

Problems of Multi-Ethnic States : A Case Study of the Sindhi Movement in Pakistan

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Udita Chandra—Kumar

**CENTRE FOR SOUTH, CENTRAL, SOUTH-EAST ASIAN
AND SOUTH-WEST PACIFIC STUDIES
SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI—110067. INDIA**

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P R E F A C E

Since its creation, Pakistan has had trouble in integrating the various ethno-linguistic groups that make-up the State. The nationalities question is probably one of the most complex and persistent problems faced by the leaders of this country. Since the disintegration of Pakistan and the establishment of Bangladesh, the people of Pakistan have had to question the very basic concept that led to the creation of Pakistan - the "Two-Nation Theory". Can religion alone be sufficient ground for nationality? Considering the volatile inter-ethnic relations in Pakistan, and the fragile relationship between the State and the ethnic groups within Pakistan, one is forced to ask if Pakistan can survive at all. The nationality question in the country, threatens the very existence of Pakistan.

This dissertation deals with one of the ethnic groups of Pakistan - the Sindhis. The present study "Problems of Multi-ethnic States : A Case Study of the Sindhi Movement in Pakistan", examines the genesis and development of the Sindhi ethnic movement - the possible causes for the assertion of Sindhi ethnicity and the course that the movement is taking.

The dissertation consists of four Chapters. The first Chapter is an attempt to introduce the subject with a broad theoretical background. No attempt has been made to discuss the various theories of nationalism or nationality. Following largely, definitions from

Encyclopaedias and Dictionaries, only a 'working' definition has been arrived at. The Chapter deals with the right of self-determination of 'nations', as this is the point at which a government finds itself in a real crisis. All ethnic groups/nations have the potential to assert this right and this can create a dilemma for the State. The definitions used in this study are merely working definitions, as a discussion of the concepts of nation, nationality, self-determination and such related concepts would involve a debate on the topic, as no exact definitions are possible. This would be beyond the scope of the present study. This dissertation only defines these concepts in the context of the problems arising from them, in multi-ethnic states. The second Chapter traces the ethnic history of the Sindhis and shows how the Sindhi nationality evolved over the years. The third Chapter deals with the grievances of the Sindhis, their demands and the course that the movement is taking. In the concluding Chapter, an attempt has been made to analyse the current situation in Sind, in the context of the problem as common to multi-ethnic Third World states; as well as, in the context of the nationalities question of Pakistan.

The views of the Sindhis presented in the present study, are the views as articulated by Sindhi leaders and political organisations. The information available on the topic is still, very limited.

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Most of the books related to the topic of the Sindhi ethnic movement are available only in Sindhi, and so, are inaccessible. Since the movement in Sind is still at the early stages (as compared with the Baluchi and Pakhtun movements), not much material is available on it. Moreover, information on the economy of the provinces of Pakistan is outdated (at least, in the case of Sind). Most books and reports on the economy of Pakistan do not discuss the economies of each province. Also, available figures are mostly of the 1972 census. Use of 1972 figures in 1988 may prove to be meaningless, as the economic situation could have changed a lot in the intervening years.

However, despite these limitations, an attempt has been made to study the Sindhi ethnic movement; to analyse the causes for the birth and growth of this movement and also, the cause and the historical roots of the Sindhi ethnic consciousness, which has resulted in the present conflict.

I would, at this point like to express my gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Kalim Bahadur, for all his cooperation, help and invaluable guidance, and for the pains he has taken in correcting the final draft.

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Udita Chandra-Kumar
(UDITA CHANDRA-KUMAR)

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CHAPTER I - INTRODUCTION

A major political trend in the second half of the twentieth century has been in the context of multi-ethnic States. A number of such States are being faced with demands emanating from minorities within their societies. Demands have often been, in the initial stages, demands for greater recognition, representation and equality, but have, in a large number of cases, erupted into demands for confederation, greater autonomy and in some cases, even into demands for secession. Such demands have been articulated on grounds of the right of nationalities to "self-determination", which is the political belief that some group of people represents a natural community which should live under the political system and be independent of others. Such groups are called 'nationalities'/'nations'.

'Nation' is a central political concept of recent times. In the prevailing usage, it means either a State, its inhabitants, or, a human group bound together by common solidarity - a group whose members place loyalty to a group as a whole, over any, conflicting loyalties. The 'Dictionary of Politics'¹ gives a working definition of 'nation', since no obvious technical definition exists. It is defined as "a body of people who see part, at least, of their identity in terms of a single communal identity with some considerable historical continuity of Union, with major elements of common culture, and with a sense of geographical location, at

1 David Robertson, Dictionary of Politics (Suffolk, 1986), p.27.

least, for a good part of those who make up the nation". The problem of definition lies in the way in which all of these criteria may be raised in any set of examples. There is obviously a problem of definition, but attempts at defining the concept have been made.

John Stuart Mill has defined the concept of nationhood as, "a portion of mankind may be said to constitute a nationality, if they are united among themselves by common sympathies which do not exist between them and any others, which make them cooperate with each other more willingly than with other people, a desire to be under the same government, and a desire that it should be government by themselves, or a portion of themselves exclusively".²

Stalin has defined nation as "a historically evolved, stable, community of language, territory, economic life and psychological makeup manifested in a community of culture".

Definitions of nationhood emphasise either objective or subjective characteristics. The former (objective) characteristics include factors such as geography, history, economic structure; while, the subjective characteristics include factors such as consciousness, loyalty and will. Though the objective factors are likely to promote feelings of nationality, they are not among the defining characteristics of a nation. The Swiss are a nation despite three or four languages being spoken in the country. Israel is also a nation though Jewish communities have had very

2 J.S. Mill, "Representative Government", in A.C. Kapur, Principles of Political Science (New Delhi, 1977), p.65.

distinctive histories; also, the Poles remained a nation through a century and a half of partition. Thus, it can be seen that the concept of nationality/nationhood is difficult to define.

Despite this problem of defining nationhood, the concept of 'nation-State' is in existence. Nation-State describes a context in which the whole of a geographical area that is the homeland for people who identify themselves as a community due to shared culture, history and probably, language and ethnic culture, is governed by one political system. Important Nation-States like Italy and Germany, that clearly possessed characteristics of nationhood, only united into Nation-States late in the nineteenth Century. Though, earlier, the Greek 'nation'/'nationality' did exist, in classical Greece, only city-States existed, there was no Greek Nation-State. The idea of the 'Nation-State' gained currency only after the creation of the German and Italian nation-States. Even today, 'national' identity remains a powerful political call.

In recent times, in addition to the concept of nationality, there has arisen the concept of 'ethnicity'. Though originally, the term 'ethnic' denoted race, the present/current definitions of ethnicity refer to a rather complex combination of racial, cultural and historical characteristics, by which societies are sometimes divided into separate political families.

The Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences defines an ethnic community as a "group bound together by common ties of race, nationality, culture, not living within an

alien civilization but remaining distinct, culturally.”
The group may occupy a position of self-sufficient isolation or may have extensive dealings with the surrounding population, while retaining its separate identity. Such communities may vary according to their origin, cohesive factors, attitudes of the other communities/community, and nature of civilization of which they are a part. They try to survive by reason of self-consciousness produced by divergence and through the tenacity of social institutions. Ethnic groups sometimes develop an ethnocentric attitude - i.e. "a view of things in which one's own group is the centre of everything and all others are scaled and rated with reference to it".³ Emotionally, it finds expression in a sympathetic awareness and approval of one's fellows and their ways, and in a feeling of fear, suspicion and contempt towards outsiders and their ways. Ethnocentrism is not confined to tribes and nations, but manifests itself in social groups of all kinds and assumes diverse and developed forms such as nationalism, patriotism, chauvinism, family pride, class consciousness, sectionalism, religious interference and race prejudice. By focusing attention on cultural differences, ethnocentrism strengthens and intensifies the folkways of a people. It is a factor securing loyalty to code and it promotes group cohesion and thus possesses survival value. Ethnocentrism also helps maintain discipline and morals. Thus, it is always accentuated when groups come into conflict.

3 W.C. Sumner, in David L. Sills, ed., International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences Vol.II (USA, 1968), p.67

In the second half of the twentieth century, the ethnic factor has become an important cause of social conflicts. Multi-ethnic States are faced with the continued assertion of ethnic pluralism. Ethnic conflicts have become a reality which have to be coped with and managed, but do not seem to be resolved once and for all.

The conflicts have been varied in their scope, basis and demands. Many terms have been used to denote conflicts between groups within States, or between a group within a State and the State itself. They have been called ethnic conflicts, problems of nationalities, or even sub-nationalism'. The difference between an ethnic group and a nationality seems to be very little in the given context of this dissertation. As stated earlier in the Chapter, the subjective characteristics of nationality are more likely to define a nation than the objective characteristics. The latter are likely to promote feelings of nationality, but are not among the defining characteristics of a nation. Thus, a nationality would be defined as "any group having the consciousness and will of being or/and to continue to be a people united under a common single sovereign and recognising common interests."⁴ An ethnic group may under certain circumstances develop this consciousness, and so, by definition it constitutes a 'nationality'/'nation'.

4 Roger Scotan, Dictionary of Political Thought (London, 1982), p.312.

Related to the concept of nationality and Nation-State, is the concept of "self-determination". The concept was brought to explicit formulation by President Woodrow Wilson and in the course of World War I, it became one of the fundamental principles of international society. It became a guideline for reshaping of States in the peacemaking that followed the war.

In the post World War II period, the focus of self-determination shifted from Europe to Asia, Middle-East and Africa. The concept came to become a weapon aimed at the imperial powers, themselves, and gradually, a host of new countries joined the international family.)

In the post World War II period, self-determination became less of a guiding principle since the Soviet Union's relations with Eastern Europe had become one of "absorption and domination" and for the Western powers, self-determination would mean "self-destruction of colonies".⁵ However, the Charter of the United Nations (UN) figures the concept, giving the right of self-determination to all "peoples".⁶ Also the General Assembly of the UN, in 1952 adopted a "Covenant of Human Rights", which includes an article that reads "all peoples shall have the right to self-determination".

The principle of self-determination is derived from a familiar set of doctrines and the apparent simplicity

5 Rupert Emerson, From Empire to Nation (Calcutta, 1970), p. 280

6 Article 1 (55) of the United Nations Charter speaks of "respect for the principle of equal rights and the self-determination of peoples".

of the concept contains complications. Though ethnic groups have existed throughout recorded history, the idea of self-determination in the context of creating new States, emerged only in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Before the idea of self-determination could be evolved, it was necessary for the ethnic group to develop a self-awareness. As Ernest Barker has said, "The self-consciousness of nations is a product of the nineteenth century. Nations were already there, they had indeed been there for centuries. But it is not the things which are simply 'there' that matter in human life. "What really and finally matters is the thing that is apprehended as an idea, and as an idea is, is vested with emotion until it becomes a cause and a spring of action..... A nation must be an idea as well as a fact before it can become a dynamic force".⁷

{ Ethnic consciousness presupposes an awareness of other groups. The sense of uniqueness requires a referent. It is an awareness that some people as a group share a multiplicity of customs, attitudes, beliefs, not shared by others, there is, therefore, a psychological bond between them, which is characterised by a feeling of 'sameness' and 'oneness', a sense of kinship. As against members of all other ethnic groups ("them"), this group is united psychologically as a collective "us".

Thus, knowledge of aliens and foreigners is indispensable to the birth of national consciousness:

7 Ernest Barker, National Character and the Factors in its Formation (London, 1927) p.173.

With a rapid spread of education, means of transport and communication, cultural isolation has become a thing of the past. And, as means of communication spread, there is a growing consciousness among greater numbers of ethnic groups.)

However, just a consciousness of having a distinct culture or ethnic identity is not sufficient for the birth of the idea of self-determination. For example, in Europe, ethnic groups had a consciousness of their separate identity much before ethnicity came to be related to political legitimacy. The radical transformation came with the birth of the idea of government by "consent" and popular sovereignty. The assumption made is that "man is a national animal and the government to which he will give his consent is one representing his own nation".⁸ This was a recognition of the natural law which entitles nations to possess their own States, and as the other side of the coin, renders illegitimate states with non-national bases. The original claim that individuals must consent to, or contractually establish the governments ruling them, is thus transmitted into the natural right of nations to determine their own Statehood.

In its postulation of a necessary linkage between political organisation and ethnic identity, the concept of self-determination of nations contains the seeds of a radical redrawing of today's political map. National self-determination maintains that it is "the right of a

⁸ Rupert Emerson, n.5, p.278.

group of people who consider themselves separate and distinct from others to determine for themselves the State in which they will live and the form of government it will have".⁹ In a world consisting of thousands of distinct ethnic groups and only some one hundred and thirty-five States, the revolutionary potential inherent in self-determination is self-evident. All but 14 of today's States (Austria, Denmark, Japan, West and East Germany, Iceland, Ireland, North and South Korea, Lesotho, Luxemburg, Netherlands, Norway and Portugal) contain, at least, one significant minority and half of the 14 exceptions are characterised by the so-called irredentist situation, in which the dominant ethnic group extends beyond one's State borders.

The demise of colonialism can also be credited to the concept of self-determination. The proposition that a people should not be ruled by those deemed to be aliens, played a vital role in the post World War II emancipation of overseas colonies from European rule. Despite the fact that the liberation of these countries took place under the banner of self-determination, all but handful of these States are ethnically heterogeneous. These multi-ethnic successor States are now, in turn increasingly threatened with demands for self-determination. These new states are not the only ones threatened by ethnic restiveness within their borders. "Among the States currently troubled by internal discord on ethnic diversity

9 Jack Plano and Ray Olton, The International Relations Dictionary (New York, 1969), p.121.

are Albania, Algeria, Belgium, Burma, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Ceylon, Chad, China, Congo, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, France, Greece, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Italy, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Guyana, Kenya, Laos, Liberia, Malagasy, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Mongolia, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Phillipines, Romania, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Spain, USSR, Sudan, Taiwan, Thailand, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, UK, US, Vietnam, Yugoslavia, Zaire and Zambia."¹⁰

When put to practical application, in the present world, in principle, none can oppose what has come to be the almost self-evident right to peoples to dispose of their own destinies, but it is unfortunately equally impossible to articulate this concept in terms that can make it meaningfully applicable to reality. Who is to decide that a nation 'may', or what nations are and when and how they may assert themselves?

If the issue is put in its most drastic terms, to accept the right of self-determination in blanket fashion is to endow social entities which cannot be identified in advance with the right to revolution against the constituted authority of the State, and even to obligate the State to the demands of the revolutionaries. But what is a nation, is in itself a complicated question. Moreover, the Charter of the UN further tangles the problem by endorsing the right of self-determination of "peoples". How are the people to whom the principle applies to be defined? As Jennings has said,

¹⁰ Walker Connor, "Politics of Ethnonationalism" Journal of International Affairs, Vol. 27(1973), pp.1-21.

"on the surface it seemed reasonable - let the people decide. It was in fact ridiculous because the people cannot decide until somebody decides who the people are".¹¹

The questions that arise are innumerable. Does the principle apply to only majorities or to minorities, too? If a majority decides one way today, does it, or a segment of it, have a right to decide otherwise at a later date? Who can speak for the people in order to set the process in motion and under what circumstances and by what methods may they press their case? What degree of majority and political experience is needed to qualify a people to make an informed and responsible choice and to maintain the independence for which it may opt?

Seeing the present day world, with secessionist movements in a number of States, it is obvious that peoples and even nations are uncertain quantities, which from time to time, assert themselves with irresistible force, but which cannot be known in advance with any assurance. When a group of people asserts the right of self-determination, it is inevitably exercising a revolutionary right. At its most extreme version the right of self-determination could mean the right of any group of disaffected people to break away at their pleasure from the State to which they presently belong and establish a new State closer to their heart's desire. Even though it is obvious that this deduction cannot find acceptance, the problem still remains as to

11 Sir Ivor Jennings, "The Approach to Self-Government", in Rupert Emerson, n.5, p.298.

whether, and how, the right can be incorporated in any reasonably orderly and predictable scheme of things, within an acceptable framework of law.

Self-determination recognises the principle that nation and state should coincide. But facts are that the State structure derived from the past only occasionally and accidentally coincided with the national make up of the world. To bring the States into line with man's new found national aspirations requires a major act of political reconstruction, which would involve a nullifying of the established legality of States and Governments.

Despite, the mass appeal of the principle of self-determination and the general acceptance of the idea, there is a lack of successful application of the concept. Only ten percent of States, today, are essentially homogeneous. Nation State is a misnomer. Ethnic pluralism rather than homogeneity is the norm. Most state structures take little cognisance of ethnic aspirations, though, some States have made provision for safeguarding the cultural rights of their ethnic minorities. Thus many states are faced with demands for ethnic separatism.

'Ethnic separatism' is based on cultural differences and a sense of cultural distinctiveness. Ethnic movements make their claims by virtue of an alleged community of culture in which members are both united with each other and differentiated from others by the possession of that culture. They are different not only

from their rulers but also from their neighbours in one or more significant cultural dimensions".¹² It is by virtue of this real or alleged cultural individuality that ethnic movements claim a communal solidarity and recognition of political demands. In these cases, political separatism is based upon the ideology of cultural diversity and the right of cultural self-determination. Ethnic separatism is then based upon the reality or myth of unique cultural ties which serves to demarcate a population from rulers and neighbours. Thus, separatism becomes, not only an end in itself, but also, a means to protect the cultural identity formed by these ties. Uniqueness of each ethnic community demands political separation, so it can run its own affairs according to the inner laws of the cultural community, uncontaminated by external influences.)

In the twentieth century, inter-ethnic conflicts have become intense and endemic. Also, along with ethnic conflict and rivalry, there has been a rise in ethnic movements of all kinds. In modern times, ethnic communities have adopted aggressive, if not, expansionist postures, fired by an ideology that emphasizes cultural solidarity and autonomy. Ethnic groups are seeking to ensure that their political demands are met by the state within which historical accident has incorporated them, or failing that, to break away and set up their own state.

12 Anthony D. Smith, The Ethnic Revival (New York, 1985), p.13.

13 Ibid, p.15.

However, there are innumerable problems with regard to sub-dividing the globe into nation - states - the sheer number of groups and sub-groups is, in itself, daunting; some of these groups are quite tiny and distinction between groups and sub-groups is quite difficult. Also, there is a problem in uniting groups existing across borders.

In addition to this, it is often presumed that self-determination cannot be allowed to disrupt the sovereign territory of the state or the political and geographical integrity of the sovereign territory, no matter how acquired, and no matter how diverse the people who occupy it. "Against the right of self-determination, the authorities raise the rights and duty to preserve union, to stamp out rebellion, to insure domestic tranquility and to defend the state's political and territorial integrity. What is self-evident to those desiring separatism, is treason to those in authority".¹⁴ There is thus a clash of rights - the "State has an indisputable prerogative and duty to defend its own existence, and the nation comes likewise, endowed with a right to overthrow the state".¹⁵ There thus, arises a dilemma of trying to reconcile two contradictory concepts of self-determination of nations; and, respect for the integrity of multi-ethnic states.

The problem is especially acute and complicated in the Third World, where geographical borders rarely seem to correspond to national boundaries. The geographical

14 Walker Cannon, n.10, p.12.

15 Rupert Emerson, n.5, p.299.

definition of countries in the Third World owes, often, far more to European empire-builders than to ethnic homogeneity. "Colonial powers have established a 'grid' of artificially demarcated territories, each, with its own administrative institutions."¹⁶ These multi-ethnic states face a constant threat of balkanization owing to the fragility and artificiality of state borders. Assimilation of, or integration of the various ethnic groups existing within the territories of a newly demarcated state, becomes a major task for the leaders of these newly emergent states.

In the third world, the problem of state boundaries not coinciding with limits of national self-consciousness, leaving within states, ethnic minorities that do not feel the same national allegiance and excluding national groups, beyond borders that do, is further compounded by conflicts among ethnic groups within the state over power and resource distribution.

In the Third World, in the post-independence era, ethnic groups within States are emerging as competitors for scarce resources - economic, social and political. In the face of such competition, group loyalties become more cohesive and people unite on the basis of race, language, religion or caste, or any other cohesive bond that excludes a part of society. Ethnic communities have asserted themselves and articulated their grievances in 'sons of the soil' movements, demands for autonomy,

16 Anthony D. Smith, n.12, p.136.

confederation or even secession. In some cases, the demands may initially be articulated for redressal of economic grievances, but the momentum gathered may lead to the demands becoming stronger and have often erupted into demands for secession.

The problem of nation-building in the Third World is thus, two dimensional - one is the economic problem of resource distribution among groups within the State and the other is the problem of building up the sentiment of nationalism within the geographical boundaries of the State. The disparity between claims to nationhood and political realities in 'new' nations is one of the most visible problems of the present century. Political instability, military coups, sporadic guerrilla warfare and subversion from outside are so many facets or consequences of the central problem.

Given the situation in the Third World today, (existence of multi-ethnic States), the conventional search for determinants of nationality in history, geography, language and popular will, has posed as many logical problems as it has resolved. In recent times, a more hopeful approach has been followed which connects the phenomenon of the nation with such processes as 'modernization' and 'social communication'.

An important exponent of the more recent definition of nationhood is Karl Deutsch, whose major premise is that nationality is not inborn, but a process of social learning and habit forming. Early nationalists/ leaders of an emergent nation often assume the existence

of a nation before it is created (e.g. Jinnah for Pakistan) nationalism has thus, often preceded the emergence of a nation or its ascent towards more perfect nationhood. Yet, the early nationalist will, in all sincerity, see in his programme an effect rather than the cause of the existence of his nation. This has led to problems of nation-building. The concept of nation-building is of crucial importance to the Third World where consciously, policies have to be adopted to encourage or accelerate the process of development.

According to the Karl Deutsch,¹⁷ people speaking similar dialects and closely connected by geography, economic life and culture, developed a latent unity or predisposition to nationhood and the combined process of social mobilisation and assimilation eventually turned them into consolidated peoples and nations.

The more gradually the process of social mobilisation occurs, the more time there is for social and national assimilation to work. In the Third World, the break up of old colonial empires has been particularly fast and the rise of unassimilated populations particularly strong. When all development has to be squeezed into the lifetime of one or two generations, the chances for assimilation to work, are much smaller. The likelihood is greater that people will be precipitated into politics with their old languages, outlook on the world, tribal loyalties still largely unchanged; and, it becomes far more difficult to have them think of themselves as members of one new nation.

17 Karl Deutsch, Nationalism and its Alternatives (New York, 1969). p.67.

In the South Asian countries, ethnic groups have, since independence, increasingly organised themselves and articulated their demands. Ethnic groups exist across boundaries while groups that have little in common are bound together under one government. Interestingly enough, however, ethnic demands and competition evolve in some groups and not in others. Some groups become progressively more demanding competitive and conflictual. South Asia has, in the recent past, witnessed a growing number of separatist movements.

This crisis is clearly manifested in a multi-ethnic state like Pakistan. A major threat to the stability of Pakistan has been from internal violence along ethnic identities. The Punjabis, Bengalis (pre-1971), Sindhis, Baluch and Pakhtuns constitute ethnic identities in Pakistani society. Each of the Pakistani provinces represents a distinct nationality, which had some sort of sovereign state of its own before the British conquest. At the time of independence, the common factor on which basis these provinces were brought together to form a new State, was religion. Having had no previous history of coexisting as one State, these provinces now had to be welded together to create a nation.

Since independence, demands along ethnic lines have continuously been articulated in Pakistan. In 1971, the Eastern Wing of Pakistan seceded to form Bangladesh - on grounds of Bengalis being a distinct nationality. Though, ethnic demands have been voiced widely, in Pakistan, this dissertation deals with the case of one province - Sind.

Sind has, in the past, had a sovereign State of its own. However, at the time of independence, Sindhi leaders opted to join Pakistan. Today, there is a complicated and widespread ethnic conflict and movement in Sind. The demands of the Sindhis range from demands for better opportunities to demands for a separate state. Also, there is a conflict between the Sindhis and the 'Muhajirs' (refugees from India at the time of independence), as well as a conflict between the 'old' Sindhis and 'new' Sindhis. This dissertation would attempt to study the situation in Sind, its historical background, as well as the present status. For Pakistan (as for any other country in a similar situation) it is extremely important that the nationality question be resolved. The Sindhis, Baluch and Pakhtuns are all making demands along ethnic lines. Pakistan has already had the experience of one province seceding (East Pakistan). If Pakistan is to survive as a State, the nationalities question needs to be resolved.

CHAPTER II

SINDHI ETHNICITY

Pakistan, literally meaning 'Land of the Pure' is a predominantly Muslim State in the South Asian region. Carved out of the Muslim majority states of British India, Pakistan came into existence in August, 1947. The demand for a separate state for the Indian Muslims was first proposed by the poet-philosopher Mohammed Iqbal, in his Presidential Address at the Annual Session of the All India Muslim League in 1930, at Allahabad. Iqbal, speaking on the future course of Muslim politics in India, observed:

"I would like to see the Punjab, NWFP, Sind and Baluchistan amalgamated into a single state. Self-government within the British Empire, or without, the British Empire, the formation of a consolidated North West Indian Muslim State appears to me to be the final destiny of the Muslims at least of North West India".¹

However, it took a decade before the concept of a Muslim State was formally articulated as a specific political demand of the Muslim League in the form of the Lahore Resolution at the Annual Session of the League on March 23, 1940, under the leadership of

1 Jamil-ul-din Ahmad, Historic Documents of the Muslim Freedom Movement (Lahore, 1970), p.121-137.

Mohammed Ali Jinnah. The Lahore Resolution, also known as the Pakistan Resolution stated:²

TH-34464
"Resolved, that it is a considered view of this session of the All India Muslim League that no constitutional plan would be workable in this country or acceptable to the Muslims unless it is designed to follow basic principles, viz., that geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted, with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary that the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority as in the North-Western and Eastern Zones of India should be grouped to constitute 'Independent States' in which the constituent units should be autonomous and sovereign".

The demand for a separate state for Muslims was based on the "Two Nations Theory" which ^{was} elaborated into political and legal terminology by Jinnah as a counter argument to the view of the Indian National Congress which believed that all Indians, irrespective of religion, race, language and caste, constituted a single political nationality.

Between 1940 and 1947, various federal schemes were considered for the setting up of an independent government of India. However, none of the schemes could

2 Pakistan Resolution, in, Manzooruddin Ahmad, ed., Contemporary Pakistan: Politics, Economy and Society (Durham, North Carolina, 1980), p.5.

satisfy both the Congress and the League. Consequently, on the eve of partition, an interim government was set up, composed of leaders of the Congress and the League. However, this scheme could not prove successful and finally, under the Mountbatten Plan, India was partitioned into two sovereign states of India and Pakistan. Partition took place in the wake of widespread communal riots leading to mass movement of populations from India to Pakistan and vice versa. Thus, Pakistan came into existence as an independent Muslim State on August 14, 1947. The Government of India Act of 1935, with necessary modifications together with the Independence Act of India, were adopted as the interim constitution of Pakistan. Jinnah was sworn in as the first Governor General and Liaquat Ali Khan as the first Prime Minister. The Members of the Muslim League, who were elected members of the Constituent Assembly in the 1946 General Elections were organised into the First Constituent Assembly of Pakistan. In accordance with the Interim Constitution, a system of federal parliamentary government was organized with its (Federal) capital at Karachi (Sind).

The State of Pakistan came to be constituted of four distinct groups in the North West of India, while the Eastern Wing of Pakistan, consisting mainly of one ethnic group, was more homogeneous. In the Western Wing, the Punjabis, Sindhis, Baluch and Pakhtuns were brought together, while the Eastern Wing was composed

mainly of the Bengalis. The homogeneous (more or less) eastern wing could not be integrated with the Western Wing and it finally seceded from Pakistan in 1971 to form the state of Bangladesh.

The Western Wing, however, continues to exist as a grouping of the four distinct ethno-linguistic groups. Despite the past forty years of independence and existence as one political unit, the four main ethnic groups of Pakistan still perceive themselves as having distinct identities of their own. Ethnic movements and conflicts have been occurring on the basis of claims of ethnic groups of being separate nationalities. In the nineteen-forties, Islamic nationalism had been the predominant sentiment, uniting the Muslim masses of the sub-continent. However, today, this Islamic identity has been overridden by ethnic identities, that are claiming their individual nationalism as grounds for setting up separate states. The Punjabis, Sindhis, Baluch and Pakhtun peoples have evolved over years of history and thus, today, claim their past as grounds for special rights or in some cases independent existence.

Ethnic movements have been, continuously, in existence in Baluchistan and the North-West Frontier Province. In recent years, Sind, too, has seen the genesis and development of an ethnic movement in the province. It has been claimed by Sindhi leaders that Sind is a separate nation/ethnic group and as such, should have the right to shape its own destiny.

Sind has existed as a separate entity from ancient times. The Aryans called the whole of present-day Pakistan, Kashmir and East Afghanistan 'Sapt-Sindhu' - the land of seven rivers. In the Rigveda it is referred to as 'Sapta-Sindhwa', whereas India is named Bharat Varta (the land of the sons of Bharat, the legendary Emperor).³ Thus, at the time of the Aryans, itself there were two distinct countries, Bharat Varta and Sapt Sindhwa. The Assyrians in the seventh century BC knew the North-Western part of the sub-continent as Sinda.⁴ However, over the years, when India began to be called 'Hind' by Persians and Arabs, and 'Ind' by Greeks and Romans, the local people continued to call their land Sind. This distinction continued for centuries. Arab geographers, historians, and travellers also called the entire area from the Arabian sea to the Kashmir mountains, Sind. As such, there were always two countries on the sub-continent - Sind and Hind.

The ethnic name of the Sindhi nationality is related to the Sanskrit 'Sindhu' i.e. 'River'. Used as a proper noun, the word meant the Indus river. 'Sindhu' literally meant an ocean, or a vast collection of water.⁵

3 D.L. Basham, The Wonder That Was India (New Delhi, 1967), p.1.

4 Yu. V. Gankovsky, The Peoples of Pakistan: An Ethnic History (Moscow, 1971), p. 15.

5 Imperial Gazetteer of India, Vol. XXII p. 289, in Gankovsky, n.4, p.20.

In antiquity, 'Sindhu' covered the territory of the lower part of the Indus valley. Originally, the country, Sindhu, was probably meant to include the lands on the right bank of the Indus in the present-day upper(northern) Sind and the Southern Punjab to the West of the country, Sauvira. It was probably, only in the First Century AD that Sindhu came to include also, the **delta** of the Indus.

Archaeological evidence shows that man inhabited the territory to the north-western part of the **I**ndo-Pakistan sub-continent, "as early as the close of the first inter-glacial period".⁶ However, evidence regarding the earliest settlers in the area is not sufficient to trace their ethnic history. Attempts to reconstruct the ethnic history of the area, begin at the dawn of the third millenium B.C., when the first State formations arose in the valleys of the Indus and its tributaries. This was one of the oldest human civilizations -the Indus Valley Civilization/Harrappan Civilization. The Harrapan Civilization occupied a vast territory stretching from the foothills of the Siwaliks to the Tapti River in the South and from Quetta in the West to Bikaner in Rajasthan and Alamgirpur in the Upper Ganga-Jamuna Doab. The civilization was not uniform or stagnant, although it had a close-knit unity. Local cultural differences and peculiarities existed.⁷

6 Gankovsky, n.4, p. 23.

7 K.M. Puri, "Lothal: An Indus Valley site in Saurashtra" p. 51-71; B.B. Lal, "Anew Indus Valley Provincial Capital", in, Gankovsky, n.4, p.29, are quoted by Gankovsky, in support of this opinion.

The origin of the civilization has long been disputed. Various scholars argued that it was not an indigenous one, but had been brought to the Indus Valley by invaders from outside. The sources of the civilization have been traced to Indo-European people, as well as to Aryan tribes who penetrated into the Indus Valley in ancient times. It has even been called an eastern branch, or a provincial variant of the Sumerian Culture.

The ethnic affiliation of the makers of Harappan Culture is still in dispute. The only fact that seems clear is that as late as the Fourth to the Third millennia BC, the population of the Indus Valley was fairly uneven. Scholars claim the existence of Southern Europoid, Proto-Australoid as well as Mongoloids. This indicates that tribes of different origin made up the nationality that created the Indus Valley Civilization. The language spoken by the people, has long, been presumed to belong to the Dravidian group. This is done on the basis of indisputable relationships between the Dravidian languages and those of ancient Western Asia. Thus, the conclusion is that, in antiquity, there must have been territorial contact between speakers of these languages.

The next known inhabitants of the Indus Valley region were the Indo-Aryans. It has often been stated that the Aryans had destroyed the Harappan Civilization and had drastically changed the ethnical map of the sub-continent, overnight. However, studies in archaeology show that the urban centres of the Indus Valley did not fall

all at once. A number of cases of continuity are found between the Harappan culture and that of the tribes that replaced it. This shows that the coming of the Aryans did not always take the form of military inroads, in which the original inhabitants were driven out.⁸ Moreover, the social organization of the Rig Vedic Aryans does not show the level of social and military organization and unity of will, and action, required to invade the vast territory strewn with populous and well fortified cities. It is more likely that there were successive waves of Indo-European invaders into the north-western part of the sub-continent, and the process began in the Second millenium BC and lasted for about a millenium.

A likely inlet through which proto-Indo-Aryan tribes made their way into the Indus Valley was across South West and South Afghanistan - where the Bolan Pass admitted them to Upper Sind and the Gomal Pass and the Khyber Pass, into the Punjab. As the proto-Indo-Aryan tribes moved eastwards, their relationship with the kindred proto-Iranian tribes ^{to a} came ~~to a~~ ^{stop}. The Indo-Iranian community gradually disintegrated and independent Iranian and Indo-Aryan groups of the Indo-European languages came into their own.

Apart from the armed conflicts between the newcomers and the indigenous population, there were also peaceful contacts between them. In such a situation,

⁸ S. Pignot, "Prehistoric India", p.223, in, Gankovsky, p.4, p.43.

while some groups of local population kept their own forms of organization, others entered into the tribal organization of the Aryans. The result of the diverse social, cultural-historical contacts between Aryan tribes and the local pre-Indo-European population was that a new Indo-Aryan ethnic community began to arise in the Central areas of the northern part of the Indian sub-continent in the second half of the second millenium BC - a process completed by the first millenium BC. The formation of ^{the} Indo-Aryan ethnic community smoothed out the differences between the components that comprised it.

In the ethno-linguistic sphere, the establishment of the Indo-Aryan ethnic community manifested itself in the rise of a number of kindred Indo-Aryan dialects, which ousted the local languages of the indigenous populations. This totality of dialects was the "stem-language" from which the Indo-Aryan languages of today, grew.

Though there is a lack of sufficient source material regarding the ethnogenetic processes underway in the first half of the first millenium BC, it has however, been established that this period is characterized by major shifts in the ethnogenesis of the people of this area.⁹ Some Indo-Aryan nationalities and tribes arose as a result of a process of synthesis of the local pre-Indo-European and Indo-Aryan elements. Each group of tribes and nationalities evolved as a result of a prolonged

⁹ Gankovsky, n.4, p.57.

co-habitation of a vast and relatively enclosed geographical region. Genetic ties and intercourse contributed to the growth of cultural and linguistic unity among the nationalities and tribes comprising these groups.

Ancient Indian sources ¹⁰ dating from the first millennium BC, give evidence of the existence of a few dozen political units - "Janapads" existing on the northern part of the sub-continent. The population of each 'Janapad' possessed a distinct territorial and cultural unity, which manifested itself in the customs, patterns of behaviour and religious beliefs associated with the cult of local deities. The population of each 'janapad' also had its own language or dialect. Thus, by the middle of the first millennium BC, a group of tribes and nationalities, speaking hindered dialects of north-western Prakrit, emerged in the north-western part of India.

A major influence on the ethnogenesis of the people of the north-western part of the Indian sub-continent was the coming of invaders. The first invasion was by Alexander, who reached the borders of India in the spring of 327 BC. It took Alexander's army two more years to overrun the territory from the Indus basin to the banks of the Beas. The victorious invader divided his territories in India into three 'Satrapies' and made them part of his domain, until after his death, Chandragupta Maurya overthrew Greek rule on both sides of the Indus.

¹⁰ Panini, "Ashtadhyayi" IV, I, 148; IV, 2, 76; IV, 2, 118, I, 177, Gankovsky, n.4, p.57.

The Hellenistic culture exercised immense influence on the civilization of the north-western part of the Indian sub-continent. Town-planning, Greek language, way of life, writing, culture, tradition, craftsmanship and artistic techniques were all brought to these areas. However, Greek influence was limited to the major trade and politico-administrative structures, while the local people continued to speak the vernacular, confessing local cults and following local cultural traditions.

In the mid-second and early first centuries BC, north-western India faced another wave of invaders - the Sakas. The advance of the Sakas into the subcontinent ran simultaneous with the resettlement of some of the Saka tribes in the newly conquered lands.

In the latter half of the Fifth Century, AD, the territory of the north-western part of the sub-continent became a part of a new barbarian state - the empire of the Chionites or Ephtalites, after the fall of the Kushan empire. In the fourth and the first half of the Fifth Century the Chionites clashed with the Sassanid Iran; the Chionites were defeated and their westward advance ended. It was only in the middle of the Fifth Century that the leaders of the Chionites launched a new series of war campaigns against the states of the Indus valley.

Around 460 AD, the Chionites conquered Gandhara. By the end of the Fifth Century, Toramana, a leader of the Chionites subjugated, Punjab, Sind, Rajasthan and the

Ganga-Jamuna Doab. The inroads of the Chionites in the basin of the Indus led to the migration of some of the tribes of the Chionite empire into the lands under the Chionite rulers, and this, to a certain extent changed the ethnic character of the territories under the Chionite - Ephtalites. (The Chionite Empire finally declined around the middle of the Sixth Century).

The ethnogenesis and ethnic character of the Chionites-Ephtalites is not very clear. A number of scholars like R.N. Erye and A.M. Sayili and J. Marguare are of the opinion that they were Turks. F. Altheim, identifies the Ephtalites with 'Kidarites', whom he concludes to be western Huns. He says that the Ephtalites were Turkish-speaking Huns, who headed a confederation of Iranian tribes of the Chionites and later underwent "Iranization". This view is supported by other writers like W.M. Macgovern, S. Konow, E. Enaki-Gankovsky, too concludes, on the basis of available evidence, that Ephtalites were a confederation of East-Iranian tribes.¹¹

The ethnogenesis of the Sindhis can be traced back to these kindred Indo-Aryan nationalities and tribal unions. In the second century BC, and the fifth century AD, fragments of the Saka-Massagetae and Chionite-Ephtalite tribes took part in the ethnogenesis of Sind.

The dawn of history reveals an Aryan dynasty in power in Sind. In the Mahabharat, (Twelfth or thirteenth century BC) Jayadrath, the King of Sind appears

11 Gankovsky, n.4, p.90.

as a partisan of the Pandavas against the Kauravas. The next historical mention of Sind is found in about 575 BC during the time of the Archaemenian Dynasty, and the Alexanderian period - during both of which times, Sind was considered rich and prosperous.¹²

The Alexandrian period was followed by that of the Maurayas whose fall brought in the Graeco-Bactrians (Second Century BC). They ruled over the whole of present-day Pakistan, with their capital at Taxila. Their coins are still found in the old towns of Sind. The Graeco-Bactrian period was followed by that of Scythian (Saka) invasion in the First Century BC. The Sakas settled in Sind in such numbers that Sind came to be known as Indo-Scythia, and even today, a large portion of the population is Scythian, and not Aryan.¹³

The First Century witnessed the arrival of Kushans, who along with the Sakas and later Parthians ruled over present day Afghanistan and Pakistan for about four centuries, from Peshwar. In the Fifth century AD, an invasion by the Huns surpassed all previous records in its intensity and vastness. This invasion ushered in the Rajput era which lasted until the Seventh Century AD in Sind, until Tenth Century in Punjab and the NWFP, and until the end of the Twelfth Century in northern India.

12 Ahmed Abdulla, Historical Background of Pakistan and Its People (Karachi, June 1973), p. 97

13 Gazetteer of the province of Sind, in, Ahmed Abdulla, n. 12, p. 97

Sind's independent history begins more or less, with the coming of Mohammed-Bin-Qasim. Before the latter's arrival in India, the Rajputs were ruling Sind and the rest of northern India. Raja Sahasi II was the last Rajput ruler of Sind before Islamic rule. After Raja Sahasi's death in 632 AD, he was succeeded by his Brahmin Chamberlain Chach, who ruled Sind for about sixty eight years from 632-700 AD. His son Dahir was the ruler of Sind when Mohammed-Bin-Qasim arrived here in 711 AD.

Surveying sea expeditions, by Arabs, to the north-western coast of India began in the latter half of the Seventh Century AD. The invasion of Sind began in the year 711 AD, when in the course of two years, the armies of Mohammed Bin Qasim (leader of the Caliph Walid) overcame the resistance of the native princes and reached as far as Multan. The invasion of Sind was made easier, since a major portion of the local population which was Buddhist, opposed the Hindu rulers and sympathised with the invaders and even helped them cross the Indus.

For forty years after the invasion, the vice-regents of the Ummad/Umayyad Caliphs ruled the country until the Abbasids ousted them in 750 AD. The viceregents of Sind, during this period, became really sovereign, recognising the suzerainty of the righteous rulers just, nominally. By the beginning of the Tenth century, the northern territory, overrun by the Arabs, got isolated into an independent feudal principality with Multan as the capital.

This Arab invasion of Sind, was accompanied by the spread of Islam in the region. The local Buddhists who felt persecuted, took to Islam especially eagerly. As early as the end of the Tenth Century, the bulk of the population seems to have come to profess the new religion. The conquerors also brought with them, their own language, which became the language of administration and cult.

The Arab invasion of Sind also prompted the feudalization of Sindhi society, which, as a process had begun in pre-Islamic times. The Emirs of Sind dealt out land generously, to military leaders, favourites and Muslim theologians. Gradually, the conquerors fused with the local landlords, who had been converted to Islam, thus, giving rise to a ruling stratum of the feudal classes. The function of Islam as an effective instrument for the development and strengthening of feudal relationships in the middle ages, contributed to the diffusion of Arabic as the language of the dominant official groups.

After 750 AD, Sind remained, de facto, a sovereign State upto 1591. It was only in the second quarter of the Eleventh Century, that the country was under the control of the Ghaznivides. However, already, by 1054 AD, the native leaders of the Sumrah dynasty had restored the sovereignty of Sind. Predominance of

settled-farming economy in these areas helped the nascent Sindhi ethnic community to consolidate and come into its own, rather rapidly.

Predominance of a sovereign Sindhi feudal state, connected to the rest of the sub-continent, comparatively weakly, had already come into existence. The loose links with the rest of the subcontinent and its continued existence as a sovereign state, speeded up the consolidation of its population into one single feudal nationality. The centres of ethnic consolidation of population were the Indus delta, the Southern parts of the Indus valley, immediately adjacent to it, i.e. the economically most developed areas where the country's major, administrative-political, economic and cultural centres were situated. The predominance of settled farming economy in these areas undoubtedly helped the nascent Sindhi ethnic community to consolidate and develop rapidly.

By the end of the eighth century itself, the population of Sind was recognised, in the other areas of India at that time, as possessing its own peculiar anthropological character, spiritual makeup and language. Muslim writers of the tenth century and Eleventh Century referred to the special language and script of the Sindhis, marking the distinction between Sind and other parts of the sub-continent. Al Istakhri wrote, "The language of the inhabitants of Mansurah and Multan and the areas adjacent to them is Arabic and Sindhi, and the language

of the inhabitants of Makran is Persian".¹⁴ Al-Birwi, in his enumeration of the alphabets in use in India during his time, notes the alphabet of the Sindhis as Saindhava. Other writers like Nizam-ul-Mulk (Siasat Namah pg. 167); Abu-l-Fazal Beihaqi (Tarikh-i-Masudi pg. 46, 47 and 57); Ibn Hauqal (Kitab-al-Masalikwa-i-Manalik pg 155); all distinguish between Sind and India when listing the individual countries of West and South Asia.

During the late stage of their ethnogenesis in the fifteenth century and sixteenth century, the Sindhis assimilated separate Baluchi tribes, who had come into Sindh from the West and North West, and also some of the Jat clans who had moved from South Punjab. As a result of the Baluchi participation in the process of Sindhi ethnogenesis, lower Sind in the late middle ages saw the revival of the traditions of clan life even among settled populations (The Baluchis still had a steady survival of the clan organisation). Also, concepts and traditions of the caste system, basic to Hinduism, still lingering among the Muslim section of the Sindhis, contributed to the perpetuation of the close-unit clan partitions. Even at the close of the eighteenth century and beginning of the nineteenth century the Sindhis were divided into more than two hundred clans.

¹⁴ Al Istakhri, "Kitab Masalik Al-Monialik" p. 177 in Gankovsky, n.4, p. 95.

After AD 750, Sind had remained a de-facto sovereign state. Only in the second quarter of the Eleventh century, the country was under the control of the Ghaznivides, but the native Sumrah dynasty restored sovereignty to Sind. Attempts by the Delhi Sultans to conquer Sind came to grief and only in 1591 did the Mughal ruler Akbar manage to annex Sind to Delhi.

Decline of central power, during the period of the last Mughals, rendered Sind open to foreign invaders. In 1739, the troops of Shah Nadir Shad Afshar overran Sind. After the assassination of Nadir, Ahmed Shah Durrani conquered Sind, gradually, during the period 1748-1750. An Afghan viceregent was installed in Shikarpur and Lower Sind's ruler of the 'Kalhoros' dynasty became a vassal of the Afghan Shahs. The attempts made by Kalhoros, in 1753 to overthrow the power of the Afghans was suppressed by force; in 1757 the conquest of Sind was acknowledged by Alamgir II.

In 1778, an internecine war between Kalhoros ruler of Sind and the feudal nobility of the Baluch tribe 'Talpur' broke out. The Talpurs were victorious and they ousted the Kalhoros and carved Sind into a number of small feudal principalities. The refusal of the Talpurs to pay tribute to the Durrani Shahs led to frequent incursions by the Afghan troops (1779, 1783, 1786, 1794 and 1808).

Incursions, internal feuds and strife affected Sind. The irrigation system fell to ruin with the acreage

of arable land shrinking and trade declining. The period of the Talpurs was characterized by a decline of urban life and many of the Sindhi cities became demi-Agrarian by then. Trade and craft were, however, on the upgrade in some major cities. Artisans were mainly engaged in processing of agricultural raw products and merchants were engaged largely in external trade. Trade and money-lending were concentrated in the hands of the local Hindu trading-usury classes/castes. Muslims were the principal producers of crafts such as weaving, dyeing, tanning and metal works.

As a result of the extensive influence being wielded by the numerous and wealthy Muslim theologians, on all aspects of the country's life, Islam came to be recognised as the State religion of Sind. On the other hand, political instability and economic chaos at the end of the Eighteenth century stimulated the spread of mystical sentiments and the growth of Sufism which spread throughout Sindhi society. "The most authoritative of Sufi orders of Sind were Halaliya, Qadiriya, Naqshbandiya, Suhrawardiya and Chistiya¹⁵ SIC_7. Of these Jalaliya was dominant largely ~~in~~ the territory of Sind itself, while the others operated in various regions in India, as well as beyond the Indian frontiers. Hindus and Muslims were both followers of the same Pirs.

By this time, the Sindhi language had also developed. The language derives from late Prakrit Vradacha,

15 Gankovsky, n.4, p.97.

which related, Indo-Aryan tribes and nationalities inhabiting Sind and the South Western areas of Punjab in the mid-first millenium AD, spoke. The core of Sindhi was the Southern dialects which the Indo-Aryan population of Lower Indus spoke. The vocabulary of Sindhi was enriched through borrowings from Arabic at the time of the Arab invasions and later from 'Farsi'.

Literature in Sindhi was already in progress in Sind in the Seventeenth Century and Eighteenth Century, which implied a consolidation of Sindhi nationality, manifest among other things in a developed sense of ethnic unity and in the desire of the progressive section of the feudal intellectuals to turn their vernacular into a native literary language. The efforts made by the advanced persons of the time, to write in a language clear to the common folk, also in turn, had a positive effect on the development of Sindhi ethnicity.

'Lari', a dialect of the most developed section of the country 'Lar', constituted the basis of literary Sindhi. Among the most renowned poets and writers of the time, writing in Sindhi were Sayid Abdul Karim, Mohammed Hashim, Mukhdum Abdullah Nariyawaro and finally, Shah Abdul Latif.

The next stage in the history of Sind and the development of Sindhi ethnicity was the period under British rule/the colonial era. In 1843, Sir Charles Napier conquered Sind and the province was annexed to the British empire. Sind was now made a part of the Bombay Presidency.

However, the Sindh that the British annexed to their colony of India was a distinct geographical and linguistic unit with a developed sense of awareness of culture, customs and traditions, having the basic requirements of nationhood. As early as 1913, there was already talk of separation of Sind from the Bombay Presidency. The issue was raised for the first time by Harchandrai Vishindas, as Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Karachi Session of the Congress. However, it was only on April 1, 1936, that Sind, as a separate province, came into existence.

Sind had, by this time, already established a distinct culture that had a history unique to itself. The Sindhi language had existed and survived the onslaught of various conquerors, but "has remained pure and unsullied!"¹⁶ The Arabs used their language as the court language, and the Mughals used Persian. However, Sindhi continued to exist and the only effect felt was that a few Arabic and Persian words came to be used; however Sindhi survived all these onslaughts and even prospered with the passage of time, adding more and more of worth and substance to itself.

The 'Sindhi' people are a result of the centuries of integration of Dravidians, Aryan, Semetic and Mongoloid races and others, who in families and tribes settled in this land. Samaats, Rajputs, Luhanas, Muhanas and clans

¹⁶ G.M. Syed, Case for Sindhudesh, (Bombay, 1984, p.32.

of Pathans, Baluch and Arabs have all contributed to the creation of the common culture of Sind. Age-old relations, common needs and requirements of life, intermingling and inter-marriage, dependence on common means and sources of livelihood, have all contributed to the levelling of the initial differences among them. All these elements in the course of time, fell into a pattern, adopting a common tongue, dress, folk traditions, religious approach, social customs and behaviour and developed a national complexion distinctly, Sindhi, in nature.¹⁷

During the period under the British colonial rule, Sindhi identity was, to some extent, recognised.

Sindhi was declared to be the official language of the province, to be used in schools, local administration and lower division courts. A standard script for Sindhi language was developed. Sindhi prose and poetry made considerable progress. Even novels were written in Sindhi. Sindhi nationality was, at this stage, well developed and not comparable to the backward state of the surrounding nationalities.

However, despite this developed sense of nationalism, at the time of independence from British rule,

17 More details regarding the customs, traditions and culture of Sind are available in Richard F. Burton, "Sindh and the Races that Inhabit the Valley of the Indus", Karachi 1973 (Reprint of the first publication in England in 1851).

Sindh opted to join Pakistan. As early as 1938, the Sind Legislative Assembly passed the pre-Pakistan resolution. In 1943, the Assembly passed the Pakistan Resolution. Explanations have been given for this phenomenon.

One explanation is that along with Sindhi consciousness, a parallel consciousness developed under the special circumstances of colonial rule under the British. Subjection to a common alien rule, or conflict with a common enemy, can often, bring different people closer, to one another. This produces a common consciousness born as a result of a common struggle. In India, the common colonial experience succeeded in welding together the various nationalities of the sub-continent, giving them a feeling of common suffering and common goals. This produced the Indian nationalism.

However, as time went by, until now, subdued nationalities started asserting themselves and in the case of the Muslim minority of India, "Muslim nationalism" was born, which gave rise to the demand for 'Pakistan' - a separate homeland for the Indian Muslims.

Though, K.R. Malkani says that "Sindhi Muslims were asking for partition because other Muslims were also doing so, and because the Hindus were saying "No" ¹⁸, there was, in fact, in Sind, a strong material basis for joining in with the demand for Pakistan. After separation of Sind from Bombay Presidency in 1936, Sind found its political freedom, economic prosperity and cultural

18 K.R. Malkani, The Sindh Story (New Delhi, 1984, p.126.

growth checkmated at home and largely, misconceiving the situation, held the "Hindu vested interests" to be responsible for it. Moreover, the landlord class in Sind, after its experiences as part of the Bombay Presidency, realised that independent India, with a Congress leadership could not avoid drastic land reforms. The emerging Muslim middle-class faced stiff competition at home from the Hindus, who were already firmly entrenched in the government and educational services, as well as other white-collar professions. The Muslim peasantry, too, was pitted against, largely, Hindu moneylenders, who grabbed nearly 2.5 million acres of land of the peasants, as well as of the landlords. The peasants hoped that the exit of the Hindus would provide them some relief.

According to GM Syed, Sind strove to gain Pakistan with a view to attaining two main objectives:

" i) Establishment of a separate state of the local Muslim majority areas in the Indian sub-continent, with a view to provide them with full opportunities for progress and development, in accordance with the ways and traditions of their life.

ii) Promotion and establishment of mutual cooperation among such separate Muslim states, in order to ensure their political freedom, economic prosperity and cultural growth."¹⁹

19 G.M. Syed: "A case for Sindhudesh" p.2

Muslim nationalistic consciousness in Sind and support for Pakistan was conditional upon the autonomy and sovereignty of Sind as envisaged in the 1940 Muslim League Resolution. G.M. Syed says that the sole reason for participation in the Pakistan movement was the unambiguously declared objective of the leaders as defined in the Lahore Resolution (of 1940) of the Muslim League, to found "independent and sovereign states" in the Muslim majority provinces of the Indian sub-continent.

However, whatever the reasons, Sind at the time of independence, came to constitute one of the provinces of the new state of Pakistan. Under the Pakistani leadership, the Muslim nationalistic consciousness in Sind, has over the years taken a backseat, and Sindhi nationalism has emerged. Due to various reasons (to be discussed later), the Sindhi people have become conscious of their own independent history and ethno-linguistic development and are seeing themselves as a separate 'nation', today.

CHAPTER III - THE CASE FOR SINDHU DESH

On May 20th, 1988, the Sindhi nationalist leaders formed a broad-based alliance in the name of Sindh Quami Ittehad (Sind National Alliance) to struggle for the restoration and preservation of Sindh's political, economic, cultural and national rights. The formation of the SNA was announced by the veteran Sindhi nationalist leader G.M. Syed, who presided over a meeting of representatives of 32 organisations at his residence in San near Hyderabad (Sind).

Analysing the forty years of existence of Pakistan, G.M. Syed felt that Sind had gradually been turned into a colony and he had come to the conclusion that Pakistan could not continue as a State and it was high time that Sindhu Desh was liberated.¹

An eight-point Charter pledge to start a peaceful struggle was adopted. A struggle is to be launched against the influx of population from other provinces and countries, to prevent construction of military cantonments in Pannu, Afil, Badin, Khesar and other areas of Sind, as it amounts to "colonisation of Sind". The struggle is also to be for distribution of river waters on the basis of the 1945 agreement between the provinces. Other points on which the new alliance will struggle include, release of all political prisoners in Sind, declaring Sindhi as the national language, handing over of oil, gas, coal and other minerals to Sind and employment of locals on these facilities.

1 Indian Express (New Delhi), 21 May, 1988.

The SNA today, symbolises what, until now, G.M. Syed has symbolised - the frustrations and aspirations of the Sindhis. In the year 1943, G.M. Syed had been instrumental in getting the Pakistan resolution passed in the Sind Assembly. But now Syed says that the Pakistan movement was a "collective madness" - a "death-wish of the Muslims of the Indian sub-continent". His greatest desire now is to 'amend his blunder of taking Sind into Pakistan'.² To this end, G.M. Syed has been leading the 'Jiye Sind' movement.

'Jiye Sind' was not, originally, the slogan of G.M. Syed, but that of Hyder Bakhsh Jatoi, a poet, who had written a poem with that title. With the imposition of the "One-Unit system"³ in October 1955, and the banning of the peasant movement in Sind, its leader, Jatoi, had composed a poem entitled 'Jiye Sind' - this was the first time that this word was used. Soon, Sindhi language and its teaching was restricted to the primary school level; writers and intellectuals tried to protest and Sindhis began to use the term 'Jiye Sind' as a salutation instead of the traditional Islamic words. At this stage, an anti-one-unit system was functioning. At the suggestion of a few leaders, the name of this movement was changed to 'Jiye Sind Movement'.⁴

2 Syed Ziaullah and Samuel Baid, Pakistan : An End without a Beginning (New Delhi, 1985), p.5.

3 The one-unit system entailed the abolition of provinces in West Pakistan, i.e. Sind, Baluchistan, the North West Frontier Province and Punjab ceased to exist as individual federating units and came to be united to form 'One-Unit'.

4 Rasool Baksh Palejo, In an interview.

The 'Jiye Sind' movement has, today, spread to every village and town of Sind, making Sindhis conscious of their cultural heritage and of their enormous economic potential. What led to this awareness of Sindhi nationalism and consciousness of Sindhi identity?

It is widely felt by the Sindhis, that soon after the establishment of Pakistan - "a cruel drama began to unfold before the simple masses of Sind".⁵ It is alleged that all properties, government jobs, business enterprises, left over by the Hindus in Sind, were grabbed by the incoming refugees (Muhajirs) from India. The attitude of the "Muhajirs" was seen by the Sindhis as being that of war victors - "claiming that they had conquered Pakistan for them and that they would be the rulers".⁶ The locals were treated worse than they had been under Hindu domination and in the pre-partition days. Their language, culture, and history were looked down upon and considered inferior. Urdu language and Urdu culture (both imported), pressed the claim to be the language and culture of Pakistan. The Sindhis, found the new situation difficult to adjust to.

The Sindhis had strived to gain Pakistan with a view to attaining certain objectives. The Muslim upper classes of the Muslim majority provinces had convinced the Muslims to join the movement for Pakistan. The Sindhis, too, joined the struggle for Pakistan with a view to attaining the following :

5 G.M. Syed, A Case for Sindhudesh (Bombay, 1985), p.V.

6 Ibid, p.V.

"Establishment of independent sovereign Muslim States in their provinces;

Introduction of a way of life in those States in full accordance with the injunctions of Islam and the holy traditions of the Prophet;

Freedom of the Muslims of these provinces from the real or imaginary economic domination of the non-Muslims, i.e. the Hindus;

Establishment of unity of all the Muslim countries, with Pakistan as the hub centre of the chosen brotherhood".⁷

The Pakistan that came into existence in 1947 comprised five distinct linguistic groups (the Bengalis, the Sindhis, the Baluchis, the Pakhtuns and the Punjabis) with a developed sense of national pride in their language, culture, history and tradition, that had to be hammered out into a single integrated cultural and political entity, that could inspire faith and unity among these groups. The only binding force between these five linguistic groups was religion. The theory of separate nationhood of Muslims had been built up and used to fight for a separate State.

Once the Muslims of the sub-continent had achieved their homeland in the form of Pakistan, a number of problems arose in the course of the adjustments required for settlement in the new State. In the province of Sind various problems arose, that have now come to be articulated as grievances against the Pakistani State. The first problem arose regarding the incoming refugees from India. These

7 Ibid, p.4.

'Muhajirs' had to be settled in Pakistan which meant that land and job opportunities had to be given to them. This naturally, led to a loss for the Sindhis, in the same areas (i.e. land and jobs). Also, Sind faced an influx of migrants from the other provinces of West Pakistan. Therefore, the first area of discontent for the Sindhis became the loss of 'their' land - to both Muhajirs as well as other Pakistani ethnic groups.

SETTLING OF MIGRANTS ON SINDHI LAND

Once Pakistan came into existence, and the transfer of populations between India and Pakistan was conducted, Sind suddenly found itself playing host to the incoming refugees from India. Hundreds of crores of rupees were gifted away or loaned to the refugees to set up industry, carry on trade and build houses.⁸ Moreover, in pre-partition Sind, Hindus had come to acquire thirty lakh acres of land over a period of one hundred years, and the Muslims resented that; but the refugees grabbed sixty lakh acres of land in a fraction of time.⁹ Under the Hindus, Sindhis who used to be hundred percent owners of land had lost forty percent of it. With partition, the Sindhis felt that they might be able to recover some of their land, but nothing of the kind happened.

Through the nineteen-forties, the Sindhi Muslims had tried to get a "Land Alienation Bill" passed in the Sind Assembly. This act was already existing in Punjab. The intention was, that land belonging to the Muslims should not pass into the hands of Hindus and money-lenders.

8 K.R. Malkani, The Sind Story (New Delhi, 1984), p.100

9 Ibid. p.129.

But the British Governor of Sind had opposed it, claiming it to be an "anti-Capitalist idea, and that the Britishers could not allow it".¹⁰ It was felt that if Pakistan came into being, the law could be passed. But though, the Sind Assembly passed the Land Alienation Bill, on creation of Pakistan, Jinnah refused to give assent to it, probably thinking that refugees could be settled on these lands.

In the post-partition period, it has been estimated that some six million refugees moved into Pakistan. In Karachi, Hyderabad, Lyallpur, Sargodha over sixty percent of the population was made up of refugees.¹¹ The exchange of population between India and Pakistan, made Punjab and NWFP, ethnically more homogeneous; and it did not affect Baluchistan. In Sind, the number of Sindhis was reduced. Thus, in the 1950s, Karachi became a city dominated politically, economically and socially by the Urdu speaking Muslim 'Muhajirs' from Delhi and Uttar Pradesh. In Karachi, in 1959, some 83 percent of the population was immigrants - refugees from India accounting for sixty five percent and in-migrants (i.e. those born in other parts of Pakistan), accounting for eighteen percent of the city's population.

10 Hamida Khuro, in an interview in, Ziaullah and Baid, n.2, p. 194.

11 S.J. Burki, "Migration, Urbanization and Politics in Pakistan", in Howard Wriggins and James Guyot, ed, Population and Politics of South Asia (New York, 1983), p. 147.

Before independence, linguistically, Sindh was relatively homogeneous. According to the 1941 Census, only 32,000 persons claimed Urdu as their mother tongue in Sind and Khairpur State in a population of 4,084,000. By 1951, Urdu-speaking Muhajirs constituted 12 percent of the population (476,000 of 4,608,514 people). By 1961, if only the urban population of Karachi was considered, then Sindhi speakers had been reduced to 7.5 percent. In Karachi district, in 1961, 53.9 percent declared Urdu to be their mother-tongue. Even Punjabi speaking people constituted 12.8 percent, while those speaking Sindhi were only 8.6 percent.

In the interior of Sind, barrages like the Ghulam Mohammed barrage^{and} the Katri Barrage were constructed in 1953-54. By the time these barrages became operational in 1958, the Martial Law of Ayub Khan had come. Immediately the lands around these barrages became reserved for the army personnel. The Guddu barrage came later, but here too, lands were reserved for army personnel, and were given to Punjabis.

Once Martial Law came, lease for land was drawn up for one year. Earlier, there was no such practice - he who had the land, held the land; lease could not be terminated for non-payment of rent. After the new lease system came into existence, effectively, it meant that after one year that land could be given to anybody. The lands could then be let out on higher rents which the

"Haris"¹² could not afford, but the Punjabis could. Similarly, there are other disputes over land, that the people feel has been given to others though the Sindhis should have been given first option to the lands.¹³

The second major irritant in inter-ethnic relations in Pakistan had been the question of a national language.

THE LANGUAGE QUESTION

In addition to the loss of land by the Sindhis, and a feeling of having being swamped by refugees, attempts were being made to impose Urdu as the national language. Urdu had come to represent the language of the Muslim vested interests of Indian Muslim-minority provinces, a large portion of whom had already migrated into Pakistan and were rallying around for the privileged positions in their new country. This caused the peoples whose mother-tongues were being ignored, to develop apprehensions of conditions building up for Muhajir dominations in their homelands.

In Sind, seemingly, the thrust for "Urduization" became so unabashed, that Urdu started replacing Sindhi from the very primary school levels. The name plates of roads, parks, streets, railway stations in Sindhi language were removed - and Urdu ones were put. No new Sindhi medium school was opened and most old Sindhi Schools were shut down. After 1947, Sindhi students studying in Karachi were required to study Urdu, but non-Sindhis

12 Landless agricultural labourers of Sind.

13 e.g. In Sukkur area the British had done some reforestation, where some ancient villages existed (Pindain). British are said to have undertaken to give villagers first option on lands for cultivation if the forests were ever cut. But during the Ayub period, military farm was set up there. Dispute between military

were exempted from studying Sindhi. Though initially teaching of Sindhi continued in the interiors, Ayub, after coming to power in 1958, discontinued that practice by passing a verbal order, making Urdu compulsory for Sindhis.

On July 7, 1972, Sind Provincial Assembly passed a bill declaring Sindhi the official language of the province, after opposition amendments proposing that Urdu, the official language, should also be recognised as an official language, had been ruled out of order by the Speaker. In the other provinces, Urdu had been adopted as the official language (in North West Frontier Province and Baluchistan, whilst Punjabi and Urdu were given equal status in Punjab). Sindhi is spoken by about 55 percent of the population of Sind. The large Urdu-speaking minority, mostly consisting of Muslim immigrants from India who settled in Sind since 1947, are concentrated in the cities and larger town, especially Karachi - the Provincial capital where they form at least half the population. Relations between two communities have been strained in the past, but had never led to serious violence.

Protest demonstrations broke out in Karachi on July 7, 1972 after the bill had been passed and spread to Hyderabad and continued until July 10, 1972. By July 8, 1972 riots had developed.¹⁴ The main centre of the disturbances was the predominantly Urdu-speaking suburb of Liaquatabad, where the police were alleged to have

14 Keesing's Contemporary Archives (London), Vol.XVIII (1971-72), p.25518.

fired indiscriminately on demonstrators, killing 12 people. Though Bhutto appealed to the people and promised that an equitable solution to the dispute would be found, the riots continued. In Liaquatabad, police stations were repeatedly attacked and other incidents continued in the main market. Troops had to be moved into Liaquatabad and 3 other suburbs where a 24 hour curfew was imposed, and after protest demonstrations on July 10, 1972 against alleged indiscriminate firing by the police on both pro-urdu and pro-Sindhi rioters, the curfew was extended to the whole of Karachi.

On July 9, 1972, rioting broke out in Hyderabad, where 10 people were reported to have been killed in clashes between Urdu-speaking and Sindhi speaking groups. Troops took control of the city and a 24-hour curfew was enforced. More people were reported to have been killed in clashes between the two communities on July 10, 1972. Order was restored in both cities on July 11. Though no official details were published, unofficial reports gave the number killed as over one hundred.¹⁵

Press censorship was imposed in Sind on July 10, 1972. A leading English language newspaper published in Karachi, "The Sun" was closed on July 18, on grounds that it had tried to "fan hatred between different sections of the population".

¹⁵ Ibid, p.25518.

Following discussions in Rawalpindi between President Bhutto and leaders of the Sindhi and Urdu - speaking communities, an ordinance amending the new law was promulgated by the Governor of Sind on July 16, 1972. This provided that no qualified person should be removed from, or refused appointment, or promotion, to any Civil Service post only on the ground of want of knowledge of Sindhi or Urdu and that the Act should be applied in a manner which would not prejudice the use of Urdu. The Sindhi intelligentsia had now been stirred into action, and the cry "Sind for Sindhis" took a new turn. The movement to defend Sindhi language, culture and Sindhi honour developed into a mass-cry - "Jiyé Sind". Sind was not ready to allow its language to be forgotten in favour of Urdu.

In Pakistan, even today, a major problem in inter-ethnic relations, remains, the perception that the other ethnic groups have, of being dominated by the Punjabis, who are in a majority in the State. Since independence, the Punjabis who managed to dominate the various spheres of social existence, due to a number of historical reasons, are seen by other ethnic groups, to be in a position to dominate their lives in all areas. This has been resented by them. In Sind, along with the Punjabis, the "Muhajirs" are also seen as a dominant group, and so, the Sindhis feel resentful towards them, too.

MUHAJIR-PUNJABI DOMINATION

The Sindhis feel that, Jinnah, in his effort at concentrating all powers at the centre and making the

Central Government overwhelmingly strong, had completely ignored the rights and privileges of the original inhabitants of Pakistan. The leadership of the newly created Pakistan was constituted largely from the Urdu-speaking Muslim migrants from India. The only exception being the Punjabis, who by dint of absolute majority in West Pakistan and their monopolistic hold on the military forces were already in a dominant position in the country - thereby causing the rest of the smaller peoples ^{to have} apprehensions of conditions building up for "Muhajir-Punjabi" political domination in their homelands.

Also, once democracy failed in Pakistan and the country came to be ruled by a military-bureaucratic combine, the dominant political force in the country also came to be constituted of the 'Punjabi-Muhajir' group. The army in Pakistan is largely drawn from two provinces - Punjab and NWFP, whereas, in the initial years, the bureaucracy was dominated by members of the former Indian Civil Service (ICS), who had migrated from India. The 'Muhajirs' were installed in superior administrative positions in the country, who assuming thereby, "airs of alien conquerors" began to rule the local population with haughty indifference to their interests, utilising their entire power and influence to their own interests.¹⁶

THE "ONE UNIT" SYSTEM

Sind also had a grouse against the Pakistan Government for having forged the four provinces of West Pakistan

16 G.M. Syed, n.5, p. 11.

into "one unit" in 1955. This led to greater predominance of the 'Punjabis', who dominated the army, and the 'Muhajirs,' who were dominant in the Civil Services. It is said that at the time of formation of 'One Unit' Sind had a credit of Rs. 33 crores, while Punjab had a debit of Rs. 100 crores. With the coming of the "One Unit" System, the finances of all the provinces were merged and Sind lost the advantage of the surpluses that it may have otherwise enjoyed.

Also, the principles of distribution of the Indus basin river waters between Sind and Punjab were laid down under a number of treaties and statutes since 1901. It was established that Sind would get 25 percent of the waters of Ravi, Sutlej, Beas and 75 percent of the waters of Sindhu. This was based on the consideration that Sind has less than 10 inches of rainfall annually, whereas Punjab has more than 20 inches. Sind also has less than 2 percent forest cover.

However, once the 'One-Unit' system was adopted this agreement was violated. The waters of Ravi, Beas and Sutlej were sold to other countries and the money was used to dam waters at Tarbela, Mangla, Chashma and Rawal in Punjab, for the benefit of Punjab.

Mr. G.M. Syed has listed what he feels are some of the "cruellest [SIC] of excesses perpetrated on the Sindhi people after the establishment of Pakistan".¹⁷

Syed feels that with the establishment of Pakistan, there has come, a denial of Sindhi separate national existence as a people, which they have enjoyed for thousands of years

17 Syed, n.5, p.58.

of their history. Sind has existed historically and geographically for centuries as a distinct and separate nation. However, in Pakistan, Sind was once merged into 'One-Unit', and Sindhi language was denied recognition. Also, the attitude towards Sindhis has not always been very correct.

Syed quotes freely, showing how the Sindhis have been looked down upon:

"Sindhis were ignorant people and we have enlightened and reformed them" (Daily JUNG). 'Sindhis were slaves of Hindus, we have freed them from slavery' (Daily JUNG); 'Sindhis had no knowledge of Islam, we have taught it to them' (Maulana Moudoodi); 'Sindhi culture is that of monkey-cart and camel-cart drivers' (Liaquat Ali Khan); 'Sindhi is the language of the illiterate and the uneducated' (Liaquat Ali Khan).¹⁸

In 1948, Pir Illahi Bux, the Chief Minister of Sind, had agreed to give up the most important city of Sind, Karachi, which was separated from Sind and declared "Federal Capital Area". However, Sind still had to locate its provincial government (of Sind), in Karachi (which did not belong to it), because no other city had the infrastructure to host the provincial government.

Though, the One-Unit system was finally dissolved in 1970 and the original provinces were reconstituted, the damage had already been done. A whole generation of non-Sindhis had been brought into urban Sind which had no concept of Sind, the Sindhi language and culture, and of Karachi being a part of Sind. A statistical tally¹⁹ completed at

18 Syed, n.5, p. 61.

19 Feroze Ahmad, Sind: National and Democratic Struggle. (New York. 1984) p. 17

the time of the dissolution of the 'One-Unit' in 1970, showed that since 1955, of the one hundred and eighty four postings of Deputy Inspector General and Superintendent of Police, only fifty three were of native Sindhis. Likewise, out of one hundred and fifty postings of Commissioners, Deputy Commissioners, only forty nine were of Sindhis. In Karachi, no Sindhi was appointed to these senior postings. The entire situation appeared to be of Sind being ruled as an alien, subject, population, and this contributed largely to the alienation of Sindhi people from the State of Pakistan.

JOB-OPPORTUNITIES

Hamida Khuro ²⁰ has in an interview discussed employment levels of Sindhis in various sectors in current years. Some of the ratios in Central Government services in Islamabad in the seventies are as follows:

In the Chief Martial Law Administration Secretariat (CMLA), among the twenty one officers of Grade 20, there is no Sindhi. Among the 48 Grade nineteen officers, there is again no Sindhi. Among the seventy seven officers of Grade 17 there are only two Sindhis. Among a total of one hundred and forty five officers of the CMLA Secretariat, there are only two Sindhis.

A sample number of divisions in the CMLA Administration with the proportion of Sindhis to the total number can be seen in the table below:

20 Hamida Khuro, in Ziaullah and Baid, n.2, p.199.

Name of Division	Total No. of Officers	No. of Sindhis Employed
Aviation	58	Nil
Cabinet	112	2
Commerce	27	1
Communications	161	2
Culture, sports	100	2
Defence	157	Nil
Economic Affairs	63	2
Education	329	24
Establishment	155	3
Finance	338	11
Food and Agriculture	74	4
Agricultural Research	74	7
Foreign Affairs	70	6
Health and Social Welfare	111	3
Industries	53	2
Information and Broadcasting	296	5
Interior	327	13
Labour	46	Nil
Law	34	2
Livestock	21	Nil

In the sugar mills set up in Larkana, Sindhis have never constituted more than fifty percent of the staff in the mills. Moreover, the technical staff is all Punjabi.

Regarding Banks, when the Habib Bank was a private enterprise, the local people of Karachi were

employed there, so also, with the National Bank of Pakistan. During the Bhutto regime these were nationalised and after nationalisation, the Punjabis came to occupy better positions in these banks as they were the bureaucrats.

In the army, the number of Sindhis employed is very low. Hamida Khuro ²¹ puts the number as Nil in five lakhs, whereas Sayed Ghulam Mustafa Shah ²² puts the number as "not more than a couple of hundred out of a total of ten lakhs of military and paramilitary forces. Though Bhutto had proposed the organisation of a Sind Regiment and it is now, in existence, the actual number of Sindhis commissioned is not known. Also, it is felt that even if a very honest and earnest effort is made to recruit Sindhis as officers now, it will take a very long time for them to reach positions of any consequence. What the Sindhis are looking for, is equality now. They are not willing to wait for twenty years for a Sindhi General and for themselves to have a share in the power game, then. What is wanted is immediate redressal of their grievances.

Other areas also show the low level of employment of Sindhis. . . . The Defence Ordnance Factory in Wah, which has a work force of fifty thousand people, (this being the highest paid and best looked after work force in the country) employs only two Sindhis, one of

21 Hamida Khuro, in Ziaullah and Baid, n.2, p. 199.

22 Ghulam Mustafa Shah, in Ziaullah and Baid, n.2, p.235

them being a 'Muhajir'. In the Pakistan Railways, out of one lakh people working in all cadres there are only two hundred Sindhis, lineman, peons, clerks and others. At the Thatta Cement Factory there were four doctors from Thatta itself who had applied for the job. Instead of them, a man from Punjab was brought. At the heavy industrial complex at Taxila, of a workforce of about thirty thousand, only six/seven were Sindhis. At Pakistan Steel (a public sector undertaking set up with Soviet assistance at Pipri near Karachi) out of twenty-five thousand people employed, only eighteen hundred were Sindhis (in 1982), that, too, employed at lower levels. There was no Sindhi director. Also, in the aftermath of the shifting of the Naval Headquarters from Karachi to Islamabad, more than two thousand people of Karachi became unemployed.

More than half of Pakistan's industry is located in Sind, but Sindhis have practically no participation in it - as owners/managers, nor as workers. The lucrative commercial, transportation, construction and service sector, which comprises fifty-five percent of Pakistan's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), is also located largely in Sind. But Sindhis do not have even a marginal share in this sector. Sindhis are represented far below their population proportion, whether seen on an all Pakistan basis or within Sind itself. More importantly, most of the jobs held by the Sindhis were low ranking and low-paying.

Sind comprises twenty-three percent of Pakistan's population but contains about sixty percent of its industry, consumes forty-two percent of its

commercial energy and has a per capita income about forty percent higher than in Punjab.²³ However, these figures should not confuse the issue. Facts are that jobs are normally held by non-Sindhis. For example, a sugar mill was set up at Piaro Goth in Saddu district. This was a rural area with no non-Sindhi population. But when the factory was located here, all the managerial staff and workers were recruited from Punjab and North West Frontier Province (NWFP). Even the 'imam' of the mosque was brought from Punjab.²⁴

and
The Punjabis/Pathans who have recently migrated to Sind, are eyed suspiciously. They are seen to be making money in Sind and then transferring it to Lahore or Rawalpindi. These people come to Sind, with a view to making money here.²⁵ They keep nothing on their lands except a "shack and a couple of buffaloes". They themselves are not sure of making Sind their permanent residence. About 90-95 percent of Pathans live in Sind without their families.

CULTURAL ISSUES

Culturally, too, Sindhis, still feel that they have been given a raw deal. The Sindhi Language Bill was passed by the Sind Assembly in 1972 to introduce Sindhi as a required subject for all. It was made

23 Ahmad, n.19, p.23.

24 Ibid, p.24.

25 Shah, p.24

compulsory for all provincial government servants to learn the Sindhi language. While the former provision was implemented on a token basis, the latter had to be amended to allow a twelve year grace period.

Successive Pakistani governments, it is felt by the people of Sind, have not only failed to encourage, but have actually sought to obliterate Sindhi language and culture. The suppression of press and publication and censorship has been a common feature in all of Pakistan. The government has resorted to preventive measures by denying 'declaration' (publishing license) to proposed Sindhi publications. In 1975, practically all Sindhi periodicals were banned, including the govt's own magazine. Presently, only the government and Jamaat-i-Islami are allowed to publish newspapers and journals in Sindhi.²⁶

Sindhi writers are denied an avenue of expression in their home country. While the State organises, promotes and finances exchange of visits between Urdu writers of Pakistan and India; no corresponding efforts are made with regard to Sindhi writers.

Television, which has become a mass medium and principal cultural influence, offers only a token place to the national languages of Pakistan. In a week, the Karachi TV Centre telecasts only one hour of programming in Sindhi.²⁷ Radio programming is likewise limited. The State's policy of 'assimilation' has manifested

26 Ahmad, n.19, p.22.

27 Ibid, p.23

itself in ignoring the historical personalities, arts, crafts, music and dance of the province. Sindhis point out^{that} though, a major road in Karachi is named after Jigar Muradabadi, an Urdu poet from Uttar Pradesh (India), no comparable street is named after the Sindhi poet-saint Shah Abdul Bhitai. Similarly, Sindhi heroes like General Hosh Mohammed have been ignored.

The Pakistan Government, to make place for the Karachi University, shifted the Sind University to Hyderabad, at the time of independence. The Karachi University was supposed to be a 'Muhajir' University in which there was, not even a department of Sindhi language. While Karachi University naturally evolved into a more or less exclusive preserve of the Urdu-speaking intelligentsia, no such exclusive policy was followed while hiring of faculty at Sind University.

ETHNIC MOVEMENT IN SIND

Considering the situation existing in Sind, it is obvious that some kind of conflict is bound to develop. The setting is right for an ethnic group to emerge to demand its rightful place. Here is a community/ethnic group/nationality which has an ancient history and culture, and has a tradition of being an independent state. However, since, 1947, there have been complaints of Sindhi language, culture, traditions being ignored. It is alleged that there is discrimination in the field of employment and that non-Sindhis have come in large numbers and are gradually reducing the Sindhis to a minority in their own home.

This feeling has given rise to a Sindhi ethnic movement in Sind. However, the movement is still at its genesis and there is no clear articulation of who a Sindhi is, or what his demands are. Three groups can be easily identified in Sind - the original inhabitants of Sind; the 'Muhajirs' or the immigrants from India at the time of independence; and, the 'New' immigrants from the other provinces, mostly the Punjabis and the Pathans.

(a) Question of Muhajirs

The 'Muhajirs' are the people who, at the time of partition, chose Pakistan to be their homeland, and migrated here from India. Today, there are different opinions regarding the exact position and status of 'Muhajirs'. One opinion insists that all people living in Sind are Sindhis. The immigrants from India have lived in Sind for forty years, and two generations have been born in Sind. These people should now consider themselves, and should be considered, Sindhis in every sense. Various organisations like the Muhajir Ittehad Tehrik (MIT), Pakistan National Party (PNP) have been working to bring about Sindhi-Muhajir unity. Individuals such as Hussain Bux Narejo (Information Secretary, Awami National Party (ANP)), have made statements saying that 'Muhajirs' are also Sindhis and they should not call themselves 'Muhajirs' after a period of forty years. They should work jointly with the Sindhis.²⁸

28 Dawn (Karachi), 21 February, 1987.

Even, Altaf Hussain, leader of the Muhajir Quami Movement (MQM) has appealed for 'Muhajir' Sindhi unity saying that 'Muhajirs' and Sindhis have "inseparable relations" which could "not be broken by any conspiracy".²⁹

Ghous Bux Bizenjo, President of the PNP has also urged Muhajirs to adopt Sindhi nationality as a means of achieving cultural assimilation in Sind. He says that the only way to end the Muhajir problem is that the Muhajirs should assimilate themselves in the federating units where they live.

Again, Salim Haider, the Chairman of the MIT, has also given a call to forge Sindhi-Muhajir unity.

However, the very fact, that so many organisations exist in the name of Muhajirs, clearly indicates, that there has not been any true assimilation of 'Muhajirs'. These immigrants evidently still exist as a separate group within Sind.

By August, 1986, a demand had already been made for recognition of Muhajirs as a "Fifth nationality" in Pakistan. The MQM and its leader, Altaf Hussain are closely linked with this demand of the 'Muhajirs'. Altaf Hussain stated that though they did not want a confrontation to achieve their due, if these rights were not granted through a just struggle, extremists could take control of the Muhajir Organisations.³⁰

Altaf Hussain has also stated that the different nationalities in Pakistan have had to identify themselves

29 Dawn (Karachi), 2 March, 1987.

30 News Review on South Asia/Indian Ocean
September, 1986 (New Delhi, 1986), p.1025

as different entities for their economic, political, cultural and linguistic rights. The Muhajirs, too have now had to identify themselves as a separate "quam". He says that the word 'Muhajir' and the concept of 'Muhajir' nation have been the result of circumstances. The name was given to them by the other nationalities and they continue to be identified as such. The only demand of the Muhajirs is that they must be given their just share in all walks of life at the central and provincial levels.³¹

There has also been talk of a "greater Muhajir alliance", saying that the problem of Muhajirs can only be solved through "collective struggle".

There is opposition to this theory of 'Muhajir' nationality. Hamida Khuro as spokesperson for G.M.Syed, and the theoritician of the 'Jiye Sind' Tehrik, has condemned the concept saying, "we provided them shelter here, and they have usurped our properties and now they are talking of a Muhajir nation in our land, which will not be tolerated".³²

Similarly, the PNP, leader, Ghous Bux Bizenjo, refused to accept 'Muhajirs' as a nation and added that it was a community which lived in Punjab, Sind and the NWFP. He feels they should have the same rights in their respective areas which the other communities enjoyed. He insists that those who migrated from India to Sind were Sindhis.³³

31 Dawn (Karachi), 26 February, 1986.

32 Pakistan Times, 18 January, 1987.

33 Dawn (Karachi), 7 December, 1987.

The problem of defining exactly how and where the 'Muhajirs' stand in the politics of Sind today, is indeed a complex one. What is the solution to their ambiguous position in Sindhi politics?

(b) The 'New' Immigrants

The problem of 'new' immigrants is far more familiar. Most ethnic conflicts in any country, begin with calls of 'Sons of the soil' and, of the original inhabitants of the area, having priority over others regarding the economic, social, and political resources of the country, concerned. Similarly, in Sind too, a Sindhi People's National Alliance (constituted of eight different organisations of the province) has been organising protests. The slogans raised are the usual ones - "Sind for the Sindhis" / "Sind Belongs to Sindhis", "Colonisation of Sind through cantonments will be opposed", "Friendship yes, domination, no".

As has been discussed in the Chapter, earlier, though a large proportion of industries of Pakistan are concentrated in Sind, the employment level of Sindhis is low. This naturally means that there is an influx of outsiders, into the province. It has been pointed out that Sindhis had been reduced from a ninety-five percent majority in Sind in 1947 to less than fifty percent now.

The 'Muslim' of July 13, 1987 reports that at least a million foreigners were currently living/ settled in Karachi, the country's (Pakistan's) business capital, without having legal documents. The highest

number of illegal immigrants were reported to have come from Bangladesh, followed by Indians, Iranians, Burmese, Vietnamese, Sri Lankans, Africans and some were those who managed to escape from the Afghan refugee camps in NWFP and Baluchistan. Also, there is a massive influx of people from the other provinces of Pakistan, who come to Sind to seek job opportunities.

— In the case of Sindhis, since independence, a middle-class has emerged and now there is a struggle for jobs, opportunities and resources. Organisations such as the Sindhi Parhiyat Sangat (Karachi Division), have been demanding that "outsiders" living in Sind should be sent back to their places of origin. Abdul Wahid Aresar (Chairman, Jiye Sind Mahaz), has also called for the return of all non-Sindhis to their provinces and asked the government of these provinces to provide them with jobs and suitable compensation.

The (QMA) Quami Mahaze Azadi has started working to prevent further inflow of population to Karachi and other parts of Sind. The organisation has proposed the introduction of 'work permits' allowing entry into Sind to permit-holders only, from other provinces.

The PNP on the other hand has been demanding that :

- all illegal immigrants from Afghanistan, Iran, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Burma, India, East Africa and Vietnam should be expelled from Sind.

- Migration of the people from other provinces should be stopped, recruitment of all non-Sindhis in government, semi-government and private organisations should be prohibited by law and jobs should be filled in through employment exchanges.

- Outsiders should not be allowed to open business in Sind freely, nor should they be allowed to purchase land for residential purposes, commercial or industrial purposes.

- Under the five-year plan, job opportunities should be created in Punjab and the NWFP, so as to stop migration to Sind. Preference in these jobs should be given to those willing to return from Sind.

The PNP, has also, demanded a reorganisation of constituencies, keeping in view the changing demographic pattern, which could turn Sindhis into a minority in Sind. The reorganisation should ensure that "Old Sindhis" will get at least two thirds of seats in the Provincial and national Assembly representation. More significantly, a demand has been made that non-Sindhis should not be allowed to stand as candidates in local bodies, national and provincial assembly elections.

The PNP defines a 'Sindhi' as one who was either born in Sind, or has lived in Sind for twenty-five years since 1955. The PNP has also demanded that new electoral lists should contain the names of only those who were either born in Sind or have Sindhi domicile.³⁴

The MQM has also demanded that opportunities of job and business be provided to potential migrants in their own provinces, with a view to checking the abnormal influx of population from other parts of Pakistan into Sind. The MQM also wants the right to vote to be limited to the Sindhis, alone, and not to the thousands of people from other provinces who are registered voters in their area.

A major target of the resentment of the Sindhis has been the 'Punjabis', who seem to dominate the minority nationalities in Pakistan.

In response to the growing sentiments against "outsiders" in Sind, in 1986, a new organisation was formed called the "Punjabi-Pakhtun Ittehad" (PPI). The Organisation strongly condemns the alleged "conspiracy to oust" Punjabis and Pathans from Sind particularly from Karachi, and deprive them of their due rights. The PPI opposed the provision of domicile for jobs and admissions in educational Institutions. The PPI claims that the people of NWFP and Punjab, living in Sind, are as much Sindhis as the "locals" and "Muhajirs" and that every Pakistani has a right to settle anywhere within the territories of the country and be employed or have business.

Thus, a conflict between the 'new' and 'old' Sindhis continues. There have been armed conflicts between the PPI and the MQM. The PPI has raised slogans such as "char soobe, char bhai, panchveen quamiat kahan se aai". (Four provinces, four brothers where did the

fifth nationality came from?) "Send Muhajirs to camps".³⁵

MOVEMENT FOR RESTORATION OF DEMOCRACY (MRD)
MOVEMENTS OF 1983 AND 1986

The situation in Sind has been discussed at length in the preceding paragraphs. What has developed in Sind is a feeling of having been let down by the government of Pakistan - a feeling of alienation and a fear that they are being reduced to a minority in their own state. A campaign of protest and civil disobedience was launched by the MRD on August 14, 1983. The campaign gave rise to widespread unrest in the succeeding months, particularly in the province of Sind, although it was notably less successful in the Punjab province from which the country's elite is traditionally drawn. Large numbers of people were killed (MRD estimate - one hundred people by late September) and thousands arrested.

The MRD Civil disobedience campaign had been preceded by persistent criticism of the regime by opposition politicians. MRD had announced in early May, that the Civil disobedience campaign would begin in mid-August. Conventions of political activists were arranged in June, in all four provinces, despite a ban on party organisations. On July 5, 1983, on the sixth anniversary of Zia's military coup, demonstrations were held (notably in Lahore, Karachi and Peshawar), and

35 News Review on South Asia/Indian Ocean,
May 1987, (New Delhi, 1987), p.689.

nearly one hundred people were arrested. The authorities made several pre-emptive arrests in the days before August 14, 1983.

The launch of the MRD movement on August 14, 1983 was marked by demonstrations, notably in Karachi and Sukkur in Sind province, in Peshawar and Rawalpindi and Lahore in the Punjab. In Sind it took the form of a total uprising of all sections of Sindhi society - landlords, labourers, students, teachers 'rightists' and 'leftists'. The targets of attack were the railways, lines of communication, institutions representing central authority. It became an expression of the sense of deprivation that the Sindhis had been feeling since independence.

In August, 1986 again there was a spontaneous outbreak of political violence throughout the province of Sind. In the first week itself, the riots claimed the lives of eleven people and turned official properties worth millions of rupees to ashes. Buses, oil tankers, banks and government buildings were burnt. Contrary to intelligence reports that only four Upper Sind districts were 'raught with political volatility, violence broke out in the Lower Sind districts, too.

Though these outbreaks of violence have been in the name of the MRD and restoration of democratic processes, in Sind, the struggle takes on a new meaning. It becomes a form of protest against all that the Sindhis see as wrong with their present circumstances.

DEMANDS FOR A CHANGE IN THE POLITICAL
SYSTEM OF PAKISTAN

Politically, the frustrations of the Sindhis have led to the feeling that a change in the political structure of the country is not only preferable, but rather, has become essential. Demands have been articulated by various organisations and individuals. There have been demands ranging from secession of Sind, to reform within the system.

(a) Demands for Secession

Mr. G.M.Syed, Chairman of Jiye Sind Tehrik, has raised the call for an independent Sind. He has said that the protection of the rights of the people of Sind was impossible in the existing administrative structure, no matter whether power was in the hands of a military or a civilian authority. Since independence, Syed feels, various military, civil, individual and elected governments came into power but "injustices with Sind have been on the rise".³⁶

Syed feels that a democracy in Pakistan is meaningless, since democracy is the rule of the majority, and in Pakistan, one nationality forms a majority. Syed has stated that the Sindhis have been deprived of their rights since independence, where before 1947, there were only two lakh non-Sindhis in Sind, in 1986 their number had shot upto fifty-seven lakhs. A major portion of the income of Sind was transferred out of the province, leaving Sind a backward province.

36 Dawn (Karachi), 13 January, 1986

Syed, on the occasion of his eighty-fourth birthday in January 1987 said, that, "we should now struggle to free Sind completely, and create close relations with India".³⁷ Syed has also spoken of breaking off from Pakistan and joining India if the circumstances so demanded.³⁸

G.M. Syed blames the "Muhajir-Punjabi vested Interests" for the state of affairs in Pakistan and, in Sind particularly. Syed bases his demand for an independent Sindhudesh on the fact that Sind is a country with its roots in the past, where historically evolved people live, possessing a distinct culture, language, political and economic identity of interests.³⁹ He points out that, at no stage in history has there been a country/nation, in the Indian sub-continent known as Pakistan/Pakistani nation. Historically, the States that have been collected together and formed into Pakistan were each a separate homeland for an individual nation. Culturally, politically and economically, these countries/nations were distinct, exclusive entities existing in their own right.

However, recently, in May, 1988, G.M. Syed, too, showing a great deal of political dexterity, has taken a stand that should make him more acceptable to more/most political groups. At the formation of the Sind National Alliance⁴⁰, Syed has made two great

37 News Review on South Asia/Indian Ocean (February, 1987) (New Delhi, 1987), p.175

38 Times of India (New Delhi), 18 June 1987.

39 G.M.Syed has expressed his theory of independence for Sindhudesh in a number of his books including "A case for Sindhudesh" . (n.5.)

concessions. On the long range and longer constitutional issues, he has shown some moderation, scaling down his demand for 'Sindhudesh' and showing a readiness to work for Sind's rights within the framework of existing Pakistan. He has also conditionally, agreed to the Muhajirs joining the struggle for Sind's rights. His major condition being, that the Muhajirs give up their demand to be recognised as a fifth nationality within Pakistan.

(b) Greater Provincial Autonomy

Even before G.M. Syed made his demands more moderate, other leaders were willing to work for a better deal for Sind within Pakistan. Both Hamida Khuro and Rasul Baksh Palejo (individually) were willing to first embark on a struggle for Sindhi rights within Pakistan. But in case this failed, the demand for separation could not be ruled out.

Also, less extremist leaders have been demanding reforms within Pakistan - two of the demands have been for greater provincial autonomy and for confederation, or a loose federation of the four provinces of Pakistan.

For a few years now, demands for greater provincial autonomy have been voiced along with a cry for restoration of full democracy in the country. Under martial law, the state has been governed as a unitary one, with all powers being concentrated in the hands of the centre. The MRD has been at the centre of the demand for provincial autonomy.

The MRD formula regarding provincial autonomy sought to give only four subjects to the Centre, and the rest to the provinces.

In August, 1986, the Central Action Committee of the MRD adopted a declaration on provincial autonomy which ensures maximum powers to provinces under a federal framework and curtails the powers of the federal Government and its interference in provincial matters.

The declaration which was unanimously adopted, gave four subjects - defence, foreign affairs, communications and currency to the federal government, while all other subjects and residuary powers were to be vested in the provinces.

Constitutional safeguards and guarantees were provided to the federating units, which would be fully autonomous in respect of their powers and subjects and the federal government would have no power to interfere in them. However, in the event of an extraordinary situation warranting federal intervention in a province, a Presidential proclamation of emergency could be made, which unless approved by the Senate would cease to be in force after thirty days. If approved, it would remain in force for a period of three months.

The subjects of foreign trade and internal security were to be the sole responsibility of the provinces. Federating units would have the power to raise their own civil armed forces for that purpose and these would remain under their exclusive control.

In November, 1987, the PNP organised a conference open to other parties, with a view to focussing the nation's attention on Sind's problems. However, the resolution adopted by this Conference, dealt with provincial autonomy, too. The PNP resolution accepted the points contained in the MRD's Lahore Declaration of August, 1986, as a basis for evolving a federal structure "ensuring the political, economic, social and cultural autonomy of the federating national units".

The Quami Mahaz Azadi (QMA) has also stressed the need for granting maximum autonomy to the provinces.

On October 30, 1987, leaders of different parties/political shades who participated in the Sind National Conference at Bhanot, expressed complete unanimity on evolving a common strategy for achieving maximum autonomy for the four provinces of Pakistan.⁴¹

However, there are sections of Pakistani society that feel that provincial autonomy is not sufficient guarantee for protection of the rights of minorities in Pakistan. The MRD's decision on provincial autonomy is seen as a subtle move to sabotage the small provinces. The talk of provincial autonomy has been regarded as a hoax. In a system which seems to perpetuate the rule of Punjab, there can be no guarantee of rights of smaller nationalities.⁴²

41 Dawn (Karachi), 22 June, 1986 quoting Rezwana Kehar, a leader of the Sindhi - Baluch - Pakhtun Front.

42 POT, Pakistan series, 14 April, 1987.

Similarly, a Hari leader Jam Saqi has said that if Pakistan is to be preserved, it should be "a union of self-ruling provinces, based on nationalities' right of self-determination".⁴³

(c) Demand for Confederation

The demand for a confederation has been articulated among others, by the "Sind-Baluch-Pakhtun Front" (SBPF) which was formed in London around April, 1986 by Mumtaz Ali Bhutto, Abdul Hafeez Pirzada and Afzal Bangash.

Mumtaz Ali Bhutto, a former Governor of Sind, has for some time now, been speaking of a confederal system for Pakistan. In the wake of the MRD's civil disobedience movement in 1983, Mumtaz Ali Bhutto was jailed. It was during this period that he wrote a paper on confederation. He claimed that the objective of the creation of Pakistan had still not been fulfilled. The objective was to guarantee an autonomous and sovereign status to the federating units. To prove this point, the paper recalled various statements of Jinnah and of the Muslim League in favour of Confederation. The most important of them being, the Muslim League's Memorandum on Minimum Demands of May 12, 1946, which along with other demands said: "After the constitutions of the Pakistan Federal Government, and the Provinces, are finally framed by the Constitution-making body, it will be open to any province of the Group to decide to opt out of its group, provided the wishes of the people of that province are ascertained by a referendum to opt out or not".

43 News Review on South Asia/ Indian Ocean
September 1986, (New Delhi, 1986), p.168

In the light of this, Mumtaz Ali Bhutto, in his paper on Confederation, gave a 19-point confederal scheme with the provision that in the event of any subversion of the Constitution and overall democratic set-up, usurption of the federal government and/or interference with the autonomy/sovereignty of any state/states (province), by the armed forces or any other agency or individual, being a part of the confederation, the concerned province would have the power to secede - separate from the confederation and declare independence.

By Confederation, Bhutto says, what he means is equality, sovereignty and autonomy for the provinces to be known as 'States' and a constitutional provision to empower any of the 'States' to break off if its rights were violated by the central authority.

In September, 1986, Bhutto even suggested that a referendum be conducted on the issue of confederation to ascertain the wishes of the people of Sind, Baluchistan and the NWFP. He was confident that the people would vote for a Confederation.

The SBPF has outlined constitutional proposals for a confederal structure for Pakistan. The scheme underlines the need for recognising the four units of Pakistan as autonomous 'States', which will unite under a new agreement, on the basis of equality. The states would have no right to secede from the confederation, until the institutions and agencies of the republic (including armed forces) remain subject to the new

structure and do not exceed limits laid down for them. If there is any violation of the constitutional structure, the concerned state will regain its sovereignty and have the right to secede.

The federal authority would extend only to a few subjects; defence, foreign affairs, communications, currency, inter-state transportation of goods and conciliatory powers to resolve fiscal disputes, that might arise between States. The Republic would not interfere/encroach on the right of the States to recruit civil militias and other law-enforcing agencies.

The resolution also proposed that there would be a President, common interest Council (Cabinet) with a Prime Minister, Senate, and judicial bodies. The President would be elected by rotation in alphabetical order by the States for a 4-year term. The Prime Minister would be elected by the majority in the Senate. In the Senate (law-making body) each state would have equal representation.

It has also been proposed that all states get equal representation in the armed forces. The command of the defence services would be decentralised, their numbers reduced and expenditure cut from the present ten percent of GDP to three percent.

The States would retain all powers except those surrendered to the republic.

The concept of confederation for Pakistan has received support from various quarters - the Servants of Sind Society, the National Democratic Party (NDP), the Jiye-Sind, ^{and} Sardar Attaullah Mangal (exiled Baluch leader). Even the PNP Chief, Ghous Bux Bizenjo, threatened to support the demand for Confederation if the small provinces were deprived of their rights. Today, in Sind there may be various opinions regarding the solution to the present crisis, however, there is, more or less, a single opinion about the fact that a crisis does exist.

In both the anti-Zia movements (in August - October 1983, and in August, 1986), it has been clearly evident that in Sind, the frustrations go deeper than merely a dissatisfaction with the ruling government. In 1983 and in 1986, the movements became concentrated in Sind. In 1983, Sindhi landlords, peasants and middle-class professionals participated in the movement and made it the first rural-based upheaval in Sind. In 1986, the upheaval was confined to Lahore, Karachi and small towns (lacked mass participation, nationally), but again the rural poor of Sind protested along with political activists.

It is clear that all the three minority nationalities are feeling deprived and this is manifested in the creation of the Sind-Baluch-Pakhtun Front. Though, the exact solution to the problem may not be clear the one thing that is

extremely obvious is that if Pakistan wishes to exist with its present geographical boundaries, the nationalities question must be resolved. Whether the solution lies in creation of a loose federation, confederation or just a federal system, is not clear. The only point of clarity is that reform is essential.

CHAPTER IV - CONCLUSIONS

Pakistan, today, is faced with a problem, common to many of the new States of Asia and Africa. As Rupert Emerson¹ has pointed out, these states are "not yet nations in being but only nations in hope". Nationalism in these countries came as a negative phenomenon. It was a movement more against western colonialism, than for a positive, coherent, national identity. Unlike European countries where nationalism accompanied, or followed industrial and democratic revolutions and where common language and culture were key elements in the growth of the nation states, the new states of Asia and Africa found the mixed seeds of their nationalisms planted in essentially diverse traditional social soils.

Language and cultural factors are often not supportive of the growth of a single nationalism in these new states, a great many of which have boundaries cutting across tribes and nationality groups, or which contain within themselves sub-national groups whose leaders aspire to lead an independent nation-state. Social group cleavages in multi-ethnic states are both horizontal (ethnic, religions, linguistic, tribal), and vertical (class, caste, sectarian). The most immediate loyalties of the vast majority of people in these

1 Rupert Emerson, From Empire to Nation (Calcutta, 1970), p.94.

states go to units other than the nation-state. The primary task of leaders in African and Asian States, therefore, is to transform primordial sentiments into civil sentiments, to create a national identity out of parochial identities, to build a nation-state out of multiple sub-national groups - as a political and governmental reality.

Though the problem of nation-building is common to developed and developing countries, the problems of the two are different. In the developed world there is a pre-existent, well-formed, national ideology, a national elite and national institutions, the problem is essentially found in the need to integrate one or more alienated group/groups into the already existing system. In the developing countries there is often no pre-existent "sovereign" system and the problem is thus two-fold. First, to create a national ideology, a national elite, and national institutes, in short, to build^a nation where there was none before; and second, to integrate the various groups into the newly created national system".²

Nation-building/national-integration is a multi-dimensional process. As Myron Weiner suggests, it may involve five tasks³: creation of a sense of

2 Raunaq Jahan, Pakistan : A Failure in National Integration (Columbia, 1972), p.3

3 Myron Weiner, "Political Integration and Political Development", The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences, CCCLVIII(1965), p.52.

territorial nationality; establishing of a national, central authority; bridging of the elite-mass gap, creation of integrative institutions and behaviour, and creation of a minimum value consensus. National integration may, broadly, be defined as the creation of a "national political system which supersedes or incorporates all the regional sub-systems".⁴

✓ In the post-independence period, most Third World countries, newly emergent as sovereign states, are involved in a process of attempting to evolve 'nations' of the territories left to them by their former colonial rulers.

✓ Various obstacles exist, in the path of nation-building in the Third World. Apart from the point, already discussed earlier in the Chapter, regarding loyalty to units other than the States, the process is further complicated by the socio-economic conditions in these countries. As it is, loyalties having their origin in medieval forms of social and cultural life are deep-rooted and influence the thinking and activity of millions of people in these countries. In addition, economic factors also influence the course of ethnic politics.

In most Third-World countries today, resources are limited and the demands made on them are varied. In this situation, a grave and growing struggle over

4 Jahan, n.2, p.3.

resources emerges at the local level. There is both, a struggle over common resources, as well as a growing struggle over basic community decisions regarding production and distribution of goods and services. This creates a situation of violence and of violent conflicts within the community, which leads to discontent and unrest.

As there is development in a State, acute competition among groups within the State emerge. As developmental programmes are carried out, regional disparities may become more emphasized. If, in such a situation some people are left out of the process, or perceive themselves as being deprived, they begin to group together and protest. Usually, in such a situation certain factors encourage group cohesion - such as a common language, history, religion or even geographical co-existence. Somehow, in a large number of cases, language has emerged as a very highly motivating factor in group formation. In normal every-day life, it is extremely easy to identify oneself by one's language, as it creates a feeling of distinctness from other people, speaking a different language, and a sympathy for people speaking the same. It also allows for greater and more intimate communication. Hence, protests by linguistic groups seeing themselves as 'nations' are widespread and a recurring phenomenon.

If, in addition to economic dis-advantages, one also perceives the group he identifies with, as

being discriminated against on other grounds, it only adds to his feelings of deprivation, frustration and group cohesion, and further alienates him from the mainstream. Usually, an economically predominant group will also dominate the political and social scene, and vice-versa. This is merely a natural and obvious fact. However, the deprived group, also, quite naturally, sees itself as dominated by another group in all spheres of its life. This leads to alienation, protest and mass unrest. The first expression of awakening among the 'deprived' may take mild forms, however if the problem is not resolved at the earliest and the disparities corrected, the situation is usually, potentially explosive. As demands remain unfulfilled, they grow more vehement and become less mild, until often, the demands evolve into secessionist and separatist demands. At least, the extremists within the protesting group demand secession and state their claim to 'nationhood'.

When development begins, some areas, for whatever reason - political or geographical (availability of raw-materials etc.) become more developed than the rest. This creates job opportunities and naturally there is inter-regional, inter-unit (in a federal system) migration. If in a federal state, the federating units constitute distinct linguistic groups, or nationalities, they already have an identity distinct from the people of the other units. This means that

the deprived local groups who feel that they have a prior right to the fruits of development in their unit, being 'sons of the soil', find an easily identifiable target group against whose domination to protest. The same could also apply to the inter-regional migrations, if a particular group can be identified among those who are reaping the benefits that the 'locals' feel, belong to them.

The initial migration may have occurred due to a couple of reasons - a lack of job opportunities at home or better opportunities outside; and/or the non-availability of local talent (labour, managerial). Once, jobs may have been filled by "outsiders", because the local people may not have had the required skills/education. However, as time passes, some benefits of development do pass on to the locals, too. There is education, and with it, a consciousness, both economic and political and a middle-class emerges, which sees "outsiders" holding all the better paid jobs, while, the locals remain unemployed. This newly emergent middle-class is always a potentially powerful group, demanding a better economic and political future, they begin to feel the necessity of controlling the economic and political machinery. Modernisation tends to create an awareness of separate identities. As political participation grows and educational and economic development produce new differentiations, such demands are likely to follow.

Nativism and the concept of 'sons of the soil' implies that people belonging to a particular territory, have a special, and the first, if not exclusive, claim to the benefits of all welfare activities within the territory. This implies a sort of ownership by a specific group of the territory it occupies. It also implies a special collective territorial right of an ethnic group. It means that the indigenous population has a first right/claim, on anything and everything, and that the "newcomers"/"outsiders" are entitled to benefits only after these have been adequately distributed to the indigeneous population.

— The crisis of ethnic group conflicts within political systems is clearly manifested in a multi-ethnic state like Pakistan. The major threat to the stability of Pakistan has been from internal violence along regional-ethnic identities. The Punjabis, Bengalis (pre-1971), Sindhis, Pakhtuns and the Baluchis constitute important elements in the Pakistani society.

— After the secession of Bangladesh/East Pakistan in 1971, Pakistan was left with just its western wing, consisting of four provinces. Punjab (with an approximate population of fifty-four million in 1982), Sind (nineteen million population in 1982), NWFP (14.6 million) and Baluchistan (3.25 million).⁵

5 Charles M. Kennedy, "Politics of Ethnic Preference in Pakistan", Asian Survey, Vol. XXIV, No. 6 (June 1984), p.698.

The four major ethnic groups/nationalities of Pakistan (Punjabis, Sindhis, Pathans, Baluch) are defined by an admixture of linguistic and political attributes. Tribal groups live within all four provinces, but the greatest concentrations are in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas, and 'Azad' Kashmir. Considerable numbers of Punjabis, Sindhis and Pathans live outside their own provinces, particularly in the ethnically diverse major urban areas of Karachi, Lahore and Rawalpindi.

For Pakistan, the task of nation building became more complicated than in most newly independent States. Four distinct nationalities, each having had, in the past, a fully or quasi-sovereign state of its own, were brought together to form the new State. (The incongruity of the fifth nationality (Bengalis) of Pakistan, was eventually brought to an end in 1971, when the Eastern Wing seceded and formed a new country). Moreover, the four provinces differ greatly in size, population, resources, level of social development and proximity to power. Also, since the beginning there has been serious opposition to the creation of a separate independent state of Pakistan. Opposition came from the two provinces - NWFP and Baluchistan.

Pakistan had been created in the name of Islam and it was expected that the ethnic groups constituting Pakistan, would be integrated on the basis of religion. But this was not a simple task. Though, an Islamic identity had gained predominance

in the minds of these groups during the freedom struggle, once freedom from British rule was achieved, other political considerations resurfaced. As the process of nation-building went underway, ethnic identities came to be articulated. The Bengalis in the Eastern wing were the first to successfully form their own nation-state, making the 1971 secession, the only such incident in the twentieth century. The bond of religion was obviously not sufficient to create firm enough ties of nationalism among the ethnic groups in Pakistan.

Once, the geographical incongruity of Pakistan having its territories separated by thousands of miles of Indian territory ended (in 1971), it may have been expected that nation-building would become a less complicated task. However, the basic dilemma facing Pakistan in the post 1971 period still remains the question of national identity. The Society is still polarized along ethnic lines, with groups feeling a sense of relative deprivation with regard to other groups.

The difference in the levels of development of the ethnic groups in Pakistan has a basis in history. The British had encouraged the growth of ethnic identities in pre-independent India. Those ethnic groups that identified themselves with their political strategy, benefitted the most. Those who collaborated with the British were, introduced to

the benefits of modernization, while others were deliberately left out - at the peripheral levels of development.⁶

The tribal Pathans of the NWFP were left out at the periphery because of the volatile tribesmen - Afridis, Orakzais, Utmans, Khels and Mohamands, and thus, they remained outside the pale of modernization and retained a strong ethnic identity. The same holds true of Baluchistan, where the British faced similar problems from the Murri and Bugti tribes.

In Sind, partial urbanisation did take place due to the strategic and political importance, of its seaport - Karachi. It was, however, the Punjabis who were patronized by the British from the very beginning as they had supported them. A new elite of landed aristocracy was created by the British through gifts of large tracts of land. This province became the principal area for the recruitment of soldiers. "The British Indian Army was 'Punjabized', as almost fifty percent of the Muslims in it were Punjabis"⁷ There was also an enormous concentration of executive power in the hands of the civilian - bureaucracy which consisted largely of Punjabis, and their "ruling collaborators",⁸ the 'Muhajirs', who occupied important positions in the

6 Arif Hussain, "Ethnicity, National Identity and Practorionism", Asian Survey (1976), p. 919.

7 Uma Singh, "Ethnic Conflicts in Pakistan : Sind as a Factor in Pakistani Politics" Seminar paper submitted at the Seminar on Domestic Conflicts in South Asian States : Emerging Trends (C.I.A., New Delhi, 1976)

8 Ibid.

country's bureaucracy, determined national policy making at the higher levels. The dominant economic force in the country was the capitalist class, which was again largely dominated by the Punjabis.

Given such a situation, it was obvious that, unless, deliberate attempts were made to prevent it, the lesser privileged ethnic groups would develop a feeling of alienation from the mainstream of Pakisani politics.- Also, since distinct nationalities existed in Pakistan, the logical choice of government would have been a federal system with a structure and machinery to protect minority rights and a sensitivity and responsiveness to ethnic matters. However, the Pakistani rulers imposed a unitary centralised form of government and the domination of the powerful economic and political groups by perpetrating discriminatory policies. The other ethnic groups resented the imposition of the Punjabi value - system on the remainder of Pakistan. In the name of securing Pakistan's national unity, the very basis of unity was eroded. "Islam, integrity of Pakistan, and the Urdu language became the code words for national domination"⁹. These attempts meant, for the other ethnic communities, a loss of their ethnic identity.

In the pre-1971 era, the main focus of dissent lay in the Eastern wing - where the Bengalis were articulating their demands under leaders like Sheikh Mujibur Rehman.

9 Mohammed A. Ghoyur and Henry Kasson, "The Effects of Population and Urbanization Growth Rates on Ethnic Tensions in Pakistan", in, Ahmed Manzooruddin ed., Contemporary Pakistan : Politics, Economy and Society (North Carolina, 1980), p.204

Since 1973, the emphasis and focus of dissent in Pakistan has shifted to Baluchistan and NWFP. Serious rifts had emerged between the government under Bhutto, and the Baluch and Pakhtun leaders. However, in recent years, Pakistan has experienced unrest in the province of Sind. Both in 1983 and in 1986, widespread conflict has been witnessed in Sind in the name of Civil Disobedience called for by the Movement for Restoration of Democracy (MRD). The situation is ethnically explosive in Sind.

According to figures quoted by Sindhis, "no more than two percent of Pakistan's armed forces come from Sind. Only five percent of the Federal Civil Services is from Sind. Most key positions in provincial administration are held by non-Sindhi bureaucrats. Of the, two thousand industrial units in Sind, only five hundred are controlled by indigenous Sindhis. Above all, Sindhis have become a minority in Sind itself - constituting merely forty five percent of the population".¹⁰

Wholesale and retail trade is dominated by Punjabi and other non-Sindhi "muhajirs". Sindhi peasants in rural hinterlands of these areas have become aware that most of the irrigated lands allotted during the 1950s and 1960s are in the possession on non-Sindhi

10 Mary Anne Weaver, "Pakistan's Protests Stir up Ethnic Divisions", The Christian Science Monitor, 2 September, 1983

Civil Service and Military Personnel.¹¹ The prosperity resulting from the remittances of million of rupees from Pakistani workers in the Middle-East, to their families, is mostly confined to the rural and urban areas of the Punjab because far fewer Sindhi skilled and unskilled workers were able to get jobs in the Gulf States.

Since Bhutto's overthrow in 1977, the Sindhis have become one of the most active ethnic groups. After having Z.A. Bhutto, a Sindhi, as their Prime Minister, there was a resurgence of hope among the Sindhis. Their ethnic politics involves not only a conflict between the Sindhis and the Punjabis, but also, between the "Old Sindhis" and "new ones" (Muhajirs) who migrated from India. The bulk of the migration occurred in the four months between August and November, 1947. It is estimated that in this period, some six million refugees moved into Pakistan. In Karachi, Hyderabad, Lyallpur, Sargodah, over sixty percent of the population was made up of refugees.¹² Thus Karachi in the 1950's became a city dominated politically, economically and socially by the Urdu-speaking Muslims of Delhi and Uttar Pradesh. In Karachi, in 1959, some eighty three percent of the population was of immigrants - refugees from India,

11 Mahleela Lodhi, "The only Way-Out", South, The Third World Magazine October 1983

12 S.J. Burki, "Migration, Urbanization and Politics in Pakistan", in, Howard Wriggins and James Guyot, ed., Population and Politics of South Asia (New York, 1983), p.147

accounting for sixty five percent and 'in-migrants' i.e. those born in other parts of Pakistan, accounting for eighteen percent of the city's population.¹³ Sind is the most important province in Pakistan, as far as the processes of population, migration and urban growth rates are concerned. These migrations, because of the numbers involved, have had the greatest effect on the ethnic politics of the country. Before independence, linguistically, Sind was a relatively homogeneous province. For instance, according to the 1941 Census, only thirty two thousand persons claimed Urdu as their mother-tongue in Sind and Khairpur State in a population of forty lakhs and eighty four thousand (which was only eight percent of the total). But by 1951, Urdu speaking Muhajirs made up about four lakhs and seventy six thousand or twelve percent of the total population of forty six lakhs eight thousand five hundred and fourteen. It will be interesting to look, at the language composition for Karachi District in 1961. Of a total population of twenty lakh forty four thousand and forty four, as many as eleven lakh one thousand seven hundred and seventy six or fifty three point nine percent declared Urdu to be their mother-tongue.

13 S.J. Burki, "Migration, Urbanization and Politics in Pakistan", in, Howard Wriggins and James Guyot, ed., Population and Politics of South Asia (New York, 1983), p. 148

Even Punjabi speaking people were found more frequently in Karachi (Two lakhs sixty thousand seven hundred and forty seven or twelve point eight percent) than Sindhi speaking people who numbered only one lakh seventy four thousand eight hundred and twenty three or eight point six percent. In fact, if only the urban population was counted in Karachi district, then the ~~third~~ largest linguistic group becomes Gujratis with one lakh fifty two thousand four hundred and seventy one or seven point five percent of the population and Sindhis would become the fourth because a substantial number of Sindhis lived in "gots" (Sindhi Villages) on the outskirts of Karachi city. Baluchis (five point three percent) and Pathans (five point two percent) were other important groups in Karachi.¹⁴

As a result of this infiltration, it is natural that the result is a conflict between the 'locals' and the 'non-locals'. The Sindhi elite's fear of hindrance in career advancement and other economic opportunities is similar to the threat which the locals of Baluchistan and NWFP feel from Punjabis, who have continually migrated to Quetta, Peshawar and other cities. Since both locals and non-locals are competing for the same limited economic

14 S.J. Burki, "Migration, Urbanization and Politics in Pakistan," in, Howard Wriggins and James Guyot, ed., Population and Politics of South Asia (New Yorks, 1983), p.148.

and job opportunities, the ethnic leaders have capitalized on these grievances and put more political demands on their ethnic groups.

More than half of Pakistan's industry is located in Sind, but Sindhis have practically no participation in it, whether as owners or as workers. The commercial, transportation, construction and service sector which comprises fifty five percent of Pakistan's Gross Domestic Product is also located largely in Sind. In Government service, educational institutions and other white-collar jobs, the Sindhis are represented far below their population proportion, whether it is on all-Pakistan basis or within Sind itself. Most of the jobs held by Sindhis are low-ranking and low-paying. Under the Pakistan Peoples Party government, Sindhis got some jobs in the nationalised sector; but according to Feroz Ahmad, the present military ruler has purged tens of thousand of Sindhis from government service and public sector enterprises.¹⁵ Even the land (nearly two million acres) left behind by the Hindus was given to Punjabi retired army personnel (by the Ayub Khan regime) who went to rural Sind's farmers. Over one million acres brought under cultivation by the construction of Kotri and Gudder Barrages were awarded to non-Sindhi military and civil officers. As much as forty percent of Sind's agricultural

15 Feroze Ahmad, in, Uma Singh, n.7.

lands has passed into the hands of non-Sindhis while three fourths of Sindhi peasants own no land at all.¹⁶ Recently , oil has been discovered in large quantities near Badin, and the Sindhis are apprehensive whether it would be utilized for the benefit of the local population or simply pumped out on the pattern of natural gas in Baluchistan.

Indisputable disparities exist in the respective levels of development of the four provinces. Inequality has increased and state policies to reverse the trend have yet to be found. The ranking of districts by provinces according to overall development criterion will show that Karachi, Lahore, Rawalpindi/Islamabad, Quetta, Peshawar and Hyderabad are the most developed districts and populations concentrated in large cities have benefitted most from development in all the four provinces.¹⁷

TABLE-1

	Punjab	Sind	NWFP	Baluchistan
Most Developed	2	2	1	1
Intermediate	11	4	2	-
Least Developed	6	5	3	9

16 Feroze Ahmad, in, Uma Sindh, n.7.

17 POT, Pakistan Series, April, July, 1983

As Table I shows the highest concentration of population in developed districts in the Punjab and Sind (Forty two percent), NWFP (Twelve percent), Baluchistan less than twelve percent of the total population. Punjabis, overwhelmingly, lie at the intermediate state of development while Sindhis, Baluchis and Pathans are disproportionately represented in Pakistan's population living in the least-developed districts. Most Pakistani, however, live in rural areas. The urban conglomerates receive a disproportionate share of resources and do not represent the trends in the provinces where there are located. For instance, Karachi and Hyderabad districts are highly urbanized where more than half of the population consists of new-Sindhis.

The rural indicators of development reinforce the results of Table 1. Overwhelmingly, it is the Punjab districts that are the most developed, NWFP districts are either at the intermediate stage or are the least developed ones while most Sindhi and all Baluch rural areas are the least developed in the country.¹⁸

TABLE 2
Ranking of Districts of Provinces
according to Rural Development Criterion

	<u>Punjab</u>	<u>Sind</u>	<u>NWFP</u>	<u>Baluchistan</u>
Most Developed	12	-	-	-
Intermediate	9	1	5	-
Least Developed	-	12	2	9

18 PUT. Pakistan Series, September-December, 1983.

An important feature of Pakistan's economy since the 1970s has been the phenomenal growth in overseas migration particularly to the Middle East. It is estimated that nearly two million Pakistanis working in the Middle East remit over \$ three billion. The remittances are a mixed blessing for the country as a whole, because the dependents of overseas migrants are concentrated primarily in the Punjab province (nearly seventy percent of the migrant dependents belong to Punjab, fourteen percent to Sind, twelve percent to NWFP and only four percent to Baluchistan). Thus, it can be inferred that regional income disparities may have worsened sharply. Also the regional inequalities are obvious and are being articulated by Sindhis, who belong to the less-developed region. This explains why Sindhi Awami Tehrik has now emerged as a new potent factor in Sind politics. This sense of deprivation formed the core of a political movement when the situation became ripe in October - December, 1983.

The Sindhis also accuse the Government of perpetrating cultural suppression. Ever since Pakistan's creation, the Sindhis in Karachi felt like strangers because very few people spoke their language and they were forced to learn Urdu. Censorship and suppression of the press and publications have been a common phenomenon in Sind. Sindhi writers are refused freedom of expression in their own country and any Sindhi writer or poet who wants to publish his work in India is declared a traitor to Pakistan.

The present ethnic conflict in Sind is reflective of the deep-rooted sense of deprivation among the Sindhis. The nature of the grievances of the Sindhis pertain to what is perceived by them as a denial of job opportunities, acquisition of their land by outsiders and ^{an} almost total absence of representation in, or access to corridors or power and the cultural oppression by the government. This perception of relative deprivation has resulted in ethnic conflict and cleavages in the society.

To ensure the stability of Pakistan, it is essential that the nationalities question be resolved. The Sindhis see the denial of job opportunities, and domination by outsiders in social and political spheres as a major irritant in inter-ethnic relations. Migration of 'outsiders' into Sind needs to be curtailed.

The question of 'Muhajirs' is extremely complex. They are today, asserting their right to be recognised as the "fifth nationality" in Pakistan. Recently, for the first time since the language riots in 1972, there have been riots between the Sindhis and the Muhajirs. In mid-June 1988, "armed supporters of the Muhajir Quami Movement and the Jiye Sind Students Federation fired at each other from rooftops and small lanes".¹⁹ Tension had been mounting between Sindhis and Muhajirs for some time in the past. The Sindhi students were not allowing Urdu-speaking Muhajirs to enter the University Campus (NED Engineering University and the Karach University). Clashes continued in other parts of Sind Province, too.

¹⁹ Idrees Bakhtiar (Karachi), in, Telegraph(Calcutta) 20 June 1988

Such clashes are symptomatic of the deep-rooted problem existing in Sind, today. The sense of deprivation among the Sindhis is strong and so is the resentment against the Punjabis and Muhajirs. A military solution can only curb the problem temporarily. For the long run, a permanent settlement needs to be sought. The 'Muhajirs' are a permanent factor in Pakistani society, and they cannot be wished away. Attempts need to be made to integrate them into Pakistani society. A position of dominance as held by the 'Muhajirs' in the early years of the existence of Pakistan, cannot solve the problem - it can only lead to greater resentment on the part of the Sindhis. A more balanced and realistic relationship between the Sindhis and Muhajirs is required, in which neither dominates the other.

Until now, the process of assimilation of the "Muhajirs" has not been very successful, and they still exist as a distinct group, even after forty years of the existence of Pakistan. However, the assimilation of the 'Muhajirs' is essential because recognition of the group as a nationality will only lead to further demands on their part. Moreover, the fact is that the 'Muhajirs' are not ^a homogeneous group. The name stands for all the Muslim migrants from India at the time of partition. They live in each province of Pakistan and have no real grounds for coming together except that they are called 'Muhajirs' and may have certain common problems. In Baluchistan and the NWFP there is hardly any prejudice against Muhajirs, inspite of the fact that the latter

do hold good positions in many respects. It is basically in Sind, where both locals and non-locals are locked in a bitter competition for the same limited job and economic opportunities, that the problem of 'Muhajirs' has become so acute. In Sind, the Sindhis are identifying all groups other than the "old" Sindhis, as groups reaping benefits that they should be enjoying. The demand for recognition as a 'fifth' nationality is not a very valid one, but the 'Muhajirs' are doing their best to protect themselves and their position.

✓ The present ethnic conflict in Sind, is a result of a sense of deprivation among the Sindhis. The issue is further complicated by the lack of a democratic responsive government. The solution to such a crisis can never be a military one, it needs to be resolved politically. The government must be sensitive to the aspirations, hopes and disappointments of the people. Such a democratic, responsive government is missing in Pakistan.

The demands in Sind have largely been for a change in the structure of the Centre-State relations in Pakistan. Though, G.M. Syed has spoken of secession and of separating from Pakistan and joining India, even he, today, seems to be willing to collaborate with other groups for reforms within the system. Demands, presently, centre around the federal structure of the state - some groups want a loose federation, others a confederal

system and yet others, ask for greater provincial autonomy. What is really being asked for, is a government and a system to protect the rights of the Sindhis and give them a greater share of social-economic and political power.

Vastly different groups exist within a single state quite peacefully, all over the world. Though the four ethnic groups that constitute Pakistan may have had no previous experience of existing as one State, they have done so, since independence. Since, one demand is for a confederal system, obviously, the four ethnic groups do not perceive, as impossible, the concept of continuing to exist under one central rule. Secession has not become a serious demand in Sind, except for demands made by G.M. Syed, who is perceived as an extremist.

The government needs to take notice of the grievances of the Sindhis. If the government is wise enough to resolve these issues here and now, the problem can be contained. However, the Sindhi grievances are genuine and deeply felt. If ignored, the situation in Sind has the potential of blowing out of proportion. The mass upsurges in 1983 and 1986 have revealed that a wide cross-section of Sindhis have already been mobilised, and the idea of Sindhi rights needing protection, is fairly widespread. If the issues put forward by an ethnic group are resolved, the question of secession need never arise.

It is of great importance to both Pakistan, and the region as a whole that the crisis be resolved within

the framework of the existing Pakistani State. A federal system has the means to resolve centre-state tensions. A change in the system is not required. What is required is the political will to do so.

Any prolonged crisis in a Third World country, lays the state open to outside interference - whether open or clandestine. The stability of the entire region is at stake, if one country is destabilized. The breaking up of Pakistan cannot be to the advantage of anyone. Small states in the region, will only lay it open to greater super-power intervention and struggle. Sind is strategically located. If it ever secedes, there is bound to be a struggle over who controls it - at the super power level.

Pakistan has already lost one wing and a large amount of its prestige. If broken up further, Pakistan will be reduced to playing the role of a small neighbour of India, whereas today, the two countries are locked in some kind of an arms race. It is in the best interests of Pakistan that the nationalities question be resolved.

Apart from the international aspect, internally too, the loss of Sind would be a major loss to Pakistan. Economically, a large amount of Pakistan's industry is located in Sind. Also, Karachi, the major seaport of Sind is of great economic and strategic importance to Pakistan.

East Pakistan, had also begun, by making demands for greater autonomy. It was to a large extent, a mismanagement of the situation at the early stages that

finally led to the break-up of Pakistan. Any ethnic group has the potential to build up its movement to demand secession. What is required is that the situation be handled carefully and wisely and be contained at manageable levels.

There have been ethnic conflicts that have, over the years, been given up or suppressed, or have become milder. It is not, as if the situation is, that, if once an ethnic group articulates its demands, the situation must necessarily, deteriorate. It can be curtailed and managed and that is what should be done at the earliest.

The Sindhi conflict in Pakistan has the potential to have repercussions in India. There is a large number of Sindhis who live in India and have some feelings of sympathy with their brothers across the border.

Moreover, over the years India has taken on the role of a major power in the region. In the light of India's role in the creation of Bangladesh and the present Sri Lankan crisis, one is forced to ask, if, in the event of a major crisis in Sind, would India feel compelled to act? G.M. Syed has already been speaking of Sind joining India. Is India willing and ready to take on the costs of playing the role of a super power in the region? Is India capable of it?

These are questions that arise, but are difficult to answer. If and when the crisis in Sind develops to that extent, the situation in the region may be quite

different from what it is at present. As things stand today, the conflict in Sind is at a manageable level. The demands can be met or negotiated. It is definitely in the interest of all concerned that the issue be resolved.

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