate rules to be framed, can make a complaint against the actions of the mayor and his cabinet first to the joint session of the planning and local government committees, and then to the taluka/tehsil courts when malfeasance in the working of local governments is suspected.
8. A joint session of the local government and planning committees will be the ultimate authority for law and order, imposing taxes and drawing up a local economic development plan for the area. Execution of government functions will be in the hands of the local government committee and of the plan in those of the planning committee.
9. Provincial governments will be responsible, above all, for co-ordination, provision of technical advice (including managerial, technological and audit facilities). Funds will also be allocated to every level of administration on the basis of a formula to be finalised by the elected representatives of the people.

My recommendation would be to divide the available funds into three sections: the first, say, 60 per cent of all funds, central and provincial, to be divisible on the basis of population; 30 per cent to be reserved for the quicker development of the areas thought to be economically backward; and 10 per cent to be put into a special reserve fund for crucial infrastructural facilities. These are to be constructed at economically significant or nodal points by central, provincial or local authority that can conveniently handle it.

10. Local plans are to be coordinated by, and are to form the basis of, district plans by the District Committees with the help of advisory officers provided by the provincial government. Similarly, district plans are to be coordinated by and form the basis of provincial

plans. Likewise the Central plan has to emerge from the collation of provincial plans. Central and provincial planning authorities are to be mainly advisory bodies to give ideas, provide expert advice and help coordinate the plans at lower levels.

In the context of the above, an immediate plan of action should be put through, preferably within three months:

1. Declare a unilateral moratorium on all funded and floating debt repayments, and begin immediate negotiations on a long-term repayments programme with a view to repaying every penny of the outstanding loans.
2. A total ban is to be placed on the import of consumer durables (except for commercial or industrial use) and consumer goods not essential for the smooth running of the economy. All machinery that can be fabricated at home shall not be allowed to be imported. All industries that run on imported raw material or ingredients, except those vital for the economy, should be shut down – unless they find a way of running on domestically available raw material or ingredients. As a rule, even vital imports will only be allowed against available export earnings.
3. Most imports of essential equipment for an infrastructure necessary for development are to be financed by (i) export earnings; (ii) home remittances; (iii) grants or credit on really soft terms from friendly countries.

The principle for all economic development to be followed should be: the economy has to generate its own surpluses for investment by cutting down avoidable consumption. This in practice will mean ruthless cutting down of state expenditure and the conspicuous consumption of the well-to-do. Adequate nourishment, proper clothing, sanitation, water supply, schools and health care for all people are not to be affected.

4. Since agriculture is the mainstay of the economy, all necessary surpluses are to be generated here. Since it is well known that agricultural production can be doubled within three years, including meat, dairy, poultry and fishing products, a three year programme of development has to be undertaken immediately, that will aim at doubling the production of foodgrains, sugarcane and fruit, and cotton; it will aim at trebling the production, collection and marketing of dairy and poultry products;

quadrupling the production, catching and processing of fishing, and production of vegetables and commodities like onions, garlic, ginger and potatoes.

5. This would require maximising the production of fertilisers of all types and their efficient and timely distribution.
All out effort has to be made to increase the utilisation of all domestically available raw material for fertiliser production, especially organic. The local engineers face the challenge to evolve appropriate local technology for producing ammonia, phosphatic and other nitrogenous fertilisers in numerous small, locally-made factories that burn domestically available fuel.
6. Similar locally available technology is to be maximally used for better distribution and utilisation of water resources and tackling the problem of waterlogging and salinity. No foreign aid is sought nor should it be necessary. Eventually all these efforts need to be coordinated into a comprehensive water management and training programme for the whole country, preferably by the nation's own efforts.
7. At every stage, expert advice apart, planning, materials and tools and execution are to be local: planning by and for the people is to be the watchword.
8. All absentee land-holding, under any guise, is to be abolished. Compensation through 40 year self-liquidating bonds on an equitable basis is to be paid. Land redistribution is to be undertaken by the local mayors in consultation with a committee of elders elected by the joint session of the local body and planning committee, subject to subsequent final approval by local government bodies and the government's planning committee in a joint session to decide the total redistribution.

In cases of grievance appeal will lie with the total local population through a local referendum, based on final arbitration by another committee of elders to be elected a second time by the joint session of the two elected committees. The principle for redistribution should be (i) no one's holding to exceed 25 acres anywhere, whether barani (rain-fed) or canal irrigated; (ii) Islamic law of preemption to guide the allocation of new lands; everyone who acquires land will be required to pay its cost in 40 years through

instalments at the same rate at which the old land-holders are to be repaid.

9. The new fraud by the Generals of using the Islamic terminology of mudarba and musharika (partnership firms) for cloaking the transgression of the older land reform legislation to permit huge (5,000-10,000 acre) capitalist farms including those owned by multinationals, is to be abolished. No plantation or capitalist farming is to be permitted.
10. For economies of scale, farmers will be encouraged to form genuine cooperatives whether for production or marketing. Apart from expert (organisational) advice and audit services, provincial governments shall have no function in the cooperatives apart from registration and collection of data.

All disputes are to be settled by the general meetings of the cooperatives and anyone accused of cheating will be investigated by an elected member and prosecuted in tehsil and district courts. No authority can supersede the general body's powers or take over the cooperatives, though provincial government experts should attend annual general meetings and advise on general efficiency, productivity, legal aspects, better marketing techniques or other arrangements.

11. Most marketing of agricultural produce to be done through cooperatives, especially of fruit, vegetables, fish, poultry and eggs, meat, grains and other commercial crops.
12. Special attention to be paid to growing edible oil raw material: sunflower, corn, rapeseed, coconut, olives and palms and other seeds. A crash programme of trebling this production in three years is to be drawn up to make the country self-sufficient in edible oils.
13. A crash programme for trebling the production of meat has to be undertaken as a correlated function of animal husbandry and increased daily production within three years in conjunction with afforestation programmes.
14. A cadre of provincial agricultural extension workers, preferably agricultural graduates, is to be set up to render technical advice at district, tehsil and local levels. It is their function to spread the results of agricultural research, undertaken both at home and

abroad, for increasing output through better crop rotation, newer and better practices, soil protection, water conservation and better methods of irrigation, etc.

15. The entire budgeting technique is to be recast to enable local authorities to impose their own taxes – which should not clash with central, provincial or district taxes. Central taxes are to be restricted to a small list of major items like customs, excise duties (on bigger industrial plants), corporation and income taxes (above a certain limit). Similarly, provincial taxes to be based mainly on sales tax, suitable agricultural cesses, water rates, stamp duties, etc.
16. Each union council level local government body is to be made responsible for reporting the number of unemployed and obtaining for them social security payment for which provincial governments will be responsible and for which adequate budgeting will have to be organised at a national conference of the federal and provincial governments.
17. On the national level one monetary and economic monitoring institution, the State Bank of Pakistan, is to be reconstituted as a statutorily independent authority – totally outside the control of all governments. It will issue currency and will be charged with monitoring all economic, monetary and financial developments with a view to maintaining primarily (i) the purchasing power and the par value of the rupee; (ii) assessing the effects of economic policies with a view to determining whether the defective implementation does not distort the laid-down order of priorities to result either in production of less useful goods and services or production of useful goods and services that is not being maximised; (iii) providing all manner of reliable data on the nation's economy and demography; and (iv) maintaining an overall supervisory mechanism for the working of all financial operations of government bodies at all levels, and crosschecking the working of various audit services and comptroller's organisation, the top audit of all audit services.

6. Foreign Policy

For obtaining military and economic aid, Dictator Zia seems to have made commitments in or to the U.S. that have aroused suspicion both at home and among neighbours. His 1981 agreement with the U.S. for a strategic relationship is simply a sell-out; read with what the Americans have said, it confers on Pakistan the same old stooge status, as was the case in the 1950s.

Zia's Afghanistan policy, the centre-piece of the military regime's foreign policy, is fraught with extreme danger for Pakistan; he has bungled his way into antagonising a superpower, that is a neighbour, on the one hand, and welcoming the 2.8 million Afghan refugees, most of whom might never go back, on the other. The Kremlin continues to behave with calculated moderation, though its media and diplomats have begun dropping not-so-discreet hints of what to expect if its geopolitical interests in Afghanistan are threatened from Pakistan.

Domestic consequences primarily are to be worried over. The presence of 2.8 million refugees, concentrated in the poverty-stricken NWFP and Baluchistan provinces, is a crushing burden on the economy. True, some foreign aid is coming in officially and more is being surreptitiously pumped in by Saudi Arabia and the CIA agents into the hands of so-called Mujahideens. But this money is playing havoc with the economy of the provinces — addition of neat cash in huge quantities in areas that are poor even by Pakistan's standards.

Politically, it is explosive material. Social tensions in these areas are rising. Political parties in these provinces are being polarised; in the NFWP the extreme reactionaries of the Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) are the agency for distributing money, lots of it, and they are associated with the scarcely-secretly-smuggled arms (that now include Bazukas, rocket launchers and SAMs). In Baluchistan it is done with the help of more questionable elements like political tribal leaders or smugglers. Those involved with gun-running and hush-hush funds, together with the government's undercover agencies, constitute one side of the barricade.

The other side comprises democratic parties in the area; mainly the PPP, Tehrik-i-Istiqlal (TI) and the successors of the old National Awami Party (NAP) that comprise the NDP, and NAP Pakhtunkhawa; the Jamiat-ul-Ulema Islam (JUI) and their student wings, in addition, take more or less the same view. They all oppose this policy of trying to overthrow the Karmal government in Kabul or at least to make its life difficult by fomenting insurgency inside that unhappy country and encouraging people to migrate. The policies of all these political parties and groups run counter to both Zia's and the Islamic fundamentalists,

funded and armed by the pro-U.S. reactionary powers. (China being a special case.) Thus a sharp confrontation is developing.

We, the democratic parties, have long stood for recognising Karmal's, and his predecessor's, governments and doing a political deal with them to stem the flood of refugees. We want, one day, to send these refugees back with the Kabul government's cooperation. Zia's policies, made in the U.S. as they are, stand in the way. These opposing alignments now threaten to eventually erupt into a civil war — the real causes of which are embedded in the 1971 civil war. The issues of that civil war are still unresolved and now broadly correspond, and get entangled with, the basically domestic issues that have been occasioned by the Afghanistan crisis.

As noted, the little-concealed gun-running by the U.S., Egypt, China and Saudi Arabia, with the connivance of thousands of Zia's minions, and the Pakistan army's unavoidable role in sustaining the insurgency and execution of more complex sabotage jobs in Afghanistan, has endangered Pakistan's security as nothing before had done. The Soviets are fuming and waiting.

It is one thing for the U.S. to want to make the Russians pay dearly for their occupation of Afghanistan. It is quite another for Pakistan to be the executing agency of that U.S. policy. The U.S. is a superpower engaged in a fierce struggle with Russia all round the globe and has the strength and means for carrying on that struggle. But we are desperately poor and weak. We are now needlessly vulnerable to Russian pressure in a number of ways.

First, our location itself constitutes a weakness. The Russians' power system with their myriad tanks, planes, missiles and what have you, starts just outside Peshawar and stretches, unbroken, upto the East-West German border in the west, and Vladivostok in the north-east. Does it make sense to shoot arrows after dusk at this huge Russian bear, especially when it knows who and from where they are being shot? It is absolute lunacy.

Moreover, the populations of the NWFP and Baluchistan, through age-old and still-popular parties have long wanted friendly relations with the Russians and their Afghan friends. Not only that. They have serious grievances against Islamabad rulers over fundamental constitutional matters and have long looked up to Kabul and Moscow for political support — and who now, along with most Pakistani patriots and nationalists, demand recognition of the Karmal government.

A large number of Pakistani dissidents of unimpeachable character and differing politics like Sardar Khair Bakhsh Marri, Ajmal Khatak, Murtaza Bhutto and

many others now reside in Kabul. There are still some misguided Pathan nationalists that envisage some kind of union of the NWFP and Baluchistan with Afghanistan. An uncertain number of Baluch nationalist guerillas are still officially camping in Afghanistan; quite a few of them fancy themselves as Marxists. They are probably very few in number, most of them having gone, sub rosa, to make money in the Persian Gulf or even inside Pakistan. At any rate, their symbolic presence remains in Kabul. They have their friends, colleagues and supporters in Pakistan. These guerillas freely come and go and are playing a role in Baluchistan politics, even if minor. But all of these are friends of both Karmal and the Russians, largely because of the Pakistan army's determination to prevent the people of Pakistan from exercising their democratic rights.

There is much dissidence elsewhere also. The military dictatorship is creating alienation. It is an extreme alienation because many regional nationalists have concluded that Pakistan is synonymous with unending Punjabi military dictatorships. (Most of Pakistan's military and civil services, big business and landlords hail from just one province, the Punjab, which is a permanent majority area; most politicians from here are fiercely opposed to making serious concessions to ethnic-minority areas.) Zia virtually said in Washington in December 1982 that he was in power for good, and that if he went there would be some other General to take his place.

Regional nationalists of minority areas are now openly saying that this declaration in Washington means that the U.S. and Pakistan army Generals have entered into an unholy alliance on the one hand and, on the other, the liberation of the Pakistani people from bondage to the military is contingent upon breaking this new relationship of servitude to Washington.

A political corollary of the Pakistani Generals' link-up with the Pentagon is that the Pakistanis will have to contend, in their struggle against the army, with the Americans also. Why? Because by doing the kind of business they are with the Generals, Washington has shown a clear preference for the Generals over the people of Pakistan.

As a second corollary, genuine secessionist movements may now be taking birth in Pakistan. The Russians, if they decide to hurt Pakistan, cannot ask for better opportunities. They are now much better than in 1971. That places us, who stand for one united and democratic Pakistan, in an invidious position.

Pakistan and India

There are two other major issues that call for comment. One is relations with India. All sections of patriotic opinion are now convinced that these relations

need to be improved. Indeed, we must work for a rapprochement. Four great obstacles stand in the way, however.

First, is the intense arms race between the two countries. The principle that you can do anything with a bayonet except sit on it, creates a dangerous situation. Pakistan, after more than five and a half years of the military's evil rule and corruption, cannot be defended by its armed forces. The people's alienation with the government whose foolish policies can bring on a war has created a dangerous situation in the context of the arms race.

War with whom? It could be both with India or with the Russians (either openly or suitably clothed with an Afghan cover). It can be in fact several covert wars, originating in Pakistan's own civil war via Russian, Afghan, American, Chinese and Indian intervention. It can become a true devil's brew. We are ripe for any or all of these things — thanks largely to the (Punjabi) Generals' insistence on an alliance with the Pentagon. Their motivation is sordid short-term objectives of gaining American support to conserve their ill-gotten power, and preserve the opportunity to make pelf, too.

The Pakistani people therefore want peace with India, above all. But what about Kashmir? Two points can be made straight away: the Simla Agreement has provided an acceptable framework for a peaceful settlement of this old dispute. Both countries are still committed to it. The whole political spectrum in Pakistan accepts this mechanism. Second, Pakistanis, being concerned only with the basic rights of the Kashmiris, see no need to themselves go to war on their behalf. We remain firmly committed to supporting, by all feasible means, the Kashmiris' struggle for their own rights. (In any case, we have first to struggle for our own rights.) This particular hurdle, therefore, can be, and should be, surmounted.

The Afghan issue too, cannot be ignored any longer. Pakistan cannot sustain its present role in the Afghan insurgency. It is creating unacceptable security risks for the country. The coterie of Generals headed by Zia cannot cope with this situation. At any rate, his role in promoting extreme right-wing religious obscurantism everywhere — inside Pakistan, Southwest Asia and Afghanistan — is sowing the seeds of much evil to come. But the focus of it, for the present purposes, is in Afghanistan. It has endangered Pakistan's very survival.

There is immediate need for totally freezing Pakistan's role in sustaining Afghan insurgency, to be followed by recognition of, and negotiations with, the Karmal government with a view to enabling the refugees to go back; and finally, initiating wider-ranging talks with Afghanistan and USSR, possibly with Indian goodwill or good offices, for creating conditions in which the Russian troops may go back. The present dilatory indirect talks through the UN are useless. The

US is using them to gain time, while Zia has several clear objectives in mind. These larger issues cannot wait for the second elections we envisage and seek; the very first democratic government would begin doing it and that, too, quickly.

India's proposal for a friendship treaty cannot be rejected; it should be accepted chiefly because it involves a commitment not to get involved in the RDF. That will greatly promote the solution of the Afghanistan crisis.

An Arab Policy

Then there is the need for an Arab policy. The Arab states of Southwest Asia need to be told that, while friendship and economic cooperation with them is most welcome, any commitments of a military or quasi-military nature made by the military dictator Zia would immediately be frozen. All and any involvement of Pakistan's military in foreign countries shall soon be ended.

The Zia regime, it seems, has merrily entangled Pakistan behind the back of the Pakistani people into American-sponsored anti-Russian schemes in Southwest Asia designed to save (i) Persian Gulf oil for the West, and (ii) the thrones of pro-western potentates from their own people. It is time the voice of the people of Pakistan be raised to warn all concerned — the West, the Arab Sheikhs and the Russians, too — that they have played no part in all this, and they want no part of it. As soon as the Zia dictatorship ends, the democratic government will review all commitments that Zia and his Generals have made.

It shall freeze any possible active role of Pakistan outside its territories or of foreigners inside Pakistan, forthwith. It shall publish all relevant documents and background information to enable the people eventually to decide what to do through their freely chosen parties. Insofar as the immediate MRD commitment is concerned it is confined to (i) opposing all military and political alignments and involvements (against any power whatever), and (ii) pursuing a genuine non-alignment.

The democratic forces represented by the MRD, are not unmindful of the righteousness of the Palestinians' or Southern Africa's black majority's national liberation causes. They support them wholeheartedly. But there is nothing much we can do. But in Southwest Asia, where Pakistan's military involvement is suspected by friends and foes and on the anti-people side, strict non-involvement in the internal affairs of the Gulf sheikhdoms is to be observed. Normal economic cooperation and cultural exchanges, as expressions of centuries-old ties and affinities, will of course not be affected.

A Low Profile

As for the Iraq-Iran war, again strict neutrality is to be observed. The MRD undertakes to do nothing that exacerbates the conflict, though it shall maintain normal relations with both. As was mentioned in the immediate political programme, the first democratic government will have only a limited (antifascist) mandate to restore normal freedoms for citizens and to help build free institutions that are characteristic of free societies. Within six months it will reorder elections in which individual parties will present their detailed programmes and obtain a mandate to reorient long-term economic and foreign policies.

Nuclear Programme

The second major issue facing the nation is the question of a nuclear research programme. It is no use pretending. Everyone knows there is a nuclear research programme on (that was started by my father and the democratically-elected Prime Minister). Zia's denials mean nothing. But this programme, in the changed situation of today, needs to be assessed anew. What has changed?

First, Pakistan cannot now politically and economically afford to make the Bomb, without which the whole effort would be pointless. Facilities for only power generation can be had from anywhere by agreeing to whatever safeguards the London Club suppliers demand. The refusal to accept the demanded safeguards, whether by India or Pakistan, speaks for itself. Secondly, by persisting with the programme, Zia and his Generals may have embarked on a nuclear arms race with India. Irrespective of what India does or does not do, we cannot afford to sustain it.

Third, in view of the realisation that we cannot and ought not to go to war with India – or indeed with anyone else – there is no point in continuing with the arms race, especially nuclear. Long before we acquire even the capability, let alone the Bomb, the Generals shall have to fight a war they will not be able to fight due to their political preoccupations, as was the case in 1971. Fourth, what may have been proper for a democratic government is not necessarily feasible for friendless military tyrants.

A Foreign Policy for MRD

Until the second elections bring in a purely party government there will be no foreign policy initiatives of a far-reaching kind; external affairs shall be conducted in a low key and mainly reactive manner. Even peacemaking in the Iraq-Iran war will be eschewed. The MRD undertakes to do nothing to promote or hinder the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). It also undertakes not to do anything to which the Russians, the Chinese and the Indians can take exception. I would have liked to include the U.S. also in this but I do not. For, it is likely to

oppose our very first actions: overthrowing the Generals and disengaging from the Afghanistan imbroglio.

As I have argued above, insofar as Afghanistan is concerned, the MRD should itself (i) eschew all military, security or strategic cooperation with, or aid to, any Mujahideen (insurgent) group; (ii) prevent foreign military aid or financing from reaching these insurgents; and (iii) recognise the Babrak Karmal regime as the de facto government of Afghanistan and proceed to discuss with it the restoring of the traditional friendly cooperation that has existed between Afghanistan and Pakistan and, specifically, the return of the Afghan refugees.

The MRD should deplore the presence of Russian troops in Afghanistan. But it should recognize that this is a matter strictly between the two sovereign countries of the Soviet Union and Afghanistan in which Pakistan has no role. It earnestly hopes Afghanistan will continue to uphold non-alignment as the guiding principle of its foreign policy. Pakistan under MRD rule will do whatever is possible to maintain and expand traditional economic links with Afghanistan; it shall uphold and safeguard Afghanistan's transit and overland trading rights through Pakistan. But it reserves the right to curb all smuggling which is designed to strengthen the hold of vested interests and imperialist agents – and now includes its use as a cover for both drug pushing and gun-running.

The MRD, while abjuring major initiatives, shall endeavour to normalise and improve relations with all its neighbours, especially India. The MRD accepts the goal of rapprochement with India. Therefore, it undertakes actively to discourage an arms race with it. It shall freeze those parts of the nuclear research programme that are not strictly necessary for power generation. It shall enter into exploratory talks with India, if the latter wishes, for examining our two peoples' possible cooperation in this field, though it shall, without taking any decision of a long-term nature, endeavour to educate public opinion on all available options.

The MRD accepts the idea of marrying the peace, friendship and cooperation treaty with a no-war pact. It undertakes to maximise trade, economic and cultural cooperation with India. It will endeavour to convert the Indo-Pakistan border into a soft one like the one between Canada and USA.

The MRD also favours the idea of organised regional economic cooperation; it wishes in theory to amplify the Bangladesh proposal of a South Asian Forum to include at least an ASEAN-like regional framework for economic cooperation. The MRD will be ready to respond positively to all Indian suggestions designed

to reduce tension and improve relations, without committing future party governments to any long-range course of action.

Over Kashmir, the MRD accepts the Simla Agreement as the still valid framework for peacefully resolving this old dispute. It continues to support the inalienable human rights, including self-determination, of the Kashmiris just as much as it supports them for the Palestinians, Afghans or even Pakistanis themselves.

The MRD also undertakes to maintain and improve the political, economic and cultural relations with all major powers: the U.S. Britain, Japan, West Germany, France, Canada, Australia and other western countries with the proviso that it shall freeze any military or even quasi-military commitment by Pakistan outside its territories. Insofar as socialist countries (including China) are concerned, every endeavour shall be made to improve political, economic and cultural cooperation with them, no whit less than with any western power.

The MRD will pursue a policy of genuine non-alignment. It will support all subject peoples' struggle for liberation. It will oppose all forms of imperialism and colonialism wherever still operative. It condemns Israel's aggressive colonialism and supports the Palestinians and other Arabs now subject to Israeli overlordship, whether overt or covert. It disapproves of the U.S. support, funding and arming of Israel, despite its clearly colonialist and imperialist actions. The MRD reiterates its support for the Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC) and stands for the liberation of Jerusalem's holy places from Zionist occupation.

The MRD holds the working of the present international monetary system to be unjust to the underdeveloped and primary commodities producing countries. It accepts that a New International Economic Order (NIEO) is the need of the hour and promises to support and promote Group of 77 initiatives.

Long-range PPP Programme

In my capacity as the Acting Chairman of the PPP and also as one of its activists, I make the following long-range policy recommendations to the party for fighting the second election with the following programme in the foreign policy field:

1. Pakistan shall reorient all its policies to make nonalignment its guiding principle. We shall abjure all involvement in any superpower-sponsored security arrangement involving Pakistan in any military or quasi-military commitments outside its territories or against any third country.

2. It shall always refuse to grant any military base of any description to any outside power, including the pooling of electronic data regarding a third country. Nor shall serving Pakistan troops be sent out of the country, except as instructors to a country that is at peace with its neighbours, or for their own training abroad.
3. Consistent with this policy, Pakistan will review all its treaties and commitments, secret or public, that involve Pakistan's military and security role in any military alignment against any other power or group of powers anywhere. Specifically, the Pakistan-U.S. mutual security treaty of 1954 and agreements of 1959 as well as of 1981-82 shall be reviewed with a view to revising or terminating them so as to cancel Pakistan's involvement in any arrangement that commits Pakistan's military or semi-military forces to any course of action in pursuance of American-sponsored purposes, schemes, or alignments against third countries. Note that we do not welcome peaceful (non-military) political and economic cooperation with the U.S. We will be ready to learn much from the most powerful and prosperous democracy in the world.
4. The same criterion and course of action would be applied to all such treaties, agreements, understandings and arrangements with every other power including the one-time CENTO and SEATO allies with whom bilateral mutual security treaties or agreements exist. The same applies to arrangements or agreements with the GCC or any other Arab or Islamic state.
5. No. Pakistani soldier, sailor, airman or para-military troop or its military equipment is to have any military or quasi-military role outside Pakistan in pursuit of any other power's security schemes or arrangements, including point military exercises like Midlink, Bright Star, etc. Pakistani service personnel may go and train others in small batches as well as obtain training abroad but no military or semi-military formation may do duty abroad without the Parliament-to-be's explicit approval.
6. Pakistan would pay special attention to peace and friendship with its neighbours. The PPP would gladly accept a treaty of peace, friendship and cooperation with India (naturally involving non-aggression clauses). In fact, it would like to go further and see the treaty evolve more like the special Franco-German treaty of January

1963. The next PPP government would like to sign a similar treaty with Afghanistan.

7. The PPP attaches special importance to friendship with China. But that desire carries no undertone of hostility either towards India or the Soviet Union. Consistent with our general approach of pursuing a low key policy, we would much prefer a Sino-Soviet as well as a Sino-Indian rapprochement. If the Soviet Union and China were to agree we would sign just such a treaty with both but not with just one of them.
8. The idea of regional cooperation in South Asia shall receive our support. This can extend to all fields: political consultations aimed at evolving joint positions, organised economic cooperation and vastly-increased cultural interchanges among all countries of South Asia. The PPP would like eventually, to work for an EEC-like organisational structure to emerge in South Asia.
9. Afghanistan belongs by right to South Asia and shall be welcome to join the regional cooperation bodies.
10. The PPP would host a South Asian Peoples Solidarity Movement to propagate and promote democratic politics, social justice, enlightenment and inter-religious amity and to fight forces of religious obscurantism, feudalism, military or fascist dictatorships.
11. Pakistan would, on the basis of its Islamic nature and heritage, like to cooperate closely with Islamic countries of Southwest and West Asia in economic and cultural fields on the basis of strict non-interference in the internal affairs of one another's country. But Pakistan would not get involved in any west or southwest Asian grouping's political or security schemes.
12. The PPP would continue its membership of the OIC but would like to see it become a body that promotes popular welfare, cultural exchanges and economic development, rather than be a club for autocratic kings and dictators.

In order to strengthen it, the PPP would like to see the Soviet Union, China and India being invited to be its members. Insofar as India is concerned, that should help remove distances both between the Indian Muslims and the majority community – as also between

India and Pakistan. After all, there are more Muslims in India than in any OIC member country, except Indonesia.

13. The PPP government strongly favours an all-round armaments reduction in South Asia. While favouring a harmonious, internally peaceful and stable South Asia, it will not want it to emerge as a big (military) power centre, throwing its weight about in other areas of Asia: southeast and southwest. We will press for all South Asian resources of manpower, raw material, skills and machines to be devoted primarily to the peaceful endeavour of raising the living standards of its desperately poor millions.
14. The PPP is not unmindful of the intense superpower rivalry in the Indian Ocean, typified by the presence of strong naval contingents of the U.S., USSR, Britain, France, China and others and the creation of the new U.S. Central Command and the Fifth Fleet.

This huge armaments race spells danger to the countless millions of people living on the littorals of this ocean, for these powers are not contesting the salt water for its own sake; they are after the resources of the ocean's populous littorals. That threat cannot be countered by wasting South Asia's resources on becoming another power centre. That is a self-defeating process: the wastage of resources on armaments of such a desperately poor area would intensify poverty and make it altogether too weak and vulnerable. It is only a prosperous, enlightened, freedom-loving people, anxious to preserve their independence who can counter the foreign military powers' threats by denying them local bases and quislings.

15. At any rate, in line with this general orientation, Pakistan under the PPP would opt out of this game — of wasting valuable resources on a useless military build-up while people live in miserable conditions. We have seen enough of this and have discovered its uselessness. Excessive military build-ups in poor countries can lead only to fascist dictatorships. We would opt out of all arms races, even joint regional ones, with other external forces.
16. Pakistan under the PPP would sharply reduce its military establishment. We need no more than a couple of divisions of the army, a few squadrons of the air force and a skeleton navy, primarily to maintain a nucleus of modern military technology.

17. The main aim of our foreign policy would be to promote our people's economic and cultural progress.
18. Pakistan would welcome peaceful economic and cultural cooperation with every major power bilaterally or multilaterally, on the basis of equality and non-interference in one another's affairs.
19. The PPP affirms its solidarity with all the exploited peoples of the world (*Mustazafin*, as our Iranian brethren put it) and will support their struggle for economic, social, and in many cases political, liberation. It stands four square with them against all oppressors: feudal lords, local collaborators of foreign imperialists (compradors), local civil and military bureaucracies, all forms of imperialism and colonialism.

The PPP family believes that in this struggle all peoples' international solidarity is the first prerequisite. It is also its ultimate instrument of victory over all tyranny.

20. Insofar as classical colonialism or Lenin-defined imperialism is concerned, we stand for fighting it by popular resistance through world peoples' solidarity with the victims, whether Palestinians, the black majority of southern Africa or the economically exploited millions in Latin America, Africa and Asia. A world-wide anti-imperialist popular movement, with meaningful local social, economic and political liberation programmes is what we aim at.
21. The PPP, while endorsing the idea of a New International Economic Order (NIEO), believes it cannot come about by passing resolutions in the UN, or elsewhere. It can only come about through intense popular struggle throughout the world, on the one hand, and by the action of individual governments of the Third World, as well as their inter se economic cooperation, especially in regional configurations, on the other. The old order will not one day decide to fold up or invite the NIEO to come and take over. The NIEO will come into being bit by bit in isolated but, altogether growing, parts of the world – until it overshadows the old order.

7. The Immediate Political Task

Our aim is to unite the people. They should regain their lost rights. Power has to be wrested from the usurpers, the senior officer corps of the Pakistan Armed Forces.

For this purpose, the aware minority of intensely-freedom-loving citizens have to lead the people by making them aware of the deadly game the military oligarchs are playing by dividing the politically conscious groups, thus making the people bewildered, demoralised and apathetic. Gen. Zia-ul-Haq does this by bribing the political leaders of right-wing parties and buying some of those who claim to stand for the rights of the people. It is the apathy of the people, their political listlessness, that greatly facilitates his regime to survive.

Let every committed democrat and socialist of no matter what hue come together under one banner. True, I am speaking for the PPP, whose leader I now am. Mine is the party of all those who hate all exploitation — by the military, landlords, capitalists, big traders, the various businessmen engaged in the business of selling the dope in the bewitching package of Islamic shibboleths. Ours is not an anti- or non-Islamic party. As dear departed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto used to say we are imbued with the true Islamic spirit. Remember his slogan: Our politics is democracy, our economy is socialist and our faith (deen) is Islamic.

Even so I am not calling all Pakistanis either to join the PPP or to specify that the coming struggle for restoring popular rights should only be conducted under the PPP's banner.

I freely recognise there are many good humanists, democrats and even socialists who stayed out of the PPP in the past and may still not be ready to join it. Past rancour may stand in the way. I and the PPP are sorry for these unfortunate misunderstandings. But today in the face of a larger danger, calamitously clear and present, let us all unite. There will be time enough for reproach and mutual recrimination. The PPP has decided to cast its lot with every other democrat, whether socialist or non-socialist, for one specific purpose: to force out of power the terrible, fascist dictatorship set up by the military's senior officer corps and to ensure that this power is finally broken.

In other words, we do not want to permit Gen. Zia being succeeded by another General. Nor should there again be any other kind of tyranny by any civilians. We should, this time around, ensure that the people come into their own and never again be cheated.

I am, therefore, not calling all humanity — and freedom-loving people to my party's banner — but to the common standard of the Movement for Restoration of Democracy (MRD). I pledge to work under it unreservedly. I want every humanist whether he calls himself a socialist or a democrat to do the same: respond to the MRD's call for struggle against the fascist tyranny of the Pakistan military.

The Common Aim

The final aim is to firmly and finally establish democratic dispensation in Pakistan in which no freebooter can usurp their inalienable human rights from the people. All the people have to be enabled to actually enjoy equal rights at all times; merely writing them on a piece of paper is not enough.

Among human rights we give absolutely equal importance, on the one hand, to traditional civil liberties — the rights to assemble freely, speak, move around or live in the country, write, publish or broadcast anything, and demonstrate and march — and, on the other, a modicum of social security, including the right to work. The time has come to ensure that these rights are not merely enshrined in the laws of the land but are actually enforced. Lip service is not enough.

The government of the country has to be run by the people; as far as possible decision-making processes have to give them an actual role to play their due part. No significant political action by the government, including law-making, should remain feasible which has not been actually deliberated upon and approved by the people throughout the country; means have to be found for popular consultation from time to time.

For the rest, an elected Parliament must continuously supervise, guide and control the government amidst free media's informed analyses and criticism.

The question of what Islam says on the matter of government and human rights, not that it is controversial, has to be settled finally by the people. Yes, by the people! Today a dictator continues to oppress people on the plea that he is enforcing(sic) Islam.

This is obscenely impudent — towards God Almighty (who has unambiguously laid down in the Koran that he has appointed man, not merely all Muslims, as his viceroy on earth and all there is on this earth is for the benefit of humankind, with all the massive emphasis on human equality), and the people at large (whose rights he has destroyed).

Let the people prove through concrete action that God Almighty has not issued Gen. Mohammad Zia-ul Haq, Chief of Staff of the Pakistan Army, any direct secret order to overthrow an elected government, abolish Parliament and popular bodies and parties, abolish people's rights as enshrined in the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, and impose his own (military) rule in place of an Islamic system on which all shades of Pakistani opinion had unanimously agreed. All such impertinences, now or in future, have to be stopped.

Let this be clearly understood. I am not suggesting that all that the government headed by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto did was ideal or that we do not have to move forward. That government was in power for a short time and during a period of much travail. It committed mistakes. But it put the question of what Islam has to say regarding social organisation beyond dispute.

The Constitution of April, 1973 has finally resolved this question. All the rest of the problems — and the people face many, beginning with intolerable living conditions — have to be tackled gradually by the people of Pakistan through their delegates, elected from time to time in the light of experience, available skills, and resources and opportunity.

God has not appointed this, or does not intend appointing any future dictator, to enforce (an ugly word for an uglier reality) Islam; between God and the people, indeed humanity as such, there are no third parties. What the commonality of predominantly-Muslim people do democratically can only be true Islam.

There is no other social or political application of Islam, as the PPP and the United Democratic Front (UDF of 1973) and the even later Pakistan National Alliance (PNA of 1977) had repeatedly agreed; which meant that all schools of Pakistani opinion had agreed on what Islam implied (and had done all that could be done in an agreed manner without causing strife among the faithful).

The Framework for a System

The practical translation of this aim implies a return to the commonly-accepted 1973 Constitution on the purely political plane — as it was originally agreed. That would provide the framework for conducting politics, truly free politics, by the people, as well as government.

What will be, or should be, the content of politics cannot be prescribed beforehand. But it should seek to solve the known and felt problems of the people's economic under-development, lack of opportunities for cultural refinement, correction of class imbalances, removal of social evils through enlightenment, and the like.

Among the specific aims, an important place is occupied by political education and continuous popular action with a view to ensuring that never again will a dictator be able to subvert the political (democratic) system and establish a tyranny.

This is the quest for providing a built-in guarantee against the democratic system being overthrown by any vested interest, either through a military putsch or a Hitlerian fascist party. Writing such guarantees on a piece of paper is useless. The 1973 Constitution was one such effort, but to no avail. The real guarantee, an iron-clad one, can only be the people's vigilant determination to refuse to be defrauded of their rights; any attempt at even eroding or diluting, much less subverting, should be met with direct popular action in the streets.

The ultimate sanction for a people's rule is the certainty that any effort to stage a coup by a would-be dictator would result in a popular revolt – even at the risk of a bloody confrontation. Only an awakened and determined people, who want to stay free and sovereign, are the true sanction for a democratic system. Let us keep that sanction in working order all the time.

The same guarantee shall operate against two dangers. First, the people's civil rights are all too frequently abridged or even violated by a so-called strong or reforming government (that says it is in a hurry). The phenomenon is only too well-known and needs to be guarded against. There can be only one safeguard against that: a vigilant people. They can ensure that popular freedoms remain unviolated on pain of what may amount to a popular revolt in the streets.

The Threat to National Unity

The second danger of which much is being made concerns national unity. I have shown, and all schools of opinion agree, that the military dictatorship is destroying national unity. Only a vigorously functioning democratic system integrates people. Those who worked for any party during the 1970 or even 1977 election campaigns, despite intense partisan feelings or subsequent events, remember the unmistakable prerequisite for national unity. On both occasions, national unity and integration could be felt to be stronger. Even while the PNA's anti-PPP agitation in 1977 was under way, national unity was not under threat. But it is so today.

Why?

Because the various elements of the nation are denied any share in either decision-making or in any political effort to influence decision-making. This is simply tearing apart the fabric of national unity. Preservation of vigorous

popular participation and actual enjoyment of all freedoms is an integral part of all the guarantees we can seek and get.

What is in fact needed and some Baluch leaders have actually demanded it is a new social and national compact. One can understand their anger and frustration because of the special circumstances and the raw deal they have received. This is not the place to go into the past, with all its misunderstandings and recriminations; we can yet have opportunities to remove them. The nationality question has to be faced. If our brothers and sisters in the NWFP, Sindh and Baluchistan think it is urgent, it is. There should be no dodging it.

In a truly democratic and socialist commonwealth there can be no place for vested interests. Indeed, the latter's power and privileges have to be destroyed before an egalitarian dispensation can be established. So, there need be no objection to settling this question of nationality and provincial autonomy, though the question of guarantees needs to be addressed forthwith. I have in fact tried to do so.

The effort to write any sanctions is pointless. When coups can be staged by a vested interest group with impunity, as has been the case so far, what use will there be in writing in some more (in addition, that is, to what was done in the 1973 Constitution)? More to the point is to educate and arouse the people to break the powers of the vested interests and to put them in their proper place. That is the problem of all Pakistanis, not of smaller nationalities.

Once the vested interest groups are crushed — as they have to be under our first objective — the whole perspective will change. In an egalitarian society the question of equality of opportunity has to be ensured. We have to move in fairly quick order to the stage of both, jobs for all, and truly participatory democracy at the grassroots level. In that perspective the question of provincial autonomy is a piece of cake; they can get all they want.

An Immediate Programme

But let us get our priorities right. At this stage, the reopening of constitutional questions while vested interests are in power and playing their divide-and-rule game, is to start more controversies and offer opportunities to dictators. Let us first create those conditions in which the issues can be solved satisfactorily and remedies work. The immediate task is to unite the people on the basis of a common minimum programme — a programme that will lay the groundwork of a democratic dispensation.

In short, a democratic society has to be built in place of the present basically feudal structure. We do not have to encourage capitalism, for that experiment

has been tried and has failed. It was rejected in 1970 and has, in any case, thrown in the towel during the last eight years.

Let us now move forward to the next stage. But we must stress democracy's institutions: free press, free judiciary, strictly-controlled bureaucracy and a firmly-subordinated army and security services, kept on a very short leash; the autonomy of free trade unions, universities, the bar, journalists and other professions has to be jealously safeguarded. These institutions are the foundations of a free society; given their vitality, tyranny shall have no leg to stand on.

8. The Common Programme

We have a big fight ahead. For the paramount task today is breaking the strength of vested interests and throwing them out of power. The firepower of the army notwithstanding, Zia's military regime has to be consigned to the dustbin of history. The question is: how?

The united people of Pakistan are a tremendous force. It is only they who can smash the military dictatorship. But can they do it?

Yes. They can. By uniting. Unity is always for a given objective and against a given force. And it is a function of the common action. It does not come about merely from listening fitfully to vague sermons and exhortations from someone who stands outside their struggle for their purposes. The people's unity can only result from the people acting upon a common programme of action, designed to topple the military regime. The concept is simple enough. But there are a number of prerequisites.

As mentioned already, first, there has to be a common (people's) programme. This should be vitally related to the felt needs, yearnings and problems of the people. It has to be one which should instantly strike a chord in everybody's heart. This should be capable of uniting the intelligentsia (including all or most political parties in nominal opposition). It will be foolish to deny the influence of traditional opinion makers, including recognised political leaders.

So a united front has to be evolved. But its anchor must remain the people through the working of the Common Programme.

But a programme by itself can do nothing. There has to be first a leadership capable of leading a (fierce) struggle and second of (*i*) mobilising popular opinion, and (*ii*) organising people's action (power).

The Indo-Pakistan subcontinent's political culture presupposes intense popular participation in agitations, demonstrations, hartals, hunger strikes, marches, jail fillings and so forth. They are basically non-violent methods. Now, general strikes, gheraos, morchas, bundhs and even jalaos are being employed. These are not violent means but approaching them at times. These are an effective and time-tested technique. I recommend them in general.

These are basically non-violent, no doubt. But their essence, the secret of their effectiveness, is not non-violence, contrary to popular misconception. It is the

participation of the largest possible number of common people. The question of preferring or eschewing violence is thus secondary or even irrelevant.

The choice is not the freedom fighters'. It is the tyrants' behaviour that determines how non-violent popular movements can remain. Only morons or fascists prefer violence for its own sake. Fighters for humanity's rights and social justice, enjoying people's support, can only struggle through popular participation and action. In our case, they will adopt all means that will enable them to not merely cope with the Zia tyranny's prohibitions but to defeat and destroy it with the help of people's power.

Let no one waste time on the philosophical debate over ends and means. It will be pointless. The question has to be left to Zia and his henchmen. We shall be absolutely non-violent, if he will only let us. But our precise means will be shaped by objective conditions. That, in the brass tacks, include mainly Zia's machinations. He will want to cow us down and will also employ force to crush the movement. And yet, we have to achieve our aims come what may. His reliance on the Pakistan army shall not cow us into total inactivity. If to be reduced to willing servitude through fear of the tyrant's guns was right, there would never have been any progress. Let Zia choose with which means he wants to be defeated: non-violent or violent.

I recommend unity of all political parties, groups and politically-conscious individuals under the banner of the Movement for Restoration of Democracy (MRD). The Common (minimum) Programme has to comprise only a few key items. Basically it is a one-point programme; forcing Pakistan's military to make over power to the representatives of the people of Pakistan elected in a free election — such as we have had in 1970. (It is unfortunately necessary to specify the ordinarily-implied type of election: adult suffrage, secret ballot, the usual direct first-past-the-post method of electing individuals in territorial constituencies, and full freedom for all to canvass through newspapers, radio, TV, pamphlets and of course for people to assemble, march and demonstrate in all possible ways.

All questions of changes and reforms in electoral methods must await normal civilian politics. Some people are agitating for proportional representation. Let them wait a while for a democratic government to decide. Not that proportional representation is bad. Traditionally, the people are familiar with the British-type election; let us remain content with these for the present to avoid extraneous issues. All reforms should await a proper civilian and democratic system's context. Now, the foremost task is to force the military out of the portals of power and to enable the people to come into their own. Everything else is secondary.

Is this one-point programme enough to unite us all? What about the various red herrings the Zia regime continues to draw across the path of the country's hapless millions? What or where is the legal framework for the elections, he says? Do the people not have to agree to the (future) form of government before elections can be held, he asks? What about the military's insistence on giving itself a constitutional role, a la Turkey or Indonesia, we are asked? Zia insists on giving (future) presidents more powers. By this he means extraordinary powers for himself when he will, he hopes, fraudulently call his own regime a civilian and democratic one. He continues to harangue us nauseatingly on how he is enforcing Islam and goes on asserting that he has a heavenly mandate to enforce Islam (and thus go on ruling dictatorially). Of late he has also started making the astonishing claim that he enjoys popular support. Something has to be said about these snares, apart from amplifying the corollaries of the one-point programme.

Let us consider some of Dictator Zia's claims. That God Almighty has directly asked him to set up an Islamic *Civitas Del* is a lie. God has done no such thing. Islam says: He has appointed all human beings as His so many viceroys on earth. That is a prescription for absolute human equality.

It is everyone's duty and right to do what Islam has enjoined. There are no third parties between God and man in Islam; Zia has no *locus standi* to speak for either God or Islam. Zia has no right to thrust his own nostrums on all of us. For any individual to claim his right to stay in power because he is enforcing Islam is preempting other viceroys of God, or all human beings living in Pakistan, from doing what they think is their duty.

Let Zia and the military go and their democratic successors will be serving Islam more truly, because they will not be oppressing and exploiting others, and will come into or go out of power in accordance with other Pakistanis' wishes. Islam is no reason why a General should be tolerated for even one minute. Indeed, Islam enjoins the struggle against tyrants. Is Zia not a tyrant? Does his hypocrisy make him a representative figure? His mouthing Islamic slogans while ruling through a mercenary army's bayonets (Martial Law) is an insult to both Islam and the predominantly Muslim people of Pakistan.

His claim that the people have accepted his rule — or else the people should be on the streets — is a barefaced lie. Let him lift his Martial Law for even a day. He will know. Having said that, it is also true: it is not so much the army's guns that have protected him as much as lack of effective leadership that has prevented the people from conducting a proper struggle (in the streets).

Legal Framework

Zia has the effrontery to talk of law. There is no legal framework, says he, for holding elections. I ask him: what legal framework did he have for treacherously seizing power in the wee hours of 5 July 1977? The Constitution he had sworn to defend and obey laid down that all army coups are acts of treason. The traitor now talks of law! How obscene!

Let him know that free polls, no matter who holds them and no matter under what legal instrument, so long as the people vote freely, will do for us. The popular representatives that emerge from such an election shall look after all questions of law. Let him not worry overmuch.

Zia knows, and all Pakistanis know, that he is talking of a legal framework for two reasons: First, it is an excuse for gaining time and not holding elections. Second, he wants to copy either Gen. Yahya Khan — the famous Gen. Yahoo who provoked a civil war by refusing to accept results of an election he had himself held, used the Pakistan armed forces to indulge in killing, destroying and raping the people of Pakistan and finally managed to lose the more populous half of the nation — in laying down conditions for transfer of power to the elected Assembly; or Gen. Ayub Khan who gave his own constitution to serve his own ends. Yahoo had given in April 1970 an impossible sort of a Legal Framework Order (LFO) under which he held the 1970 elections in which, among other atrocious conditions, he reserved the right not to transfer power to popular representatives unless they did certain (nearly impossible) things — and to his satisfaction. Anyhow, the people rejected both Yahoo and Ayub.

Well, let Zia and his cohorts know that we do not expect them to hold elections of their own volition. If free elections are held, it will almost certainly be because the people will have forced them to accede to the demand. It is people's power that will ensure that they are held and that they are free. Real legality will flow from people's power, and through the people's act of freely voting. That central truth must be kept in focus.

Still, let us see how elections can be held. Either, finding there is no opinion, the Zia regime, or a successor General's, will agree and itself order elections on pain of being blown off the stage of history, just as the Iranian Shah was.

The senior judiciary, despite its having been discredited, especially in March 1981, can supervise it. Free elections will create their own *grund norm*, as Zia's legal Sancho Panza was fond of putting it. Or, somebody can dig out the agreement that the then ruling PPP and the opposition PNA negotiators had hammered out in the small hours of July 4, 1977, (for holding the elections on October 8, 1977) and make it work somehow, if necessary by the MRD amending

or amplifying it. It is not impossible. There has to be the precondition: the people's power must have forced the hands of the Generals. Where there is a will, there is always a way.

Still a third way will be for the Generals, again on pain of being thrown unceremoniously onto the dust heap of history, to ask an ad hoc body of, say, senior most judges and/or vice-chancellors of universities or a combination of other eminent personalities to supervise polling operations. There can be many modalities. So long as it yields free polls, any will do; the precondition must however remain in focus: people exercising their sovereign right to drive the oppressors out of power.

Form of Government

Then, Zia says the future form of government must be decided before an election and transfer of power can take place. I do not have to remind him that all patriotic Pakistanis are of one mind: the people have firmly, finally, and for always, chosen democracy as the only form of government that can work in this country. This is enshrined in the only, and maybe the last, unanimously-accepted Constitution of 1973.

Who in Pakistan does not agree that the 1973 Constitution represented the maximum area of agreement among all the various people and ethnic groups living in Pakistan? Who denies that giving it up would risk breaking the national unity, perhaps irretrievably?

It is common knowledge that finding another agreed constitution, acceptable to all elements, would be all but impossible. Even Zia is on record as saying that the 1973 Constitution is irreplaceable, the "last chance" for the country. But that was in the earlier years of his rule. Now he is going well beyond Nero insofar as he has himself destroyed what was our Rome: the national covenant embodied in the 1973 Constitution. This vandalism has somehow to be counteracted and the nation has to save, in fact resurrect, that Constitution.

Zia's mischief has to be understood and exposed. Since he broke the Constitution, he and his co-conspirators are afraid of holding elections under that Constitution. For they will be held accountable for that act of treason by the next democratic government, an act punishable by death. That is why he keeps on raising smokescreens, postponing the day of reckoning. He must know that no matter how many politicians he manages to bribe, the march of history and the people coming into their own cannot be prevented.

In order to prolong his own rule, he has opened the Pandora's box: he has formally and ostensibly tried to smash the people's biggest political asset, the

1973 Constitution, and to promulgate his own so-called Provisional Constitutional Order (PCO) in March 1981, because of which nine supreme and high courts lost their jobs for refusing to take oath under it. He is now trying to compound the crime by proposing a new form of government which means making another constitution. Since it can hardly be done, he is laying the groundwork for an actual civil war in days to come. Why? He knows that once the conservative so-called Islam-loving parties, on his secret urgings, begin to insist on a basically non-democratic or authoritarian set up, others will oppose fiercely. His army will side with, we know whom. The people shall have to defeat this evil collusion. Zia is irreconcilably dividing the people and pushing them into civil strife merely to stay in power.

Another Hare

The most cynical thing Zia says is that elections are not an end, they are a means. But means to what end? His own perpetuation? He insists he will hold elections only when he is sure of "positive results". What are the positive results of an election? He agrees it is the election of certain types of candidates. He also lamely denies that he does not mean the election of those who support him. But that is only subterfuge – in fact it is a lie.

Zia talks of the moral and Islamic character of the elected deputies. Who is to judge another man's state of morality or his faith? It is for God Almighty to do so. People elect their representatives for transacting specific (social) work. They can only hear and approve the views of various available candidates; they cannot get inside their skin or into their innermost being or conscience. How can the voters be sure of anyone being a better Muslim than another follower of Islamic faith? What gibberish!

But there is method in this madness. Zia's vast propaganda machinery keeps on plugging away at the theme of his boundless love for Islam; he is intent on enforcing it. He is also actively cultivating at least three so-called Islam-loving conservative parties. They have indicated on various occasions their readiness to participate in non-party elections and acceptance of the condition of prior common agreement on the form of government, screening of candidates and almost everything Zia has chosen to speak about. It is clear what Zia is after. His "positive results" mean so gerrymandering the elections as to enable these parties or other yesmen to win.

These foul designs have to be defeated.

Damocles' Sword

Another Zia nostrum is the armed forces' constitutional role. This is the most mischievous proposal. Almost everyone with a shred of decency says that the

1973 Constitution has finally specified their role: they have to defend the borders and to obey the civil authority. Period.

What Zia has in mind is not secret or obscure. His apologists have indicated that what he wants is a super-government body in which the armed forces will have representation (possibly a majority, with the help of the President) that can decide at any time to suspend the Constitution, and the armed forces can take over and run the government directly. This is simply to deny democracy in perpetuity; future civilian governments, in order to survive, will have to comprise such yesmen as will be always acceptable to the army brass, and who will do its bidding.

This pernicious design too must be defeated.

Nature of the Task

At the primary level, the task is to wrest power from the usurpers, the coterie of Generals. This coterie is exploiting not only the people but also the soldiers and subalterns. It is with their help that it robs and oppresses the people - all the people, in the Punjab as much as in Baluchistan, Sind or NWFP.

Although the coterie is a small one, it is not powerless. It tries to bribe, by various concessions, the bulk of the armed forces. In the name of discipline, it has trained all the army's guns on democratic-minded people and on activists.

Not only that. This coterie is supported by all the feudal classes: capitalists, rich contractors and large-scale trading or industrial houses. This social base – virtually all the vested interests – makes the Generals a simultaneously strong and vulnerable force.

Their strength is obvious. They can call upon all the talent employed by the controlled media, to propagate ideas, doctrines and deceptive slogans to divert the attention of the common people. For those few who insist on calling attention to the crass contradictions between the common people in all parts of Pakistan and the vested interest groups, or elites as they are called in modern jargon, there is brute force. Such people are mercilessly beaten in police lock-ups, framed in bogus (military) courts, given savage sentences including the barbaric one of whipping. Not less than 25-35,000 persons have been lashed inside the country's various jails, and a thousand or so in full public view.

To repeat, the coterie's main tactic is to divert and divide the people. So long as they are divided and at odds with one another on no matter what issues, the military rulers – and with them, the vested interest classes – are safe. The

common people remain powerless (because of the lack of unity) and without rights, prey to the machinations of the rulers.

This dirty game must be stopped before we can seriously think of organising the struggle for wresting power from the Generals. How do we do it?

People's Unity

We can defeat the game by uniting the people, of course. Being united for a purpose and against a given foe — we all know the foe — we can define a common purpose or cause. It is (i) to break the power of the obscenely rich and thoroughly corrupt ruling junta and their supporters; and (ii) to reestablish a democratic dispensation that will truly enfranchise the people by giving them all the well recognised human rights. (Indeed the people will acquire their rights through the struggle and keep enjoying it.)

The master formula is people's unity. When we talk of this unity it is not verbal or theoretical unity. It has to be a living unity — in action. Unity except through united action is ephemeral, unreal. United action presupposes a common programme of action. This has to have minimum items which a maximum number of people can agree on — meaningfully.

By meaningful I mean purposeful: with the clear intention of doing everything feasible and necessary to achieve those aims. The factor of leadership is assumed; it is the element that converts the latent possibility of united action (in common or minimum programme) into an actual impulse for moving forward or doing something to that end. That is, basically, an implied function of the common programme also.

The rulers have all the guns and money of the state, supplemented by that of their foreign supporters - mainly imperialists. With money they play all manner of dirty games in dividing the people, making them forget their real interests. With the guns they can, and at least initially will, shoot down those who have the courage to confront them openly. Their power, built into the structure of the state, is obvious.

On the other hand, there are the mainly unarmed, illiterate, simple and honest people. If unitedly moving forward to achieve a well-perceived goal, the people are a tremendous power before which the well-oiled war machines of dictators begin to buckle. A disunited people, at odds with one another, dissipating their energies, are no force. They soon become apathetic and pessimistic.

The experience in Algeria, Vietnam and now in Iran has shown that the power of the gun and money, per se, is a flimsy thing. It works for a while. Once

challenged by a determined people ready to pay the necessary price, it is soon found to be a rotten structure. A few determined assaults and it falls. But not so the people. They can recover from their powerlessness in a remarkably short time. They can even absorb setbacks and are soon ready to resume their fight.

Nevertheless, given today's conditions, the military rulers seem all powerful. Why? Because the people have allowed them to remain in power and do what they please. How? Because the people have remained concerned with petty day-to-day matters and have either not bothered about larger political questions or have responded to sectional appeals or myopic partisan politics.

Gen. Zia and his cohorts are basically ruling by default. They are where they are not because people want them there. They are there because the people have not thrown them out. Just that. Specifically, it is the apathy of the people and their political listlessness that is enabling the dictator and his colleagues to go on strutting the political stage and to appear larger than life in the garish media light.

In this restricted sense, as we have seen, they are often seen as a terribly strong force — i.e., so long as the people's energies remain scattered and are wasted over useless pursuits. Uncoordinated policies by numerous political groups, each acting separately and at different times, is worse than useless. It can in the earlier phases be ignored or put down — a thing the Zia government has been doing in a studiedly relaxed manner.

Protests against the Zia tyranny have been aplenty. Over 15,000 activists and supporters of the PPP are behind bars — not to mention the indignities and tortures they have suffered either as detenues or as undertrials, or on and after conviction for various Martial Law or other bogus criminal charges. There are some of them, belonging to other democratic parties, similarly detained or convicted on fraudulent criminal or Martial Law's catch-all offences.

There has not been much impact of all these protests against the military regime (for they are in jail for no other reason), which taken together, should have amounted to a massive movement. Why has it been ineffective? Because there has been no centrally-directed struggle. Isolated individual or group demonstrations may be a fine brave gesture. But that sort of thing does not bring down power structures. It is only well-led and coordinated struggles that tell on governments like Zia's.

Divide and Rule

Zia's regime is supremely successful in its main strategy to prevent the people from uniting by playing the divide and rule game. How Zia does so is simple.

Following Yahya Khan's example, Zia tries to bribe every political leader either with money, flattery, ideological claptrap or other stratagems; he wants or goes on interminably negotiating political deals with each, trying to keep each on tenterhooks. For the rest, he keeps the people diverted by constantly and massively propagating all sorts of nostrums and by recruiting some politicians' support.

Let us not forget the role of the regimented media. Voices of reason are absolutely blacked out. A few incoherent but shrill denunciatory criticisms are rightly regarded as less dangerous than sober analytical writings that can expose the larger political game of the military mafia. The latter is never permitted to appear either in print or on radio or television.

For the most part, the media are prostituted to project the personality, utterances and achievements of Zia, the larger than-life saviour of so many millions of people. This terrible but orchestrated din of whatever the regime wants to see resounding in the country and keeping out other voices, helps to keep an already disunited people diverted and committed to irrelevant issues and objectives.

It is this background that, superficially, makes the regime all powerful. Its command over more than 600,000 rifles may seem overpowering — and it is, so long as the people are not properly organised.

Should we give up? Should we accept our slavery as permanent? Shall the 85 million people remain in bondage in the hands of a small coterie of corrupt and scheming Generals?

The Secret of People's Power

I say this powerlessness, this servitude, is not fated. It is absolutely unnecessary. It can be brought to an end fairly quickly. How quickly, I cannot say. But many hard years of struggle may not actually be needed. This depends on many factors and there are other factors that might lead to a long, tenacious struggle that may become bloody at times.

Both these things are contradictory. There is an optimistic assessment and there is a pessimistic one. The pessimistic position will be dealt with later. The basis of expecting a shorter struggle is: the military is too corrupt to be really united. I know all Generals, being frightened of the people after the Iranian experience, are now behind Zia. None of them wants to rock the rather leaky boat. But this support is shaky. The jawans and junior officers too are being grossly misused and exploited; they do not want to be a part of today's organised plundering of the country's wealth.

The ruling junta has no real constituency. It has undertaken to run the country in a manner and in conditions that are all but impossible. It simply cannot deliver. It cannot even hold on to any course consistently. The task of defending the state is now beyond it. Who does not know that if any of our neighbours were to attack us militarily, this army will just not be able to defend the geographical frontiers? It cannot even resist diplomatic pressure. It is totally isolated from the people. The people are not likely to respond to any of its calls. It lives in a political vacuum. And it knows it.

If this is true, and every Pakistani is sure to agree with it, the regime is a rotten one. It requires just a strong but concerted push and it will topple over.

To repeat, in a short-term sense, the regime does look like a very strong, almost overwhelming force. But if we, as a people, are true to our salt, we shall not go on tolerating this oppression.

We will overcome this tyranny. Once we begin doing what we seemingly cannot do today, paying whatever price necessary, which will be higher for those pioneers who begin the process, we are likely to be amazed at finding the task a lot easier than it initially seemed.

But it will be unsafe to depend only on an optimistic assessment. In any case, the instrument of overcoming the tyranny and the method of employing it would remain the same. As the argument proceeds, the less optimistic assessment would be relied upon.

The real secret of the people's power, I cannot repeat too often, is its unity and its concerted action. The latter part is integral to the idea of unity. Unity, in order to survive even in the short run, has to be expressed in action. Action by whom? It has to be by the people, all of those whose unity is desired: popular action or action by the maximum number of people. In this idea, we have the key to success.

But let us look into the process involved a little more closely, beginning with the concept of participation (in action) by the maximum number of common people. What is implied and how can it be initiated and sustained? A political struggle today is another name for the maximal participation of the largest number of people, no matter by what means.

Popular Action

Insofar as popular participation is concerned, several questions arise. Martial Law is nothing if not absolutely savage in prohibiting all actual political activity

at the grassroots. In the press, it permits a severely-controlled measure of political news – news about some politicians' movements, mention of meetings in drawing rooms and sanitised or less significant parts or distorted versions of their statements and interviews. This is intended to serve as a safety valve against the feeling of utter suffocation in the intelligentsia. But this actually preempts the real politics.

Ordinary people may not meet nor is an ordinary political worker or activist to address even small group meetings – on pain of brutal punishments like 20-30 lashes and long spells in jail. They may not take out processions. Any occasion where a group begins forming anywhere, that might become a demonstration or a march, is broken up. The ever-present police contingents – the ubiquitous presence of police posses with firearms at even inconspicuous crossroads, especially near schools and colleges, is a new development – have orders to use maximum force. But, if by any chance, a sudden demonstration involving 500 or more persons does somehow materialise, it is allowed to take place with the police and others looking on quietly. Only the media are not allowed to report. Smaller meetings are savagely broken up. The intention is that the people ought not to get the idea that irrepressible demonstrations are taking place and are being suppressed by using force from which casualties result.

The political workers of the middle and lower levels have been put behind bars in their thousands. Even where they are in their homes or jobs, the security agencies and police watch and harass them constantly. The purpose is to render them ineffective and isolate them from the people.

At the national level, as noted elsewhere, maximum effort is being made to create rifts and misunderstandings among political leaders of all stripes. For the purpose money, fraud and agents provocateurs are being used on a hitherto unparalleled scale, and Zia himself takes a hand in the process. His so-called disclosures that politicians say one thing in public and another in private (to him) and other cryptic remarks not only divide the politicians but put all of them in a very bad light before the public. Manipulation of news does the rest.

This is in addition to the inexorable process of splitting that occurs among politicians when they can only operate in a political vacuum – completely cut off from the people's live reactions to day-to-day developments – and communicate only with one another either by letter, directly or through distorted press statements.

However, the point is that the Martial Law regime, no matter how foundationless it is, manages to give an image of success and strength on two counts. First, it has the guns and keeps everyone under the jackboot. It does not permit

dissenting opinions to be expressed by the people. Its own propaganda echoes and reechoes throughout the country.

Secondly, the people, being disorganised can be made to see their own ineffectiveness. Martial Law seeks to dishearten them. Soon they also become apathetic. The politicians' isolation and helplessness strengthen their hopelessness and political listlessness. They stop thinking of doing anything.

This however is not a permanent situation. Were it so, no people would be free; tyranny would be a world-wide condition. People elsewhere have smashed tyrannies worse than that of today's Pakistan. The Pakistani people can and shall do so. How? It is not much of a problem, for it will largely depend upon the tyrants' own behaviour. It is a point I have made earlier.

While a people shall close no options including using violent means, no sensible person shall advise them to resort to violence as such. Indeed, violence must be avoided as far as possible. Violence by army and other security agencies in an authoritarian state is a day-to-day matter; they would be pleased no end if the leadership of popular movements were to be provoked into using violent tactics especially in the earlier stages. That would be an opportunity for traditional power brokers to come down very heavily on the movement and use maximum violence in a short time (in the initial stages) on the plea that they were responding to violence. That may cause a setback to the people and may mean a longer, and harder, struggle.

For all practical purposes the actual question is of devising the ways and means of conducting a popular movement by peaceful means in a fascist state. The problem is how to conduct a civilised political campaign against a government that is not ready to give civilisation a chance. Not only can rallies not be held and marches be organised, even collecting signatures or painting slogans on the wall attract whipping in public and long sentences, (in addition to police torture in interrogating centres). What is the way out, then?

Desideratum

Two points need to be made immediately. First, that no matter what the price for freedom and progress may be, it has to be paid. Second, if the term law is extended to cover such illegality as MLRs and MLOs, law-breaking has to be resorted to as peacefully as feasible – and as demonstratively as possible. Only, no one should attract needlessly heavy punishment from an oppressive state machinery. The operative part of this is using means as peaceful and as expressive or demonstrative as possible.

Here the role of leadership comes into focus. It is the task and function of leadership to agitate, mobilise and organise first the more politically conscious elements (mainly political workers or activists) and later the people at large, successively. These workers and the people have to be motivated to take action.

This can only be in stages: first their interest would be aroused when their situation is described and compared with what it can possibly become. Then they would like to begin doing small things like sparing time to listen to those who talk or visit such people talking, and not reporting them. When convinced, they should do something; they would become activists, progressively again — and the leadership's skill would lie in enthusing and taking them through to the commitment's final stages.

Varying Tactics

It is hardly necessary to emphasise that the precise tactics need to vary from locality to locality. Since the local officers will differ in temperament and degree of brutality, the central leadership of the movement cannot lay down precise tactics to be followed in each and every neighbourhood or village. But talking points and a general approach will have to be indicated.

The larynx, in combination with the use of the brain, is the world's most powerful weapon. It is both supplemented and complemented by written messages. Two elementary and effective means of communication are passing the word around: the news of the leadership's actions, speeches, slogans, or of the corruption or enormities of the rulers. Let people talk and spread news by word of mouth. In cities or among educated people written messages can be passed around. Where possible cassettes, or even video cassettes, can be useful. Iran showed how useful a cassette can be. In Pakistan cassette players are not too plentiful. But an itinerant, activist can play a cassette in a village that can be heard by many.

Provided quotable, well-articulated and striking pronouncements are passed around whether by word of mouth or written messages or in cassette shape, an agitation can soon be started. Nevertheless, passive listening by anyone is not enough. Each citizen, a potential freedom-fighter, must do something concrete, even if it be (as in a chain letter) writing something and passing it along. But this is minimal action and is sufficient for initial phases only. More will have to be expected by way of showing commitment to the cause.

The next stage should comprise more demonstrative actions. This would require involving more people, as many as feasible, without causing needlessly bloody clashes. Local issues, without ignoring political questions or demands altogether, are excellent bases for local collective action in both villages and towns.

When this sort of thing begins, we have to replicate both what the pamphleteers did before classical revolutions and what the underground press does in an authoritarian or totalitarian state. (Pakistan not being a technologically-developed society, the possibilities of illegal printing facilities would remain, at best, limited.) Increasing reliance will have to be placed on handwritten or spoken messages for organising an unending series of collective action.

So far, most of this can only be regarded as preliminaries. Not that this would require a long period. So long as it is done systematically, it will not need more than a few months. After that we can move on to the second phase of small-scale but mainly political demonstrations of, say, several hundred people at a time. These need not be announced affairs or in the main squares of big cities. They need to be everywhere. In bigger cities several can take place at approximately the same time in separate parts. But the main thing is that these should be frequent and more or less impromptu-seeming. The security agencies will need to be kept hopping from place to place without warning.

Care needs to be taken that in the initial stages, clashes with police agencies must be avoided, as far as possible. They need not be so rigorously avoided in the second – not to the same degree at any rate. But the proviso applies: while the clashes need not be avoided like a plague, they should not be welcomed or sought. Where and when they do take place, we should give and take a minimum of casualties. Seeing innocent blood being spilled is neither pleasant nor desirable.

I do not doubt that we shall have to begin paying a price from the very first stage of this-none-too-short struggle. And as we progress into the second phase, the price will become heavier and heavier. Arrests, more convictions, more interrogation-centre tortures and, of course, more punishments will be in store.

The people, after a short time and when the movement begins to gather steam, will become more involved and angrily determined to carry on rather than be cowed down. In the initial stages, however, terror, even on a relatively small scale, can possibly invite massive suppression and may lead to depression and discouragement. The leadership has to keep that in mind.

A movement like what we need requires, in the main, a few key elements: a leadership that understands what is happening; can give a lead (if necessary at a price to itself); can communicate suitable messages to the people that enthuses them to act, and finally suggest a simple organisational structure that can progressively coordinate popular action and help maintain two-way communication between the leadership and the people taking action, including a

system of information pooling. Among these obvious requirements, it is difficult to apportion emphases. But special importance attaches to collection, collation and dissemination of information regarding the movement. For, in a closed society, the flow of information is possibly the most crucial factor.

Now, all this may seem a tall order – and it is – but no popular struggle can be conducted without these prerequisites. For a pattern, we have now to look beyond the local tradition. Pakistan has seen two movements: 1968-69 and 1977. These were strongly influenced by the older Gandhian movements in the subcontinent. Insofar as these involved the active participation of a very large number of common people, they do have a relevance. (Besides, the methods evolved in local conditions cannot but be more suitable, other things being equal, than techniques of foreign revolutions and movements.) But other things are no longer true.

What has changed? A radical kind of change has occurred. The British rulers, for all their imperial purposes, had not established an administration that can be compared with a totalitarian state's. As for the two movements in Pakistan, one truth cannot be forgotten: when all is said and done about hidden hands and funds, (both foreign and local), the government machinery resisted popular demands and used normal security forces to suppress as freely as it could (including some use of the armed forces), but it was clear to all that the armed forces would not defend the particular government at heavy cost to themselves or the people. That made all the difference.

Today, let us be quite clear about the officer corps' commitment to the present regime. To think that Gen. Zia has said in the USA that the Pakistan Armed Forces are in power and will remain so, even if he has to yield the top office to another General.

The armed forces are today, backing Zia's illegal government; indeed it is a rule by a junta that comprises all or most senior military officers. Politically, as we have seen, the military are now the most privileged, not to mention exploitative, group and are integrated with and fully supported by all other privileged elites. Martial Law's long continuation signifies just one thing: the social structure and the pattern of distributing national wealth that favours the elites and virtually robs the masses, can now survive only under the brutal dictatorship of the army. That is why all the privileged groups have ganged up and stand behind the army. That is why there are no conspiracies and coup attempts; the regime suits all privileged groups, especially armed forces.

Therefore, the movement against this military regime will have to run the gauntlet of total opposition from the armed forces. The army may go all out to

suppress the movement either initially or in the later phases. We have to steel ourselves for that.

There can be one variation of the army's all-out support for the regime. At the first sign that the movement has taken hold of the popular mind and that it cannot easily be suppressed, the junta may decide to deflect and sabotage the movement by suddenly dumping Gen. Zia-ul Haq, the man, and replace him with another General.

This will be a cheap trick, enabling the regime to continue under another head, and gain time to deflect, if not defuse, the movement. We reject that sort of manoeuvring. We must all the time emphasise that we want an end to the military regime, root and branch, which means eventually pulling down, in as constitutional, orderly and/or political a way, the whole system that exploits and oppresses the people.

It is because of this aim that the armed forces, who head all reactionary and vested interest groups, can be depended upon to do their utmost to resist the movement. They may not flinch from using maximum force and fraud, with which they will begin. The fight can become long and bloody. How long and bloody, no one can say.

Let us be ready for a long, hard and bloody struggle, though hopes of relatively easier sailing have a basis. For the Pakistan army has a low morale. It is difficult to visualise it as behaving like the Iranian armed forces under the Shah, although it is the same sort of privileged group. Maybe its resistance to people after a few initially tough and murderous bouts will either collapse or call forth the requisite response from the people: a true countervailing force of the people that will finally subdue it (with the open or covert help of dissident sections of the armed forces which, after a few such engagements, should generate mutinies).

However, it is futile to speculate upon how precisely the army will behave under certain circumstances. For the practical purpose of progressive political elements, what is important to realise is this: the army will put up a hell of a resistance that will have to be surmounted, meeting brute force with a more intelligent, therefore superior, force. This resolve will be a vital factor in the effectiveness of the struggle.

It is at this point that the question of a model becomes relevant. We have noted the usefulness, indeed the inevitability, of following the traditional sub continental model of popular movement. But the emergent factor of the Pakistan army becoming one of the chief actors on the political stage makes the older techniques inadequate. We have to go beyond purely non-violent constitutional

or semi-constitutional methods of protest to other techniques, although the distaste for violence must constantly inform all levels of the movement.

Since the state apparatus is now increasingly likely to adopt fascist methods of suppression, we too have to look to the European anti-fascist methodology of the 1940s. The Maquis experience and techniques of occupied France would appear to be the most suitable, for we, too, are under occupation by an abhorrent non-popular force.

To sum up, so far, the element of organisation in the first stage may remain minimal and would centre around the active persons and process of spreading messages. But as the movement enters the second stage, requiring more concrete and demonstrative acts by a much larger number of people, a relatively more elaborate organisation would have to emerge. Again, it will have to grow out of the kind of actions that will comprise the movement and be another facet of cooperation among the activists. A new model will have to be evolved in our conditions by learning from European anti-fascist resistance movements. Specifically, an action programme has to be thought of along the following lines:

1. Its objective should be to mobilise the people for the redress of local grievances and attainment of simple welfare amenities. In the process, special attention should be paid to the locally prominent hangers-on of the regime; the "elected" members of local bodies and members of so-called conciliation courts, the police-nominated *zakat* (tithe) committees and other municipal or district council members or office bearers and, of course, members of central or provincial advisory councils. Almost constant popular pressure, in locally as demonstrative a way as possible, has to be brought to bear on them, not that grievances would, thereby, be removed. But it would convincingly show the people that these people and the system they represent is rotten and cannot deliver the goods. Local issues of the poor people, especially in the *katchi abadis* should be pressed: they should ask for elementary civic amenities like local hygiene, a roof over their heads, electricity and water in their localities, if not in their huts, and, at least, proper communal latrines. *One such demonstration roughly each week by say 25 to 35 people should be the minimum.*

This work would require a small local workers'(nucleus) committee of say four or five with only one office bearer, the secretary or convenor.

2. Another major target should be the oppression and malpractices of the police and government officers responsible for social matters

like industrial workers' social security or *zakat* Islamic administration officials. The poorest sections need to be mobilised to ask for food and jobs. Corruption, general oppression and brutality must be traced to each major culprit in the police and *zakat* set-up and exposed by demonstrating crowds of say 20 to 30. This cannot have a fixed periodicity but on each practicable occasion the poorest sections should be organised to go out and show their anger to local notables.

The convenors/secretaries of these workers' committees would constitute a town or city committee. In cities like Karachi and Lahore there should also be ward or zonal committees, which together should eventually constitute the central city committee. These would however be mainly liaison and coordinating committees.

3. Mosque gatherings every Friday must be utilised by these workers' committees to seek mass support by being there, taking their sympathisers with them and raising concrete issues affecting the people living in the locality – making their presence felt and their concerted voice heard. Problems of people living in huts or on pavements are to be raised and demands on decency made in the mosques, especially every Friday. The nucleus group or committee is to take the lead – if necessary, shouting down Mullahs who indulge in empty rhetoric on irrelevant issues; forcing them to relate Islam to the concrete question of the particular area should be the main thrust of these demonstrations. That will, before long, expose the shibboleths of the rightists for what they are – on their own ground.

In this and other activities, each committee member should try to recruit three or four active sympathisers who can in time become activists themselves. The committee membership should not be treated as an elitist privilege to guard against every Tom, Dick and Harry aspiring to become a member; every sympathiser who participates in a few regular activities ought to be treated as a valued member. Every common person who takes part in more than two demos is a true member. Let committees become too big; they should then create specialised sub-committees for specific jobs without creating an elite group(s).

4. Every town or city committee should in the beginning, aim at a relatively central demonstration, say, four to five thousand, every month or so. These would be mainly the people who have already participated in local demonstrations. It is vital that the people once

mobilised for a demonstration ought not to be lost sight of by our activists. These few thousands should become a nucleus of a larger crowd (and not a mob) and lead it into making truly impressive popular demonstrations.

5. A special activity, in continuation of the first stage that should be intensified is plastering the walls with slogans in Urdu and regional languages. The work is to be done by committee members in parties of two or three at night, using thick felt pens or cheap paint and brushes. Each member should engage in it at least two nights a week. All walls would not quickly be done up because the government would keep white-washing them. One person must watch out for the police or other stragglers, who can inform while the work goes on.
6. While a central demonstration may be planned once a month to begin with, care must be taken that it be a highly spontaneous and nimble-footed operation. We should let the police arrest only the minimum number of actual activists. For this purpose, speed should be the watchword. The date, time and place should be known through word of mouth, handbills, rather small chits, and wall paintings, asking people to converge on the date, time and place on their own, separately.

Some of the (handwritten) posters and banners should be, preferably, posted in the area beforehand. The demonstration must be organised speedily and noisily and should be as mobile as feasible, preferably in a crowded marketplace, for maximum effect. When police and security swoop down they should at first seem to ignore them and when they start using preliminary force, the main activists should disappear instantly (mingling with the crowd) while making the people chant slogans, wherever possible.

The main point is: there is no use *offering* yourself as targets of violence and arrest. The effort should be to appear out of the blue and disappear as quickly.

7. It is necessary to emphasise intensifying the effort of informing the people by spreading the news of all these activities, especially of each demonstration. This could be through handbills (if necessary hand-written, cyclostyled, photostated or printed) and word of mouth. Small presses should be located and utilised. But care should be taken, as these are always watched. Foreign

correspondents should, as far as possible, be kept posted with the latest development.

8. After some experience, a squad of highly motivated activists should be created for organising or staging special demonstrations on normal public occasions, cultural or literary get-togethers, religious ceremonies for officially-sponsored functions where large numbers of people gather—for asking pertinent questions, shouting disagreements and giving the alternative point of view, including slogans, on occasion.
9. Special attention should be paid and effort expended to create organisations for mobilising and leading professional bodies of industrial workers, students, teachers, lawyers, journalists, etc. Many of these exist; they need to be vitalised and made vigorously active.
10. Central task forces should be created for the research and writing of books and pamphlets and preparing suitable cassettes for widest dissemination.
11. Special attention has to be given to coining catchy slogans for dissemination. This includes spreading jokes.
12. This is how one hopes to reach the third stage of truly massive demonstrations leading to stoppage of main activities in cities, and even paralysing government activity.
13. A large number of arrests are sure to be made and savage punishments will be meted out. Each arrest must, as far as possible, be made an occasion for a noisy demonstration and news-spreading. Each police or security official must be relentlessly tracked down for a demonstration against him for any misbehavior or torture. Magistrates or officers passing judgements should receive the same attention; demonstrations should especially be led by relatives of the victims.
14. For the rest, this third would be the decisive stage. No cut and dried formula can be given about how they are to be led. My hope is that while the role of the movement's central leadership would be crucial, it would not be the present octogenarians of the MRD. The first and second stages should have succeeded in doing two things: first, the momentum of popular action would begin shaping

the course of events. Secondly, aided by this momentum and indeed as its vehicle, a whole new leadership would have been thrown up by the movement itself.

A precise course of action cannot be laid down by me or anyone for this stage; that would be the work of (i) regular popular action's momentum; (ii) the organisation that emerges from the process; and (iii) the leadership that is shaped by the struggle itself.

The process should be a truly dynamic one.

Appendix

LOST FREEDOMS

(Excerpts from the 1973 Constitution)

FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AND PRINCIPLES OF POLICY

7. In this Part unless the context otherwise requires, "the State" means the Federal Government, Parliament, a Provincial Government, a Provincial Assembly, and such local or other authorities in Pakistan as are by law empowered to impose any tax or cess.

CHAPTER 1. – FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

8.—(1) Any law, or any custom or usage having the force of law, in so far as it is inconsistent with the rights conferred by this Chapter, shall, to the extent of such inconsistency, be void.

(2) The State shall not make any law which takes away or abridges the rights so conferred and any law made in contravention of this clause shall, to the extent of such contravention, be void.

(3) The provisions of this Article shall not apply to -

(a) any law relating to members of the Armed Forces, or of the police or of such other forces as are charged with the maintenance of public order, for the purpose of ensuring the proper discharge of their duties or the maintenance of discipline among them; or

(b) any of the laws specified in the First Schedule as in force immediately before the commencing day; and no such law nor any provision thereof shall be void on the ground that such law or provision is inconsistent with, or repugnant to, any provision of this Chapter.

(4) Notwithstanding anything contained in paragraph (b) of clause (3), within a period of two years from the commencing day, the appropriate Legislature shall bring the laws specified in the First Schedule, not being a law which relates to, or is connected with, economic reforms, into conformity with the rights conferred by this Chapter:

Provided that the appropriate Legislature may by resolution extend the said period of two years by a period not exceeding six months.

Explanation. — If in respect of any law Parliament is the appropriate Legislature, such resolution shall be a resolution of the National Assembly.

(5) The rights conferred by this Chapter shall not be suspended except as expressly provided by the Constitution.

9. No person shall be deprived of life or liberty save in accordance with law.

10.—(1) No person who is arrested shall be detained in custody without being informed, as soon as may be, of the grounds for such arrest, nor shall he be denied the right to consult and be defended by a legal practitioner of his choice.

(2) Every person who is arrested and detained in custody shall be produced before a magistrate within a period of twenty-four hours of such arrest, excluding the time necessary for the journey from the place of arrest to the court of the nearest magistrate, and no such person shall be detained in custody beyond the said period without the authority of a magistrate.

(3) Nothing in clauses (1) and (2) shall apply to any person who is arrested or detained under any law providing for preventive detention.

(4) No law providing for preventive detention shall be made except to deal with persons acting in a manner prejudicial to the integrity, security or defence of Pakistan or any part thereof, or external affairs of Pakistan, or public order, or the maintenance of supplies or services, and no such law shall authorise the detention of a person for a period exceeding one month unless the appropriate Review Board has, after affording him an opportunity of being heard in person, reviewed his case and reported, before the expiration of the said period, that there is, in its opinion, sufficient cause for such detention, and, if the detention is continued after the said period of one month, unless the appropriate Review Board has reviewed his case and reported, before the expiration of each period of three months, that there is, in its opinion, sufficient cause for such detention.

Explanation 1. — In this Article, “the appropriate Review Board” means, —

- (i) in the case of a person detained under a Federal law, a Board appointed by the Chief Justice of Pakistan and consisting of a Chairman and two other persons, each of whom is or has been a Judge of the Supreme Court or a High Court: and
- (ii) in the case of a person detained under a Provincial law, a Board appointed by the Chief Justice of the High Court concerned and

consisting of a Chairman and two other persons, each of whom is or has been a Judge of a High Court.

Explanation II. — The opinion of a Review Board shall be expressed in terms of the views of the majority of its members.

(5) When any person is detained in pursuance of an order made under any law providing for preventive detention, the authority making the order shall, as soon as may be, but not later than one week from such detention, communicate to such person the grounds on which the order has been made, and shall afford him the earliest opportunity of making a representation against the order: Provided that the authority making any such order may refuse to disclose facts which such authority considers it to be against the public interest to disclose.

(6) The authority making the order shall furnish to the appropriate Review Board all documents relevant to the case unless a certificate, signed by a Secretary to the Government concerned, to the effect that it is not in the public interest to furnish any documents, is produced.

(7) Within a period of twenty-four months commencing on the day of his first detention in pursuance of an order made under a law providing for preventive detention, no person shall be detained in pursuance of any such order for more than a total period of eight months in the case of a person detained for acting in a manner prejudicial to public order and twelve months in any other case:

Provided that this clause shall not apply to any person who is employed by, or works for, or acts on instructions received from, the enemy, or who is acting or attempting to act in a manner prejudicial to the sovereignty, security or integrity of Pakistan, or who commits or attempts to commit any act which amounts to an anti-national activity as defined in a Federal law or is a member of any association which has for its objects, or which indulges in, any such anti-national activity.

(8) The appropriate Review Board shall determine the place of detention of the person detained and fix a reasonable subsistence allowance for his family.

(9) Nothing in this Article shall apply to any person who for the time being is an enemy alien.

11.—(1) Slavery is non-existent and forbidden and no law shall permit or facilitate its introduction into Pakistan in any form.

(2) All forms of forced labour and traffic in human beings are prohibited.

(3) No child below the age of fourteen years shall be engaged in any factory or mine or any other hazardous employment.

- (4) Nothing in this Article shall be deemed to affect compulsory service
- (a) by any person undergoing punishment for an offence against any law; or
 - (b) required by any law for public purpose:

Provided that no compulsory service shall be of a cruel nature or incompatible with human dignity.

12. – (1) No law shall authorize the punishment of a person

- (a) for an act or omission that was not punishable by law at the time of the act or omission; or
 - (b) for an offence by a penalty greater than, or of a kind different from, the penalty prescribed by law for that offence at the time the offence was committed.
- (2) Nothing in clause. (1) or in Article 270 shall apply to any law making acts of abrogation or subversion of a Constitution in force in Pakistan at any time since the twenty-third day of March, one thousand nine hundred and fifty-six, an offence.

13. No person

- (a) shall be prosecuted or punished for the same offence more than once; or
- (b) shall, when accused of an offence, be compelled to be a witness against himself.

14. – (1) The dignity of man and, subject to law, the privacy of home, shall be inviolable.

(2) No person shall be subjected to torture for the purpose of extracting evidence.

15. Every citizen shall have the right to remain in, and, subject to any reasonable restriction imposed by law in the public interest, enter and move freely throughout Pakistan and to reside and settle in any part thereof.

16. Every citizen shall have the right to assemble peacefully and without arms, subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the interest of public order.

17.–(1) Every citizen shall have the right to form associations or unions, subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the interest of morality or public order.

(2) Every citizen, not being in the service of Pakistan, shall have the right to form or be a member of a political party. Every political party shall account for the source of its funds in accordance with law.

18. Subject to such qualifications, if any, as may be prescribed by law, every citizen shall have the right to enter upon any lawful profession or occupation, and to conduct any lawful trade or business:

Provided that nothing in this Article shall prevent -

- (a) the regulation of any trade or profession by a licensing system; or
- (b) the regulation of trade, commerce or industry in the interest of free competition therein; or
- (c) the carrying on, by the Federal Government or a Provincial Government, or by a corporation controlled by any such Government, of any trade, business, industry or service, to the exclusion, complete or partial, of other persons.

19. Every citizen shall have the right to freedom of speech and expression, and there shall be freedom of the press, subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the interest of the glory of Islam or the integrity, security or defence of Pakistan or any part thereof, friendly relations with foreign States, public order, decency or morality, or in relation to contempt of court, defamation or incitement to an offence.

20. Subject to law, public order and morality,

- (a) every citizen shall have the right to profess, practise and propagate his religion; and
- (b) every religious denomination and every sect thereof shall have the right to establish, maintain and manage its religious institutions.

21. No person shall be compelled to pay any special tax the proceeds of which are to be spent on the propagation or maintenance of any religion other than his own.

22.—(1) No person attending any educational institution shall be required to receive religious instruction, or take part in any religious ceremony, or attend religious worship, if such instruction, ceremony or worship relates to a religion other than his own.

(2) In respect of any religious institution, there shall be no discrimination against any community in the granting of exemption or concession in relation to taxation.

(3) Subject to law, --

(a) no religious community or denomination shall be prevented from providing religious instruction for pupils of that community or denomination in any educational institution maintained wholly by that community or denomination; and

(b) no citizen shall be denied admission to any educational institution receiving aid from public revenues on the ground only of race, religion, caste or place of birth.

(4) Nothing in this Article shall prevent any public authority from making provision for the advancement of any socially or educationally backward class of citizens.

23. Every citizen shall have the right to acquire, hold and dispose of property in any part of Pakistan, subject to the Constitution and any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the public interest.

24.—(1) No person shall be deprived of his property save in accordance with law.

(2) No property shall be compulsorily acquired or taken possession of save for a public purpose, and save by the authority of law which provides for compensation therefore and either fixes the amount of compensation or specifies the principles on and the manner in which compensation is to be determined and given.

(3) Nothing in this Article shall affect the validity of

- (a) any law permitting the compulsory acquisition or taking possession of any property for preventing danger to life, property or public health; or
 - (b) any law permitting the taking over of any property which has been acquired by, or come into the possession of, any person by any unfair means, or in any manner, contrary to law; or
 - (c) any law relating to the acquisition, administration or disposal of any property which is or is deemed to be enemy property or evacuee property under any law (not being property which has ceased to be evacuee property under any law); or
 - (d) any law providing for the taking over of the management of any property by the State for a limited period, either in the public interest or in order to secure the proper management of the property, or for the benefit of its owner; or
 - (e) any law providing for the acquisition of any class of property for the purpose of
 - (i) providing education and medical aid to all or any specified class of citizens; or
 - (ii) providing housing and public facilities and services such as roads, water supply, sewerage, gas and electric power to all or any specified class of citizens; or
 - (iii) providing maintenance to those who, on account of unemployment, sickness, infirmity or old age, are unable to maintain themselves; or
 - (f) any existing law or any law made in pursuance of Article 253.
- (4) The adequacy or otherwise of any compensation provided for by any such law as is referred to in this Article, or determined in pursuance thereof, shall not be called in question in any court.

25.—(1) All citizens are equal before law and are entitled to equal protection of law.

(2) There shall be no discrimination on the basis of sex alone.

(3) Nothing in this Article shall prevent the State from making any special provision for the protection of women and children.

26.—(1) In respect of access to places of public entertainment or resort, not intended for religious purposes only, there shall be no discrimination against any citizen on the ground only of race, religion, caste, sex, residence or place of birth.
(2) Nothing in clause (1) shall prevent the State from making any special provision for women and children:

27.—(1) No citizen otherwise qualified for appointment in the service of Pakistan shall be discriminated against in respect of any such appointment on the ground only of race, religion, caste, sex, residence or place of birth:

Provided that, for a period not exceeding ten years from the commencing day, posts may be reserved for persons belonging to any class or area to secure their adequate representation in the service of Pakistan:

Provided further that, in the interest of the said service, specified posts or services may be reserved for members of either sex if such posts or services entail the performance of duties and functions which cannot be adequately performed by members of the other sex.

(2) Nothing in clause (1) shall prevent any Provincial Government, or any local or other authority in a Province, from prescribing, in relation to any post or class of service under that Government or authority, conditions as to residence in the Province, for a period not exceeding three years, prior to appointment under that Government or authority.

28. Subject to Article 251 any section of citizens having a distinct language, script or culture shall have the right to preserve and promote the same and subject to law, establish institutions for that purpose.