

A State of Transition: Authoritarianism and Democratization in Pakistan

Riaz Ahmed Shaikh

Institute of Business & Technology (BIZTEK), Pakistan

ABSTRACT

Among the more fascinating themes in contemporary South Asia has been the "success" of democracy in India and its "failure" in neighboring Pakistan. Yet studies of democratic politics in India and the military-dominated authoritarian state in Pakistan have rarely addressed why a common British colonial legacy led to apparently contrasting patterns of political development in post-independence South Asia. Pakistan came into existence in 1947 as a parliamentary democracy, but in 1954 the government was dissolved and the path was opened for the military rule that has characterized much of Pakistan's history. Four direct military interventions (1958-69), (1969-71), (1977-88), and (1999-2008) and the introduction of four constitutions highlight Pakistan's tumultuous relationship with its military and society's inconsistency in rule of law. This paper discusses the conflicts and crises attached to the political process of Pakistan while the country's polity is in a state of transition from an authoritarian to a democratic order, concluding that democratization is a highly fragile process in Pakistan that requires continued vigilance and further reforms to prevent a regression to previous anti-democratic political patterns.

INTRODUCTION

It is said that Pakistan is undergoing a transition to democracy. Unfortunately such transitions have been frequent in the country's 62 year existence and very often the nation returns to its original situation after only a few years, when the army covertly or overtly seizes control of the system.

The focus of this study is the relationship between democratic politics and military intervention in Pakistan. The prolonged suspension of political processes has resulted in an obsessive concern with the two main non-elected institutions of the state: the civil bureaucracy and the military. The supremacy of the military and bureaucracy in Pakistan is inexplicable without reference to the complications caused by the role of certain dominant social groups in eschewing the politics of resistance to gain patronage and privileged access to state (Aziz, 1998).

While assessing the failure of democracy in Pakistan and the conflict between democratic forces and non-democratic elements, various theories have to be taken into consideration. Sayeed (1978) believes that the perpetuation of the so called "Viceregal System" by the founding father M. A. Jinnah is at the root of the ills in the Pakistan democratic and political system. In Waseem (1994)'s view the influence of the military and bureaucracy against the democratic forces is based on the specific course the Pakistan Movement took. In his

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© Asia Journal of Global Studies, c/o The Asia Association for Global Studies
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opinion, the movement for Pakistan was largely rooted in areas outside the regions now comprising Pakistan, hence the mode of entry of Pan-Indian politics into the Muslim majority provinces played a decisive role in shaping the democratic institutions of the new state. McGrath (1998) highlights the controversial role of the country's judiciary in the conflict between democratic institutions and the military and civil bureaucracy. Alavi (1988), on the other hand, paints Pakistan as an "overdeveloped state" in which the military remains central to the interests of the dominant classes. He has also discussed the dominance of the salariat in the military bureaucratic oligarchy and the classes it has controlled. Ahmed (1998), while agreeing with Alavi's main thesis, emphasizes the role of the service bourgeoisie, as this sector occupies an important place in the country's economy. This sector consists of government services and contracts, permits and regulations. The higher echelons of the military and bureaucracy, including retired officers as well as their relatives, are members of the service bourgeoisie. The military and bureaucracy, therefore, are not simply over-developed, but a relatively autonomous executive and coercive arm of the state that protects and mediates between the interests of the indigenous and metropolitan propertied classes. Burki (1980) has also indicated the additional factor of the large mass of refugees who poured into Pakistan in millions after the 1947 Partition. His analysis focuses on the different cultures of the refugees on the one hand and the locals on the other and its dire consequences for the future democratic structure of the country.

Thus, a consensus exists among Pakistani scholars concerning the control of the country's political system by military-bureaucratic elites. At the same time, however, a wide range of opinions is evident concerning the nature and character of the military elite and how far it is autonomous and what classes its members serve.

HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE PAKISTANI NATION STATE

Pakistan came into existence on August 14, 1947 as a result of the partition of the sub-continent as per the partition plan of June 1947 under the India Act of 1935, amended as the Independence Act in 1947. In this discussion, we will examine the course the Pakistan Movement took in the context of democratic traditions and its constitutional framework and how it later influenced the shaping of authority structures in the post-independence period.

The Pakistan Movement was largely rooted even up to the mid-1940s in the areas outside the regions now comprising the territory of Pakistan. The mode of entry of Pan-Indian politics into the Muslim majority provinces played a decisive role in shaping the political institutions of the state. The peculiar structure of the Pakistan Movement must be understood in order to appreciate the specific structural and policy orientations of the future nation.

In the post-1857 period following the Indian Mutiny, fears of the dwindling position of Muslims in the new political framework of the sub-continent compelled the Islamic aristocracy of northern India to search for ways to safeguard its interests. Muslims were in the minority but they occupied a majority share of all employment as well as government lands and other resources (Robinson, 1974). Gradually a spirit of selective accommodation of Western education and its social reformist features combined with a commitment to political conservatism pervaded by the last quarter of the nineteenth century. From Sir Syed Ahmed Khan onwards, Uttar Pradesh (UP)'s Muslim leadership was increasingly wedded to the principle of safeguarding its rights through collective presentations to the Indian government against a backdrop of Urdu-Hindi communal struggles for economic opportunities in general (Robinson, 1977). Gradually various localities threw up a common string of communal problems which prompted groups across India to follow a strategy of exclusive dealings with the British government. The Muslim leadership shied away from the Indian National Congress, considering it a Hindu entity. The Simla Deputation of 1905 was a landmark in Muslim separation and was basis for the eventual formation of the Muslim League. Congress claimed the status of a secular political identity, whereas the

Muslim League loudly proclaimed itself the watchdog of the rights of Muslim aristocratic families. Hence, its membership was restricted to Muslims (Jaffrelot, 1985).

Since the Mughal period, Muslim politics was dominated by aristocratic families. For any Muslim to become a member of the Muslim League he had to meet special conditions, which included the ability read and write and to have an income of at least Rs. 500 annually. Additionally, most of the League's leadership came from Muslim minority areas. In fact, only 5 out of the 33 members of the Simla Deputation and only 8 out of the 35 members of the Muslim League nominated at its 1906 session at Karachi belonged to the future territory of Pakistan (Brass, 1979). This group generally reflected the preponderant position of the Muslim elite of UP in educational, professional and government employment sectors. Electoral reforms introduced in 1930s placed this elite in fear of a Hindu dominated UP province. The Muslim bourgeoisie of Bombay voiced the concern that the insecurity of Muslim commercial interests was becoming a serious issue. The election result of 1937 was indicative of this fear in Muslim minority provinces. The Muslim League performed very well in minority provinces, while it failed to show significant progress in majority provinces (Robinson, 1973).

Since making its demand for a separate state in March, 1940, the Muslim League leadership was at a loss as to making inroads into majority provinces, where Muslim populations were still generally not interested in the idea of Pakistan. The struggle for the creation of Pakistan was still centered on the Muslim minority provinces of Uttar Pradesh, Bombay and Bihar. The dilemma of the situation was that without a Muslim majority province on board the idea of Pakistan could never be realized (Brass, 1974).

This situation placed Jinnah in a difficult position. He had no other option but to enter the majority provinces on the terms of the predominantly feudal land holding groups who ruled in the Muslim majority provinces. It was a marriage of convenience for the provincial magnates, on whom Jinnah depended for support, who agreed to join the Muslim League on the condition that they would not surrender their local autonomy (Ahmed, 1976). These arrangements ultimately benefited the Muslim League, which swept the 1946 elections by appealing to communalism. Violence commenced in the Muslim majority province of Bengal and later spread to almost all the sub-continent. This paved the way for the Partition in 1947. The true number of casualties which accompanied India's partition will never be known and is subject to considerable controversy. Death toll figures range from 500,000 to 1.5 million lives. What is clear is that the dislocation surrounding partition involved the largest mass displacement of people (13 million) seen in the twentieth century (Talbot, 2007). The influx of a large number of Muslim refugees from the minority areas and provinces of India later introduced a new element into the future body-politic of Pakistan. Burki (1980)'s analysis focuses on the two different cultures that emerged in Pakistan - that of the refugees on the one hand and that of the locals on the other. This divide had dire consequences for the shape of future events in the country, especially with respect to the institutions of democracy (Burki, 1980).

An influx of refugees not only contributed to a significant change in the demographic balance between the rural and urban sectors of Pakistan, but also strengthened the bureaucracy's hold over society. The refugees coming from both urban and rural areas of India tended to settle in towns (Wright, 1947). In 1951, Pakistan's major urban centers - including Karachi, Hyderabad, Mirpurkhas, Gujranwala, Faisalabad, Sargodha, and Sukkur - had refugee majorities, while in Lahore, Rawalpindi, Multan and Sahiwal refugees accounted for more than 40 percent of the population. These urban refugees emerged as the support base for the refugee leadership of the Muslim League. In the absence of a local constituency in the country at large, elections would have meant the wiping out of the migratory Muslim League from the political scene altogether. Hence, the non-local members of the Muslim League leadership represented a built-in pressure group against the holding of general elections, despite the fact that individual migrants often showed enthusiasm for democracy. In a country where voting patterns depended heavily on clan loyalty and the

caste system, the absence of a sufficiently large concentration of refugees in the countryside meant that the chances for the election of refugee candidates from the rural constituencies were bleak (Ahmed, 1993).

The refugee phenomenon played a decisive role in shaping general political attitudes in Pakistan. The communal holocaust left a lasting imprint on the memories of the refugees. Hence at a national level their hatred for "Hindu India" provided a support base for the anti-Indian stance of the government's foreign and defense policies. The refugees generally considered factional quibbling among landlords as sufficient reason to believe that democracy could not suit Pakistan's specific conditions (Burki, 1980).

THE FORMATIVE PHASES OF PAKISTAN AND THE CIVIL AND MILITARY BUREAUCRACY

The founding father of Pakistan Muhammad Ali Jinnah was well aware of the turncoat politics of the majority provinces and the insecurity it caused by attaching itself to the migratory Muslim League leadership. Instead of depending on these provincial governments, therefore, the Muslim League leader relied on the civil bureaucracy. He appointed Chaudhry Muhammad Ali as secretary-general, when he in fact already enjoyed the de facto powers of prime minister (Ahmed, 1998).

Jinnah also surprised many when he announced that he would be the first governor-general of Pakistan. It was in flagrant disregard for Commonwealth convention. In later years, Lord Mountbatten related a meeting in which he explained to Jinnah that under the dominion constitution of Pakistan real power would be in the hands of the prime minister. To this Jinnah reportedly replied: "In Pakistan, I will be the governor-general, and the prime minister will do what I tell him." Jinnah's assumption of the office constituted a departure from dominion practice that the governor-general should be non-political. Pakistan had in Jinnah not only an active and political governor-general, but also its most powerful and influential politician. He met the challenge of building a Pakistani political system by assuming an active role within its government. His orders were unquestioned. He, not Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan, appointed the cabinet, again in contravention of Commonwealth norms (McGrath, 1996). He also undertook the constitutionally unusual move of serving both as governor-general and as a cabinet member. He kept the newly-created ministries of Evacuation and Refugee Rehabilitation and that of States and Frontier Regions under his direct control by assuming the portfolios for these cabinet offices (Hussain & Hussain, 1993).

Just one week after Pakistan came into existence, Jinnah dismissed the ministry of Dr. Khan in the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP). This was the first indication of the denial of opposition and a clear signal to those opposing the Muslim League. For this purpose Jinnah purported to act pursuant to Section 51(5) of the Government of India Act, which he alleged gave him control over the Provincial Governor. Section 51(5) had not been so employed during British rule. Rather, when the British had used it to assert their control from the center and a governor-general wished to remove a provincial minister, he did so through the exercise of Section 93 of the Government of India Act. The British, believing that this instrument of colonial control would not be necessary after independence, deleted it from the 1935 Act when they departed. In the absence of Section 93, Jinnah lacked the authority to remove the provincial ministry. He thus used the authority given him under Section 51(5). He did not stop there. Eight months after removing the Dr. Khan Shaikh government, he dismissed the chief minister of Sindh. In doing so, Jinnah pushed the constitutional limits of the governor-general's power even further than he had in NWFP. Jinnah's steps set the precedent for the future rulers of Pakistan to adopt undemocratic means to undermine the fragile democratic system of the country (Sayeed, 1978).

THE MILITARY AND CIVIL BUREAUCRACIES' RISING INFLUENCE

In Pakistan's first two decades, the locus of power centered on the civil bureaucracy rather than the political leadership, which it dominated. The civil bureaucracy also collaborated closely with the army. The men at the top of the bureaucratic apparatus in British India - the Indian Civil Service (ICS) - were a close-knit, exclusive group that guarded their privileged status. The Pakistani bureaucracy inherited and further reinforced this structure with the help of Jinnah (Goodnow, 1964).

On the eve of independence, the dynamics of the political situation had created the general impression that bureaucrats could not be anything more than the servants of the new government. In the public mind, it was Jinnah and his Muslim League who represented the new nation. In common parlance, the transfer of power had taken place between the two governments: the out-going British government and the incoming Muslim League. However, a closer look at the whole episode reveals that the actual transition took place between the British bureaucracy and the emergent Pakistani bureaucracy (Howards, 1969).

Chaudhry Muhammad Ali, in his capacity as secretary-general, could even supersede ministers in policy decisions. In successfully maintaining his grip on state affairs, he managed to malign two other persons. One was Finance Minister Ghulam Muhammad, who himself was an ex-civil bureaucrat belonging to the Indian Audit and Accounts Service. He was also hired by Jinnah to run the affairs of Finance Ministry. The other was Iskander Mirza, who had a unique combination of a military and civil bureaucratic background. He played a key role in the promotion of General Ayub Khan to the position of commander-in-chief, being a long-time friend of his from Sandhurst Military Academy in England (Cohen, 2005).

With the murder of Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan, a close associate of Jinnah's, Ghulam Muhammad, assumed the position of governor-general in 1951 and abrogated the Constituent Assembly in 1954. Bureaucratic supremacy over political institutions was thus publicly demonstrated. The military's complete support for and involvement in the new civil order was also symbolized by General Ayub's presence in the so-called "cabinet of talents" under a non-elected prime minister, Muhammad Ali Bogra. From 1951 to 1955, therefore, four persons - Chaudhry Muhammad Ali, Ghulam Muhammad, Iskandar Mirza, and General Ayub Khan - were freely operating on the chessboard of Pakistani politics (Habib, 1973).

With the entry of General Ayub Khan in the federal cabinet as Defense Minister, the military emerged as the most politically influential institution in the country. This tortuous emergence of a new political power in Pakistan, and the consequences of institutional and demographic imbalance, led to the atrophy of parliamentary politics in the country. Constitutional assemblies failed to design a working constitution for the country. One of the main reasons for the successful entry of the military and civil bureaucracy into the politics of Pakistan was the absence of any real political party system, which is an essential element of democracy in any country (Rafique, 1986). If we look at the Muslim League, its character as a mass movement was limited to cities. Having sympathizers only in village refugees, it critically depended on factional alliances among landlords. In Pakistan, power has frequently evaded any party-in-government, as is the case in many developing nations. Belonging to a rootless party in the country, the leadership of the Muslim League supported delays in the holding of free and fair elections. This continuous postponement of general elections rendered the use of party cadres more and more irrelevant because their ideological and organizational skills were not needed outside the electoral framework of politics. In the resulting organizational weakness of political parties, the military and civil bureaucracy-supported government could manage to lure certain factional groups away, or, conversely, create artificial majorities in the legislatures or reduce an existing one (Braibanti, 1966). The final blow to the Muslim League came in 1954, when the opposition-led United Front

defeated them in elections in East Bengal. This process went further when the first genuine political party in the form of National Awami Party came into existence in 1957. This generated fear in the ruling circles and the doors of parliamentary democracy closed, providing the context for the first military take over a year later.

THE MILITARY IN POLITICS

On October 7, 1958, President Iskander Mirza declared martial law in Pakistan. As a result, central and provincial governments were abrogated and political parties ceased to operate. The justification was the allegation that constitutional assemblies had failed to provide a workable constitutional framework for the country and had thus lost their utility (Zafar, 2001).

Soon after imposition of martial law, Ayub Khan promised to maximize the use of civilian agencies and minimize that of the armed services. The courts were to continue their normal functions. The major task of martial law was to build a new democratic system and "to enlighten the existing law." As Ayub Khan declared from the beginning, the purpose of Martial Law was to "assist civil power." In pursuance of this policy, Aziz Ahmed, an ICS bureaucrat, was appointed both secretary-general of Pakistan as well as the deputy martial law administrator. This favoring of the civilian bureaucracy was operative throughout the martial law years. In most of the enquiry committees constituted against politicians, 42.1 percent of members belonged to the civil service, with only 6.4 percent from the military, 5.7 percent from the judiciary and remaining from various other professional bodies (Ahmed, 1964). The new government system freed the bureaucracy from the need to seek a mandate from the masses. Military intervention in politics became almost a structural feature of the bureaucratic polity of Pakistan. This remarkable partnership with the civil bureaucracy was however not meant to hide the fact that it was the military that was in control. However, this sharing of power by a civilian president and a chief martial law administrator in the person of an army general came to an end on the October 27, when Ayub Khan took over as prime minister and also assumed presidential powers while later completely eliminating the post of prime minister. This finally completed the process of settling into a new pattern of non-democratic, military-centered government (Dobell, 1969).

General Ayub Khan, after strengthening his grip on political and administrative affairs, introduced a new law banning several popular political parties and arrested any political leaders he perceived might create trouble for his government. To defame the politicians and former members of constitutional assembly, several laws including the Elective Bodies Disqualification Ordinance (EBDO) were enacted (Ziring, 1971).

With his takeover, the martial law government of Ayub Khan announced on its very first day that a new constitution would be framed. In 1962, Khan presented this constitution, a poor reflection of the presidential democratic system in Pakistan.

THE MILITARY'S CONTRADICTORY DEFINITIONS OF DEMOCRACY

Military rulers in Pakistan have traditionally promoted their own definitions of democracy. For them, a powerful independent parliament elected through an electoral procedure is not an expression of the peoples' will. Rather, the delegation of power to local bodies represents the true spirit of democracy, embodying what may be termed "controlled democracy." Within a year of the Ayub government's being in power, his new system of Basic Democracies (BD) was promulgated in October, 1959. This new system was introduced to restrict the wider definition of democracy to the provision of basic amenities at the local level. The BD apparatus, employing 80,000 bureaucrats, was based on a four-tier hierarchical structure consisting of the Union Council/Committee followed by the Tehsil Council/Town Committee, under which was the District Council followed by the Divisional Council.

Ironically, the military's own concept of democracy was negated when a provision in the system called for half of the Union Council member be nominated by the Deputy Commissioners and not elected directly by their voters. The military government had high hopes that the upper tiers of the system would provide leadership for the local population. Violating actual democratic principles, General Ayub Khan sought his election as president through a referendum on February 14, 1960 based on an electorate consisting of the BD members. Almost 96 percent of them voted for him, and he was from then on regarded as Pakistan's first elected president (Ahmed, 1988). This practice was mirrored by future military rulers.

In the new phase of military rule, various top level officers of the armed forces were inducted into jobs and public sectors, chairmanships of public corporations and ambassadorial positions. Political opposition to the martial law government was restrained, as important figures were barred from taking part in politics. Khan faced his first public pressure to restore democratic rights in 1968. On the 10th anniversary of his rise to power on October 27, stirrings of mass discontent appeared on the streets of Pakistan. The government tried to contain student agitation against police oppression in Rawalpindi, especially as students turned to Z. A. Bhutto for guidance. The army was called in and a curfew was imposed after some rioting students were killed. The student movement soon spread to all towns and cities. The students' demands gradually expanded to include constitutional changes, the lifting of the state of emergency and the release of political prisoners. The movement against military rule gained further momentum when different segments of society including journalists, industrial workers and political workers joined together. This anti-Ayub movement was rooted in the tensions caused by the non-compatibility of three different bureaucratic institutions - the parliament, political parties and elections. The first two are structural variables and the third a process variable. The first two were rendered powerless under the 1962 constitution, followed by the Political Parties Act. As for the latter, it became the manipulated exercise of an electoral college in the form of Basic Democracies (Ali, 1987).

THE SECOND IMPOSITION OF MARTIAL LAW

Public discontent with military rule forced General Ayub Khan to surrender and resign, but again instead of handing over power to the speaker, as per constitutional provisions, he invited Army Chief General Yahya Khan to impose martial law in 1969. The Yahya regime represents a crucial point in the political history of Pakistan. The new regime found it difficult to avoid addressing the large scale problems inherited from the previous regime and took some reformist measures to rehabilitate its legitimacy. However, holding national elections for the first time in the country's history proved to be the most significant step forward taken by this government in terms of structural changes to the political system of Pakistan (Wriggins, 1975).

Yahya's ascent to power symbolized many significant changes. Unlike the 1958 coup, whose leaders held the previous parliamentary system responsible for Pakistan's gravest ills (thus disenfranchising the public through the system of Basic Democracies), the 1969 coup was born out of a general consensus to revert to the pre-1958 system. It meant that the new martial law regime started out from a perceived mandate of holding elections under the parliamentary system. It was thus under moral pressure to bring democracy back to the nation (Feldman, 1976).

Yahya's regime held elections in December, 1970. These elections played a unique role in Pakistan's history. While there had been presidential referendums and nation-wide polls before, only the 1970 elections enjoy the distinction of being undisputedly free and fair. This fact is important primarily because it laid bare the true political attitudes of people hitherto unacknowledged by the rulers. It showed that new political forces had come of age and were now ready to actively engage in Pakistan's politics. That was something that

could hardly be imagined by the government before the elections, even though officials had always feared the unpredictability of seeking a public mandate. The elections exploded the myth that any exercise in arbitrary institution-building could be a surrogate for genuine expression of the public will (Syed, 1985).

THE ARMY AND THE FIRST GENERAL ELECTION'S RESULTS

Yahya Khan held the 1970 elections with the hope of bringing in a civilian regime that would be acceptable to the army establishment. The army would have preferred to see a coalition of the Muslim League and religious parties in power. However, the elections did not produce the desired result. The two parties that came to the fore were the Awami League Party in East Pakistan and the Pakistan People's Party in West Pakistan, led by popular political agitator Sheikh Mujeeb-ur-Rehman and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto respectively (Feldman, 1976). The election results were therefore not honored by the military regime, civilian bureaucracy and the political elite of the Western wing. The hostile reaction against the majority party and Bengali leaders led to a stalemate which intensified further into a political crisis. Despite the majority won by Mujeeb's Awami League in the elections, the West Pakistan establishment, dominated by the military, was uncomfortable with the idea of transferring power to a majority party whom they considered ethnically inferior. In his book on the 1971 debacle, army officer-turned-intellectual Sadiq Salik quoted another Pakistan Army officer as saying, "Don't worry.... We will not allow these black bastards to rule over us." Such derogatory remarks expressed the ethnic bias and exclusivity of the army, the majority of the Punjabi population and West Pakistan's leadership (cited in Mascarenhas, 1972). The army leadership had to make a difficult choice between Mujeeb and Bhutto, which resulted in delaying the transfer of power to either of the two leaders. This was a clear violation of standard democratic practices.

In fact, the real fear of majority rule had forced the Pakistani establishment to postpone the elections since the founding of the country in 1947. They made the army a junior partner to ensure their continuity in power for the next few decades. This denial of the transfer of power to the majority party through delaying tactics led to a political stalemate between the two wings. Army and civil bureaucrats saw the unrest in East Pakistan as part of a larger Indian conspiracy to undo the country. The army thus launched a military operation called "Searchlight" against the majority party on March 15, 1971, cracking down on all dissent in the Eastern wing. Human rights atrocities in the Eastern wing - a such as selective killings of Awami League supporters, Hindus and university students - increased to such an extent that they became noticeable to foreign diplomats stationed in Dhaka and elsewhere in the region (Jahan, 1972).

On December 16, 1971 Pakistan's military commander in East Pakistan surrendered to Indian forces, and the new state of Bangladesh was carved out of Pakistan. This led to a crisis of legitimacy which made it imperative for the army to withdraw from politics. It is said that it was not Bhutto's election victory but the tragic conditions caused by the defeat in war that facilitated the transfer of power from the army to the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) (Wolpert, 1993). The army was left only with the option of partnering with Bhutto, who was seen as reasonably sympathetic to the military's pro-Islam and anti-India agenda. These two issues were central to the military's conception of its role. Bhutto assumed power in December 1971 as the president and chief martial law administrator with the support and consent of the military (Hasan, 1995).

Unfortunately, Bhutto destroyed his chance to strengthen democratic institutions when he mistreated the sociopolitical ideologues in his party, cracked down on his critics and sacked the Marxist elements within the PPP. Towards the end of his regime he had almost completely revised his political agenda by giving a greater number of party tickets to the landed gentry in the 1977 elections than in the 1970 elections. It was, however, inevitable that Bhutto would make these errors because of larger systemic problems. He was, after

all, a member of the ruling feudal class, and ultimately a hostage of his class and interests. Given the pre-capitalist structure of the political economy, the landed feudal and other dominant classes would not have benefited from a metamorphosis of the strengthened democratic institutions. The PPP leader eventually struck deals with the civil-military bureaucracy to keep firm control over power. While strengthening the civil bureaucracy by turning bureaucrats into managers of public-sector industries and business, he also pursued policies that equally bolstered the military's significance (Scherer, 1993).

BHUTTO'S CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT AND THE MILITARY

In terms of Bhutto's relationship with the military, he miscalculated the resilience of the armed forces in thwarting the strategic changes he had brought about in their management. Initially, he seemed to have taken a major step forward in changing the command and control structure. For example, he created the Joint Chief of Staff Committee which was made responsible for joint planning. He also strengthened the Ministry of Defense (MOD) by bringing the three services under the Ministry of Defense's administrative control, granting the prime minister the position of the supreme commander of the armed forces, replacing all designations of commander-in-chief by that of chief of staff, and making all the services chiefs equal in stature in all three forces. The three chiefs were put under the command of the joint chiefs of the staff committee, with the president of Pakistan as the commander-in-chief. Furthermore, the 1973 constitution promulgated during Bhutto's rule declared the abrogation of the constitution to be an act of treason punishable by death (Askari, 2003). The tenure of the chiefs of staff was also fixed and government also decided not to grant extension to the services chiefs so that a particular commander did not hold post for too long a period of time.

The 1973 constitution reflected the desire of the political elite to push the military back to its traditional limits. The functions of the military were clearly laid down in the constitution. The military, under the direction of the federal government, was required to "defend Pakistan against external aggression or threat of war, and subject to law, act in aid of civil power when called upon to do so." This inclusion in the 1973 constitution was indicative of the determination of the democratic forces to "put an end" to the military's involvement in the active politics (Taseer, 1979).

The constitution defined as high treason any attempt to or any kind of direct or indirect assistance to abrogate or conspire to abrogate and subvert the constitution "by use of force or show of force or by other unconstitutional means." The parliament was authorized to make laws for those found guilty of high treason. In September 1973, the parliament passed a law instituting the death sentence or life imprisonment for the subversion of the constitution. The constitution also laid down the oath for armed forces personnel specifically forbidding them to take part in political activities of any kind (Hasan, 2002). The political elite hoped that these clauses in the 1973 constitution coupled with the judgment of the Supreme Court in the Asma Jilani vs. the Government of Punjab case in 1972 would deter any future military intervention in politics.

The People's Party government assigned special importance to strengthening the civilian regulatory apparatus so as to reduce its reliance on the military institutions for law and order. Bhutto's government decided to strengthen the civilian security forces. This was done by providing better equipment and communication systems to the police. The Federal Investigation Agency was created and the existing intelligence agencies were streamlined. The major focus of Bhutto's policy towards the military from 1972 to 1973 was the neutralization of its political power. When the senior commanders associated with the Yahya regime had been removed, Bhutto felt that he had effectively established control over the military and began to cultivate the favor of the military high command. However, due to defense considerations that emerged after the debacle of 1971, the establishment of Bangladesh and internal security problems, the Bhutto government could not continue

to antagonize the military. Bhutto began to mend fences with the military after the reassertion of civilian supremacy and took steps to remove the impression that his government was anti-military (Cohen, 2005).

The commanders who took control of the military after the 1971 debacle accepted the principle of civilian supremacy and emphasized the military's aloofness from active politics. General Tikka Khan, Chief of Army Staff (1972-76), stressed professionalism and loyalty to the constitution and the civilian authority established there under (Rizvi, 2000).

However, within few years a sense of resentment developed over government policies among a small group of army and air force officers. This came to light when 14 officers of the air force and two brigadiers were arrested on charges of conspiring to seize power by arresting the political leadership and the top brass of the army. The plan was discovered before it could be launched (Quddus, 1981).

This episode had an important impact on democratic-military relations. The behavior of the officers involved in the conspiracy was not typical of the mood of the military. The military as an institution stood by the democratic government. No sympathy was also expressed for the convicted military officers by the press. This was a clear assertion of democratic civilian pre-eminence over the military (Yusuf, 1980).

While asserting democratic supremacy over the military and also providing for the armed forces' demands of modernization, the Bhutto government adopted policies to extend the popular support it enjoyed at the time of assumption of power and endeavored to lay down solid foundations for political institutions. These policy measures included the introduction of socio-economic reforms, the formulation of the constitution, and the use of the ruling People's Party as the major instrument of political mobilization. However, these policies faltered. The socio-economic reforms could not usher in the promised era of change. Disillusionment resulted among supporters and evoked opposition from well-entrenched politico-economic interests. The constitution's participatory and democratic character was softened through amendments and by a heavy reliance on the regulative apparatus of the state, while the People's Party suffered from internal conflicts, ideological and personality feuds (Jalal, 1995).

An important development was the dismissal of the Mengal Cabinet in Baluchistan in February 1973 by the federal government and the resignation of Mufti Mahmud's Cabinet in North West Frontier Province as a mark of protest. The federal government used troops to suppress dissidents in Baluchistan (Khan, 1975), exposing its inability to settle political problems through constitutional means. The resulting political imbroglio included a large number of Baluch activists who took to the hills and launched a guerrilla war. Anti-insurgency operations undertaken by the army under the instructions from the civilian government kept the regular troops tied down in Baluchistan until the coup of 1977 when the new military government abandoned operations there. This also marked the beginning of Bhutto's reliance on the military for achieving political goals (Baloch, 1975).

In his instinct for survival, Bhutto tried to partner with the military by giving it a role in administration, imposing martial law in major cities. The army, to this end, was asked to fire on demonstrators. This was a manifestation of the PPP leadership's failure to institutionalize party democracy. The period from 1971 to 1977 represents a lost opportunity. The role of religious parties increased while the use of army for the suppression of political unrest and mass demonstrations clearly provided a chance for the military to understand the structural flaws of the political system, thereby enabling it to dominate Pakistani society (Aslam, 1995).

However, Bhutto alone could not be held responsible for strengthening the armed forces. The structural lacunae in the country's political system which led to the military's significance date back to the country's birth in 1947 (Hasan, 2000).

THE THIRD IMPOSITION OF MARTIAL LAW

The military staged a comeback to politics in 1977 with the intention of institutionalizing its control of the state and relationship with civil society. General Zia-ul-Haq's military regime continued until his death in an air crash in 1988. Zia's policies affected Pakistani society and its political culture significantly. The supreme court of the country was arm-twisted into giving the death sentence to deposed Prime Minister Bhutto. He was hanged in April, 1979. The death of Bhutto was a signal to the public regarding the regime's zero tolerance for opposition. It indicated its absolute control over all national matters (Jalal, 1990). The killing of the elected prime minister was one of the draconian measures that altered the relationship between the military and the political leadership forever. Not satisfied with the prime minister's assassination, the military regime undertook other coercive measures to eliminate any hint of populism in the country, acting against both political leaders and their supporters. Meetings of all senior political leaders were monitored by the intelligence agencies through bugging or spying. Reportedly, major political leaders of parties who were struggling under the umbrella group Movement for the Restoration of Democracy (MRD) were closely watched through wire-tapping and other covert means by the intelligence agencies. The Zia regime also banned all major sources of public protest and groups such as student and labor unions (Ziring, 1980).

The most dangerous action of the military government under General Zia was the use of religious ideology to muster support among the general public against democratic forces. The alliance of the military with religious parties and the promotion of Islamic culture were meant to establish hegemony over democratic society (Nasr, 2002). The creation of the office of Nazim-e-Salat (Controller of Prayers) and the introduction of Sharia law and Islamic banking were some of the means used to fight the secular system linked to Western democracy. These measures gave the military dictator a symbolic legitimacy. State propaganda was used in the character assassination of certain opposition politicians and was especially adept at condemning Bhutto for his alleged consumption of alcohol. Thus, it claimed that the army had taken control of governance to clean the state of the debauched leadership that had been drawing society away from its Islamic norms. Pushing society toward social conservatism required the military to cozy up to the religious conservative right. It must be noted that the Pakistan of the 1960s and the 1970s was comparatively liberal. As the later linkage between the military and the religious right brought sociopolitical legitimacy to the military, however, Pakistani society became more socially conservative (Sherani, 1991).

Tightening its grip on the political culture of the country, the Zia regime created a new set of parties and politicians to neutralize genuine political forces such as the Pakistan People's Party. Zia sought a new breed of politician loyal to the military establishment by introducing the Local Bodies System (this was nearly identical to General Ayub Khan's Basic Democratic System). Instead of strengthening democracy, the Local Bodies System undermined the role of political parties' national appeal through the localization of politics (Muneer, 1980).

Local elections were held on a non-party basis, thereby creating an apolitical cadre of political representatives at the grassroots level. Moreover, local representatives were empowered over the traditional political party system by being provided with development funds to be used in cooperation with district administrations. The basic idea was to create a new system of political patronage controlled from the top rather than through the popular political parties (Malik, 1997).

National elections were also held on a non-party basis in 1985. Contrary to the government's claim that elections held on a non-party basis would produce a new or better set of political leaders, most of the seats in these elections were acquired by members of the landed-feudal class, tribal chiefs, and influential religious officials with feudal backgrounds. Since their

political survival depended on the military, these politicians were keen to become clients of the armed forces establishment rather than the political parties (Ahmed, 1982).

The non-party elections threw up a weak civilian democratic regime. Zia handpicked the prime minister, Muhammad Khan Junejo. The parliament was then coerced into passing the controversial Eight Amendments to the 1973 constitution. Passed in 1985, it allowed the president instead of the prime minister to become the supreme commander of the armed forces. The president also was given the power to sack the parliament and dismiss the cabinet without consultation with the prime minister. The parliament was also blackmailed and coerced into agreeing to ignore all acts of omission committed by Zia and his cabal of generals after the 1977 coup. The coercive capacity of the military worked to good effect on these parliamentarians, who had major personal stakes which they could not afford to compromise for the sake of democracy. The military general-cum-president did not allow the elected representatives to change the course of his policies (Khalid, 1985).

A rift was created between Zia and Junejo when the prime minister ordered a inquiry into an explosion at a military ammunition depot at Ojhri near Rawalpindi in April 1988 in which hundreds of innocent people died. There was also a military-parliament impasse on the Afghan policy. Zia demonstrated who was in control, and sacked his hand-picked government led by Prime Minister Junejo in May, 1988 (James, 1993).

The army under Zia skillfully used intelligence agencies to manipulate the political parties. Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) was involved in the formation of an alliance of opposition parties, the Islami Jamhoori Ittihad (IJI) and the Mohajir Qaumi Movement (MQM) to counter Bhutto's Pakistan Peoples Party. The military regime also strengthened important entrepreneurs to neutralize Bhutto's support base, which included labor and student unions. An alliance with the trader-merchant class or big business was also sought to create alternatives to the PPP. The rise of Nawaz Sharif, who became Pakistan's premier twice during the 1990s, is a case in point (Arif, 1995).

The military's ultimate objective continued to be to find more dependable means to legitimize its political power and role, including revising the legal and constitutional framework. The Zia regime also used extra constitutional methods, such as holding a referendum in December 1984 to cultivate public support for his continuation in power, using Islam as a shield in seeking political legitimacy. Like Ayub Khan, Zia sought the continuation of his and the army's power through a mandate. Again, the way in which the army established a permanent role through the head of the services was similar to the events of the 1960s (Chisti, 1989).

THE RESTORATION OF A FRAGILE DEMOCRACY (1988-1999)

The elections held in November 1988 (after the death of Zia) ushered in a period of unstable democracy that became noted for its quick succession of governments. During the ten years (1988-99), before another army takeover by General Musharraf, Pakistan saw eight prime ministers assume office. The military, as the ultimate arbiter, tweaked the political system every two years, especially when it saw the democratic regime challenging the defense establishment's authority, and perceived it to be a substantive threat.

The army was accused of forcing the dismissal of Benazir Bhutto's and Nawaz Sharif's first government for challenging the military's authority. Benazir Bhutto was quite helpless against the army's conspiracy to overthrow her government in 1990. She was at odds with the military over issues important to its interests, such as the appointment of the corps commanders and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (JCSC). Benazir also replaced the head of the Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) with a general of her choice. This did not make her popular with the army, prompting its retaliation. The army chief and ISI chief obtained a slush fund of Rs.60 million from a private bank and used it to

execute a plan for Bhutto's removal. The money was given to the ISI to destabilize the civilian government (Lamb, 1991).

Later on the army's involvement led to the removal of Bhutto's successor, Nawaz Sharif. Sharif, who was a product of General Zia, was initially brought to power with the army's help to replace Benazir Bhutto in 1990. His subsequent removal was a result of differences with the army chief over the government's support for the US military initiative against the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Sharif and the army also became estranged because of disagreements over military operations in Sindh against the Muttahida Quami Movement (MQM). Clearly the military prevailed on most issues and political leaders were sacked for disagreeing with them (Baxter, 2005).

Benazir Bhutto returned to power in 1993, only to be dismissed again in 1996. It is thought that her government was removed as a result of the efforts of religious-conservative forces and the military's realization that she was unable to guarantee continued US support, with Washington and Islamabad having divergent views on Afghanistan and nuclear proliferation (Khory, 1997).

After returning to power in 1997, Nawaz Sharif lost it again in 1999 because of his open confrontation with the army chief General Pervez Musharraf, whom he had removed from office. Sharif's dismissal brought the military back into the seat of power (Siddiq, 2007).

THE ARMY'S FOURTH COUP

A fierce battle for supremacy between the military and the parliament in the last days of Sharif's government reached its peak. The prime minister had gained confidence through getting a two-thirds majority in the 1996 elections, and this had helped him remove the controversial Article 58(2) (b) from the 1973 constitution, which was included in the constitution by General Zia-ul-Haq in 1985. He also became confident of his ability to reduce the army's power after forcing General Jahangir Karmat, General Musharraf's predecessor, to resign. Sharif was unhappy with his statement regarding the need for a National Security Council (NSC) which would give a permanent role to the armed forces in political decision making (Khan, 2001).

One of the causes of the rift between the prime minister and the army chief was the military's dissatisfaction with the former's efforts at negotiating peace with its traditional arch-rival, India, without including the military in the process. Musharraf expressed his resentment of the peace process by refusing to attend the welcome ceremony for Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpai, who had come to sign the famous Lahore Declaration. To further damage Sharif's peace efforts, in 1999 a small group of senior army generals launched a military operation (later known as the Kargil Conflict) against India at Musharraf's behest. Sharif seriously considered the initiation of an inquiry into the operation. This progressive strengthening of the parliament's authority suggested that the prime minister might eventually have acquired the confidence to publicly question the army chief's judgment. Any inquiry into this controversial military action would have symbolized a final victory for civilian democratic forces over the military (Mazari, 2003).

The army would not allow its authority to be questioned. The resignation of General Karamat had caused consternation amongst the officer cadre, who saw the move as an insult to the armed forces. Similarly, peace talks with India initiated by Sharif's government aimed at restoring confidence between the two neighboring nuclear-armed states without involving the army seemed to challenge the military's very *raison d'être*. The removal of the prime minister and the dissolution of parliament was therefore an expression of the military's restoring its own monopoly over critical foreign and defense policy issues (Johnson, 2005).

After the coup, General Musharraf followed a familiar agenda of reform, removing "corrupt and incompetent politicians," including both former prime ministers, from the political scene. The same agenda was adopted by the previous army Generals Ayub Khan and Zia-ul-Haq. The military embarked upon rebuilding the political system through creating alternative constituencies and seeking out a new set of politicians who would do the GHQ's bidding. This process involved the use of techniques such as the "localization of politics" carried out by previous military regimes, though the new regime called it "devolution of democracy." The result was that local governments were elected in country's 96 districts (Khan, 2004).

The new local government elections, held on a party basis, allowed for the entry of new figures onto the political scene. These local government representatives played a crucial role during the May 2002 presidential referendum that was held before the general elections. As survival of these local bodies was linked to General Musharraf and the army regime, the new politicians ensured that the ballot boxes returned full and the votes were in Musharraf's favor. As per independent sources, the voter turnout in the referendum was not more than 15 percent (Abbas, 2005). However, the government claimed it to be 70 percent, 98 percent of whom voted in the general's favor.

A general election at the end of 2002 followed this referendum, and was a model of the military establishment's mastery of pre-poll rigging. The army did not merely manipulate the election-day process - they also controlled the lead up to the elections. Barring the two main political parties from forming a government, the military decided to use other puppet parties to achieve its goals. They also coerced politicians through the creation of organizations such as the National Accountability Bureau (NAB). NAB, working under a senior general, was used to harass politicians into compliance. It was accused of creating the "King's Party," a name given to Musharraf's Pakistan Muslim League Quaid-e-Asam (PML-Q), by clearing its members of charges of corruption. The NAB coerced opposition members through instituting cases against them by seeking their disqualification through the national accountability courts. Among the prominent members of the opposition who were victimized was a well-known member of Pakistan Peoples Party, Yusuf Raza Gillani, who is now the prime minister of the country. He was charged for misusing official cars and telephone facilities (Waseem, 2006).

Despite all its manipulations, the army failed to get the results it desired and had to engage in further manipulation by forcing a split in Bhutto's Pakistan Peoples Party. Fearful of losing privileges, being involved in court cases, or being victimized by NAB, 20 members of the Pakistan Peoples Party defected to form a group called the Pakistan People's Party Patriot (PPPP) before joining ranks with the army backed King's Party-PML-Q. This enabled the PML-Q to get the majority it required to form a government. The change of loyalties of the Pakistan Peoples Party members is an extraordinary example of the army's political maneuvering (Askari, 2003).

Neither the parliament nor the government operated freely. Elected members were not allowed sufficient room to maneuver by the executive, represented by the army-president. The army managed to create a new set of clients among politicians who supported the army chief turned president. It was in fact Musharraf's position as the army chief that gave him the capacity to openly manipulate politicians. The democratic process was hijacked by the military president. The army turned Pakistan into a bureaucratic-authoritarian state in which the president was a military man and the prime minister an international banker brought in from Citibank. The parliament and ruling party politics were subservient to the army chief/president (Waseem, 2006).

General Musharraf took two specific measures to institutionalize the military's control of politics: first was the restoration of Article 58(2)(b); second, the establishment of the National Security Council (NSC). The institutionalization of power indicates a fundamental change in the character of the armed forces. While acknowledging the relative resilience

of the political forces in contesting for its share of power, the military also ensured that it became an equal partner in decision making to guarantee the stability of the central state. It had by this time turned into a parent-guardian, who ensured its control of the state and society through the NSC. The NSC Act passed in April 2004 gave the military a permanent role in decision making and governance. The creation of this special council was also the culmination of the armed forces' almost 44 years of struggle to establish themselves as the prime domestic player. The NSC was headed by the chief of army staff/president and four military officers (the chairman of JCSC, the chiefs of the army, air and navy staff) (Talbot, 2003).

Contrary to Musharraf's claim that the NSC was necessary to strengthen democracy and to stop the "irresponsible behavior" of politicians, it was formed to protect the military's interests and to enhance the organization's position as the guardian of the state (Askari, 2003).

It took both the major political parties PPP and PML-N several years to finally recognize the negative consequences of encouraging the military's internal economy. In issuing a jointly agreed Charter of Democracy (COD) in May 2006, the leaders of both parties agreed to reduce the military's role in the nation's political affairs (Wilson, 2007).

General Musharraf ruled Pakistan without any major troubles with the assistance of his King's Party while sidelining the popular Pakistan Peoples Party and the Pakistan Muslim League-N. He faced his first real problem when he dismissed Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry. The president leveled various allegations of corruption and nepotism against him. The suspension of the chief justice led to severe political turmoil in the country, which forced General Musharraf to impose a state of emergency in the country in November, 2007. Using this emergency, he sent the entire judiciary home, placed curbs on the media, suspended human rights and brought amendments to the country's constitution. The persistent protests of civil society, in the form of disgruntled journalists, lawyers and human right activists, forced General Musharraf to shed his uniform and fix a date for elections under a caretaker government he would nominate. Most of the caretaker cabinet was selected by Musharraf and consisted mostly of his close associates, who played a biased and far from impartial role in the elections held in February, 2008. Despite General Musharraf's interference and misuse of state machinery, he could not obtain the results he intended (Askari, 2003).

Despite the support of state machinery, General Musharraf's King's Party failed to return an impressive performance. The peoples' verdict was clearly against him. Morally, he should have resigned while accepting the election results. But this was possible only when public agitation forced General Musharraf to vacate the presidency, which he has occupied as a result of a doubtful election process and his hand-picked parliament. This parliament had already completed its tenure and morally was not in a position to elect an army general once again as president for next five years.

The Pakistan Peoples Party's incumbent government that took over about a year ago is faced with three important issues: 1) An economic crisis left by the previous government of General Pervez Musharraf; 2) controversial constitutional amendments and a judicial crisis initiated by General Pervez Musharraf on November 3, 2007 by dismissing 60 judges just to stop the Supreme Court from giving a judgment on the eligibility of General Musharraf for contesting the election as serving chief of army staff; and 3) the worsening security problem in the country due to its pivotal role in the War against Terror, with Pakistan's entire tribal area bordering Afghanistan in a state of war since 2002. Despite its stated intentions, President Zardari's government has as of yet failed to resolve any major problem he inherited from the previous government. These unresolved issues hang like the sword of Damocles on the fragile democratic process restarted only a year ago. The important question is whether the mere retention of a civilian government is going to ensure the continuity of democracy in Pakistan while several unaddressed contradictions

attached to the political process of the country are still unresolved. In this situation neither the country's road to democracy nor the supremacy of parliament can be ensured.

CONCLUSION

Since the founding of Pakistan six decades ago, the army has directly ruled for 33 years. For 11 years after the death of General Zia-ul-Haq in an air crash, it remains the real power behind the throne.

The genuine purpose of the army is to defend the geographical territory of the country. Instead, the military has throttled democracy, mutilated the constitution, destroyed the institutions of the state, blundered into two major wars and a minor one, as well as destroyed the basis upon which Pakistan was founded. Military leaders are reviled by the people, for all the money invested in their institution has given the people nothing in return except dictators, a truncated country, national humiliation and wasted years.

The new democratic government, which has taken over just one year ago, must not forget that the majority in the parliament has provided them an opportunity to bridge the gap between two separate worlds - civil democracy and the military. While politicians and civilians are portrayed as incompetent and corrupt, the military is presented as the better institution. A military/parliament divide is not in the interest of the country. The existence of two worlds antithetical to each other creates tension and not understanding.

The new democrats and especially the elected prime minister must ensure the supremacy of parliament on all the institutions of the state including the military by allowing the discussion of all issues related to the defense of the country. It is a fallacy to assume that parliament will jeopardize national security or that transparency will hurt secrecy. Another step involves the reigning in of NAB and the political wing of country's most notorious intelligence agency, the ISI. These two institutions have attracted criticism for their perceived role against the political class, and they may play a very vital role in making the roots of democracy stronger by remaining within their own constitutional roles. Powers obtained by President General Pervez Musharraf through different unconstitutional tactics include the appointment of judges, the chiefs of the armed forces and the use of Article 58(2) (b), which has held parliament hostage through threat of dissolution by the president. That brings in the issue of parliamentary sovereignty, which was destroyed by General Pervez Musharraf under the 17th Amendment. It is not surprising that politicians who have been elected feel extremely insecure and want to do away with the controversial articles as soon as possible. It should also be a point of concern for the military that, after having remained the dominant national power for 44 years, it should redeem itself by apologizing to the people of Pakistan and saying "never again."

Furthermore, it is high time for the political leadership and members of civil society to address vital issues impeding the democratic process in the country. These issues include the acceptance of the multi-ethnic identity of the country, the much delayed and unaddressed issue of provincial autonomy, the delegation of powers to the provinces, the role of intelligence agencies in the country's politics, and the proper role of religion in society. The denial of ethnic identity has already resulted in the separation of East Pakistan in 1971 as Bangladesh. Nationalist movements have arisen in regions such as in Sindh, Balochistan, and in the NWFP. All these nationalist movements have very genuine grievances against the Pakistani establishment.

It is unfortunate that every government, especially those led by military dictators, has used Islam to further ensure its grip on the country. Pakistan's active participation in Afghanistan's war since 1979 has changed the socio-political culture of the country. Pakistan has emerged as one of the most dangerous states on the globe, one which is not only injurious to itself but has also become a point of concern for the whole world. Until all the institutions of

the state reach a consensus to restrict their active roles to their duties as defined in the constitution, the country will remain in the grip of such crises and the continuity of democracy can never be assured.

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