The Baluchis and Pathans

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- To help prevent, through publicity about violations of human rights, such problems from developing into dangerous and destructive conflicts which, when polarised, are very difficult to resolve; and
- To foster, by its research findings, international understanding of the factors which create prejudiced treatment and group tensions, thus helping to promote the growth of a world conscience regarding human rights.

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The Baluchis and Pathans

By Professor Robert G. Wirsing

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The cover map shows the areas of the three countries, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran, inhabited by the Baluchis and Pathans.

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THE UNITED NATIONS

UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.

Whereas disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people.

Whereas it is essential to promote the development of friendly relations between nations.

Whereas the peoples of the United Nations have in the Charter reaffirmed their faith in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life all in the world.

Whereas Member States have promised to achieve, in cooperation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Whereas a common understanding of these rights and freedoms is of the greatest importance for the full realization of this pledge.

Now, Therefore,

THE UNITED NATIONS PROCLAIMS

THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Article 1. All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 2. Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Furthermore, no discrimination shall be made based on the basis of the political, juridical or any other status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other form of limitation of sovereignty.

Article 3. Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

Article 4. No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

Article 5. No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 6. Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

Article 7. All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any incitement to such discrimination.

Article 8. Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.

Article 9. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

Article 10. Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

Article 11. Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defence.

No one shall be held guilty of any penal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed.

Article 12. Everyone is entitled to have any accusation to which he is the subject investigated in his presence and by public hearing and to have the right to be defended in any such proceedings.

Article 13. Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state.

(1) Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

(2) Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state.

Article 14. Everyone has the right to seek and enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.

(2) This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 15. (1) Everyone has the right to a nationality.

(2) Everyone shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.

Article 16. (1) Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family.

They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage, and at its dissolution.

(2) Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.

(3) The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.

Article 17. (1) Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others.

(2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

Article 18. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

Article 19. Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Article 20. Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.

(2) No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

Article 21. Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely elected representatives.

(2) Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country.

(3) The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

Article 22. Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international cooperation in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

Article 23. (1) Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.

(2) Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.

Article 24. Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

Article 25. (1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

(2) Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

Article 26. (1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory.

Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.

(2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance, friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

(3) Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

Article 27. (1) Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.

(2) Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production in which he has invested himself.

Article 28. Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized.

Article 29. Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible.

(2) In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society.

(3) These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 30. Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.
The region extending from the Indian subcontinent on the east to the Horn of Africa on the west, and lying adjacent to the Arabian Sea, has recently gained notoriety as the 'arc of crisis'. It earned the title in the latter years of the 1970s when it was struck by massive political storms that ignited insurgencies and swept away governments in state after state, jeopardizing the interests of the Great Powers and threatening to engulf the entire region in war.

In the frontier areas of many countries in this convulsed region are some of the world's largest remaining concentrations of tribal peoples. Political turmoil all along the arc has brought a considerable number of them, including the Kurds and Nagas described in earlier MRG Reports, to the frontlines of international conflict. Among the most severely affected are the Baluchis and Pathans, whose homelands astride the boundaries of Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Iran form the summit of the arc.

An examination of these two tribal groups, given their vast size and historical importance, would be warranted regardless of their location. But a moment's reflection on the fact of their placement side by side at one of the most critical points on the Eurasian landmass—where the People's Republic of China, the Soviet Union and India (a group including the three most populous, the largest, and one of the best armed states on earth) meet, and where all gaze out upon the vital waterway leading into the Persian Gulf—should persuade even the most casual observer of their importance and their vulnerability.

In this report, attention is given to internal problems of the two tribal groups, to the relationship between them, as well as to developments within the three states they inhabit. International aspects of the tribal environment, especially developments stemming from the wars in Afghanistan, are also examined because the fortunes of the Baluchis and Pathans have obviously been powerfully affected by them. Having been pushed from relative obscurity by the fact that they occupy an area of enormous global strategic value, the Baluchis and Pathans must now seek to protect their interests in the midst of events which are bound to have far-reaching consequences for them, but which they can neither prevent nor influence in their own interests.

PART I: THE PEOPLES: LOCATION AND MAJOR GROUPINGS

The Baluchis

The tribal groups collectively known as Baluchis occupy one of the most remote and rugged parts of the world. From its northernmost stretches in sparsely populated deserts lying to the south and southwest of the massive Hindu Kush Mountains, the Baluch homeland extends southward to the Arabian Sea across vast tracts of desolate and forbidding mountain and desert landscape split among the three countries of Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan. The Afghan portion contains the fewest Baluchis. The largest and politically most self-assertive branch of the Baluch tribes, and the one to which we give most attention in this report, is in Pakistan. On the western side of the Iran-Pakistan border is the Iranian province of Baluchistan and Seistan. On the eastern side, containing about 40% of the country's territory (1981) of four divisions (Quetta, Sibi, Kalat, Makran) sub-divided into sixteen districts is Pakistan's province of Baluchistan (see Tables).

Many Baluchis in both Iran and Pakistan dwell outside the boundaries of the provinces of which they are the titular inhabitants: there are significant numbers of Iranian Baluchis in neighbouring Kerman province; and very large numbers of Pakistani Baluchis have settled over the centuries in parts of the Punjab and Sind. Moreover, on both sides of the international border Baluchis share the region with many non-Baluchis: Persian-speaking Seistanis were administratively classified to Iranian Baluchistan in 1935; and sizable numbers of Pathans (many of them refugees from Afghanistan), Punjabis and Brahmus dwell in

Pakistan Baluchistan. There is, in addition, a substantial Baluch population resident entirely outside the tri-state area, mainly in several of the Arab sheikhdoms of the Persian Gulf (in Oman, Abu Dhabi and Dubai, for example).

Culturally speaking, the Baluch ethno-linguistic group is itself far from homogeneous. Diverse historical origins, geographic isolation of individual tribes, intermingling with other groups, local ecological adaptations, and the partitioning of their homeland into separate states in modern times, have assured variations in the lifestyle and social patterns of Baluchi tribes from one area to another. Many Baluchis of Pakistan's Sind province, for example, have adopted the regional vernacular, at least outside the home, and have become sedentarized and detribalized to such an extent that they probably retain little sense of solidarity with tribesmen in neighbouring districts of Baluchistan.

Iranian Baluchis have been assimilated to some extent to Persian culture; and the Afghan Baluchis, none of whose area of habitation lies contiguous with that of their Pakistani co-ethnics to the south, commonly speak Dari (Afghan Persian) or Pashtu in addition to their own language. Between the mainly pastoral and nomadic Baluch tribes of Iran's semi-arid Sarhad steppeland and those more sedentary Baluch agriculturalists of lowland southern Baluchistan, there is a whole range of differences in tribal organization and leadership, in settlement and in marriage patterns.

The question of Baluch cultural boundaries is posed in its most controversial form, perhaps, by the Brahmis. The Brahui group of tribes is settled primarily on the central Kalat plateau of Pakistani Baluchistan, where they separate the Suleimani or Eastern Baluch from the Makrani or Western Baluch, and to a lesser extent in desert areas of southwestern Afghanistan. The Brahui language is not classed in the same family of languages as Baluchi. Considered by many a relic of the Harappan civilization which developed in the Indus river valley in the pre-Aryan era, it is most closely related to the Dravidian languages of South India. However, distinguishing between Baluchis and Brahmis is, in fact, quite problematic. The Brahui language has a heavy Baluchi admixture, and male bilingualism is common in both groups. Some Baluchis, as Nina Swidler has pointed out in a study of Brahui political organization, changed tribal allegiance over the course of time and became Brahmis. Moreover, some Brahu tribes were historically only marginally integrated into the Brahu confederation (the Khante of Kalat), and some (the Mengals, for example) behaved more like Baluch tribes in resisting incorporation into it. At present, there does not exist an independent Brahu political movement. In fact, a number of prominent Brahu political leaders have been closely identified with the movement in recent years. The question of cultural differences between Brahu and Brahuis is not without significance, however, because the Brahu tribes could conceivably develop an independent political outlook grounded in Brahu linguistic nationalism.

Notwithstanding these differences, a Baluch culture that is strong and resilient and rooted not only in language but in the traditions of a pastoral and warrior people, has survived. Were a politically united Baluchistan to be created encompassing the entire range of Baluch culture, its boundaries would extend along the coastline of the Arabian Sea roughly from the Indus River to the Straits of Hormuz, a distance of perhaps 700 miles, and reach inland over 400 miles to the Dari border so defined, the land of the Baluchis of Iran's semi-arid Sarhad steppeland and those more sedentary Baluch agriculturalists of lowland southern Baluchistan, an area that covers in all well over 200,000 square miles (see Map on front cover).

The Pathans

Definitions of the Pathan homeland vary considerably, reflecting the great cultural diversity which exists among the tribes making up the Pathan ethno-linguistic group. But broadly defined, the land of the Pathans embraces between one-fourth and one-third of Afghanistan's 250,000 square miles territory, and a little more than 39,000 square miles of Pakistan's Northwest Frontier area. It is bordered on the east by the Indus River, on the west by sparsely populated desert regions dividing Iran from Afghanistan, on the north by the Hindu Kush mountain system, and on the south by the deserts of Baluchistan. It contains highly varied and often spectacular topographical ranges from its northernmost peaks to the desert fringes of Afghanistan's narrow Wakhan Corridor separates Pakistan from the Soviet Union, as far as Quetta in Baluchistan, some 400 miles to the southwest.

* for footnotes see page 17
In most writing on the subject, Pathan territory is held to consist of a much smaller tract lying mainly within the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP), the two divisions of this area forms the North West Frontier Province (NWFP), subdivided into twelve districts. The rest of the area is made up of seven Tribal Areas (Bajaur, Khyber, Kurram, Mohmand, North Waziristan, South Waziristan, Orakzai). These, together with four special Tribal Areas located adjacent to regular districts of the NWFP (Bannu, Dera Ismail Khan, Kohat, Peshawar) are formally designated as the Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA). Prior to the founding of modern Pakistan in 1947, the highlanders who lie mainly in the highlands adjacent to the Durand Line, the boundary established between British India and Afghanistan in 1893 by negotiations between Sir Mortimer Durand and Amir Abdurrahman and which remains today the international border between Pakistan and Afghanistan. The NWFP consists essentially of the regular or 'settled' districts of the trans-Indus plain – excepting Hazara district on the east bank of the Indus – plus the four former princely states (Amb, Chitral, Dir, Swat) of the northern mountains. These had retained at least the semblance of autonomy from provincial authority when they merged with the settled districts, Amb in 1960, the others in 1970.

To confine a definition of the Pathan homeland to Pakistan's North West Frontier Province is to disregard two-thirds of people quite arbitrarily. The word Pathan is the Indian version of the plural form of Pashtun, common ethnic designation for people on both sides of the Northwest Frontier area is in some respects quite arbitrary. The greatest jeopardy from the advance of modernity and centralized governmental authority. Considered collectively, the Pashtuns of Kabul or the sedentarized Pashtuns of the country's 400,000 strong Mohmands, for example, are divided in two by the international border between Pakistan and Afghanistan. The NWFP consists essentially of the regular or 'settled' districts of the trans-Indus plain – excepting Hazara district on the east bank of the Indus – plus the four former princely states (Amb, Chitral, Dir, Swat) of the northern mountains. These had retained at least the semblance of autonomy from provincial authority when they merged with the settled districts, Amb in 1960, the others in 1970.

Further confusing the matter is the fact that most Pashtuns, with Indo-Aryan groups such as the Punjabis and the Baluchis, are divided into three main sections: the Western Afghans, Persian-influenced (often Persian-speaking) and settled mainly in Afghanistan (the Durranis and some elements of the Ghilzais, for example); the Eastern Afghans, Indian-influenced and settled mainly on the trans-Indus plains of Pakistan (the Khattaks are a clear example); and, between these two, the highlanders of the tribal belt, the 'true' Pathans (Wazirs, Mahsuds, Afridis, Mohmands, Bangash, Orakzai, and others).4

The highlander criterion is far from perfect. The Khattaks, as Spain points out, clearly qualify as Pashtuns and yet they are mainly Baluchis. Caroe, for instance, divides Afghans broadly into three main sections: the Western Afghans, Persian-influenced (often Persian-speaking) and settled mainly in Afghanistan (the Durranis and some elements of the Ghilzais, for example); the Eastern Afghans, Indian-influenced and settled mainly on the trans-Indus plains of Pakistan (the Khattaks are a clear example); and, between these two, the highlanders of the tribal belt, the 'true' Pathans (Wazirs, Mahsuds, Afridis, Mohmands, Bangash, Orakzai, and others).4

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over tribal affairs in Baluchistan was exerted largely through agreements negotiated with tribal leaders, and through subsidies, manipulation of tribal feuds, and the conduct of periodic punitive expeditions against rebellious tribesmen. But by the late 1870s, the British had secured direct control over a broad belt of territory in northeastern Baluchistan, including Quetta, and had reduced the nominally independent Khanate of Kalat to a status of utter dependency. By the 1890s, Baluchistan was largely pacified and stabilized, never thereafter a serious challenge to British authority. At independence, both British Baluchistan and, more grudgingly, the four princely states of Kalat, Khuran, Las Bela, and Makran, merged with Pakistan. For a brief period (1952-55), the princely states were given semi-autonomous status as the Baluchistan States Union. But this arrangement collapsed when West Pakistan was declared a single province in October 1955. In July 1970, Baluchistan was restored to separate provincial status, its boundaries incorporating the former British Baluchistan and the Baluchistan States.

The Pathans

Pathans traditionally trace their origins to the Hebrew King Saul, one of whose descendants is said to have founded the Afghan race and led its conversion to Islam in the seventh century AD. The first historical mention of Afghans as a people occurs much later, however, at the time of Mahmud of Ghazni, a Turkic Muslim chieftain who spread his rule and his religion over the frontier area in the early years of the 11th century. The precise racial ancestry of the Pathan branch of Afghans is probably impossible to establish. It is almost certainly an amalgam of the numberless peoples from both east and west, including Greeks, Mongols, Arabs, Persians, Sikhs and many others, who over the centuries passed through the frontier region or sought to conquer it. Virtually all Pathans speak Pashto, an Eastern Iranian tongue belonging (with Baluchi) to the Indo-European family of languages.

The history of the Pathans since Mahmud placed that of the Baluchis. It is filled with heroic exploits, bold raids upon distant lands and stalwart defences of their own, the comings and goings of countless armies in pursuit of booty and empire, frequent but short-lived attempts by others to rule over them, and equally abortive efforts by their own great leaders (like Khushal Khan Khattak in the 17th century) to introduce a semblance of order in their own territory. The principal difference between the histories of the two groups may be largely a matter of scale. The Pathans were both a much larger group and they occupied a far more strategic location astiride the highway between Central Asia and the Punjab plain.

About the frontier area itself, very little is known until the rise of India's Mogul Empire in the early 16th century. Since the Pathans sat astride the Moguls' vital line of communication between Delhi, India's Mogul Empire in the early 16th century. Since the Pathans were both a much larger group and they occupied a far more strategic location astride the highway between Central Asia and the Punjab plain.

With the disappearance of Mogul power from the area in the early 18th century, the frontier fell first to an Afghan chieftain, Ahmad Shah, who conquered Kabul and founded the Durrani dynasty line in 1747, and then, when the generally anarchic Durrani Empire had collapsed, to the Sikhs. For about 15 years the Sikhs controlled the area until the British, supported by thePathans, took it in 1849.

The Pathans, as a group, have always been the most popular political movement in the Northwest Frontier, in spite of its alliance with the predominantly Hindu Congress, until the 1940s. The Pathans played a major, though rather anomalous, role in the events surrounding India's struggle for independence. Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the charismatic 'Frontier Gandhi', founded a Pathan nationalist organization (Khudai-Kidmatgars, more commonly known as the Red Shirts) in 1929 and in 1931 formally aligned it with the Indian National Congress against the British. It remained the most popular political movement in the Northwest Frontier, in spite of its alliance with the predominantly Hindu Congress, until the very eve of independence. By then, however, reconciling the organization's secular ideology with rapidly spreading Hindu-Muslim communal violence became impossible, and Pathan support shifted elsewhere. By 1946, Mohammad Ali Jinnah's Muslim League was largely in command of the masses of Pathans (the reis of government were still in the hands of the local Congress leaders, Sadruddin Ali Khan and Liaquat Ali Khan, brother). Ghaffar Khan, increasingly isolated with his Congress allies, made a desperate attempt to mobilize popular opinion behind an independent Pathan state (Pashtunistan), but failed. In the British-supervised referendum of June 1947, Pathan voters were given a choice of joining Pakistan or India (but not of independence or of joining Afghanistan). With most of the Khudai-Kidmatgars boycotting the referendum, the vote was overwhelmingly (99%) in favour of Pakistan. Independence from Britain was celebrated on 15 August 1947. Pakistan and the NWFP's absorption by Pakistan were accomplished facts. The Khudai-Kidmatgars vanished as a political force; and Ghaffar Khan himself was jailed.

By the end of December 1947, in a gesture reflecting the new country's relatively weak military position, all regular Pakistani armed forces had been withdrawn from the Tribal Territories to be redeployed along the border with India. While the princely states in Pathan areas quickly acceded to Pakistan without serious incident, trouble was already brewing in the Northwest Frontier. Pathan raiding parties had been striking at non-Muslims in the NWFP and Punjab almost immediately following independence. Vast numbers, stirred by grim reports of assaults on their co-religionists, poured into neighbouring Kashmir, and for months on into 1948 engaged Indian army troops over possession of that much coveted and mainly Muslim princely state. The origins of the first Indo-

As in Baluchistan, the British initially tolerated a degree of tribal independence beyond the settled areas, using subsidies, hostage-taking, blockades, punitive expeditions and other time-honoured techniques of divide-and-rule to assure the security of British India's Northwest Frontier. Given impetus by the Second Afghan War (1878-1880) and the steady advance of Russia into Central Asia, advocates of more direct control over the frontier area eventually succeeded in bringing about a shift to a Forward Policy which, by the mid-19th century, had resulted in an extensive network of British military outposts and political agents in tribal territory, the demarcation of Afghanistan's eastern boundary (the Durand Line), extensive road construction and, finally, the creation in 1901 of a separate Northwest Frontier Province and establishment of Tribal Territories ruled directly from Delhi. Though the British relented thereafter from some aspects of the Forward Policy, frequent British intervention in tribal affairs, whenever these impinged on the security of India, was the rule until British departure in 1947.

From beginning to end, Pathan reaction to the extension of British power to the tribal belt was extremely negative. Major tribal revolts broke out in 1747, and then, when the generally anarchic Durrani Empire had collapsed, Tribes. In this they largely failed; though the Emperor Aurangzeb, emperors placed particular importance on subjugating the frontier region or sought to conquer it. Virtually all Pathans speak Pashto, an Eastern Iranian tongue belonging (with Baluchi) to the Indo-European family of languages.
The Baluchis

Selig Harrison estimates the total population of Baluchi speakers in the three states of Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan at around five million. This figure, which excludes ethnic Baluchis partially or wholly assimilated to neighbouring cultures, could conceivably double or triple were ethnic origin, rather than language, the defining criterion. Pakistan probably accounts for at least 75% of the total. In its population census of 1981, Baluchi was given as the mother tongue of 379,148 households in Pakistan, a figure that was 3% of the total. Brahu was given as the mother tongue of an additional 131,958 households (1.2%). Together the Baluchi- and Brahu-speaking groups thus accounted for approximately 4.2% of Pakistan’s households (see Tables). Extrapolating from that figure, Pakistan, with a 1981 population officially placed at 84.3 million, 11 this figure, which excludes ethnic Baluchis partially or wholly assimilated to neighbouring cultures, could conceivably double or triple were ethnic origin, rather than language, the defining criterion. Pakistan probably accounts for at least 75% of the total. In its population census of 1981, Baluchi was given as the mother tongue of 379,148 households in Pakistan, a figure that was 3% of the total. Brahu was given as the mother tongue of an additional 131,958 households (1.2%). Together the Baluchi- and Brahu-speaking groups thus accounted for approximately 4.2% of Pakistan’s households (see Tables). Extrapolating from that figure, Pakistan, with a 1981 population officially placed at 84.3 million, has a Baluchi/Brahu population in the neighbourhood of 3.5 million, of which as many as 1 million are Brahus.

The best estimate we have for the Baluch/Brahu population of Afghanistan is 300,000 (the Brahus, at 200,000, more numerous than Baluchis). Estimates of the number of Iranian Baluchis (there are few Brahus in Iran) range from 500,000 to 750,000. The distribution of Baluchis is in some respects more important politically than the group’s absolute numerical size. A large percentage of Pakistan’s Baluchis (43% of Baluch households in 1981) dwell as minorities in the Sind and Punjab provinces rather than in the province of Baluchistan, where 50% of Pakistan’s Baluch households are to be found. In fact, even in that province, there are large numbers of Pashtu, Sindhi and Punjabi speakers, Baluchis are very likely a minority. According to the 1981 census, Baluchis accounted for only 36% (if Brahus were included, 57%) of the provincial households (see Tables). Baluchis are barely represented in the heavily Pashtu-speaking districts in the northern part of the province (Quetta Division), where only 9% of households gave Baluchi as mother tongue in 1981. In Quetta, the provincial capital and only city of much significance in the province, Baluchi was spoken in hardly 5% of total households in 1981.

Of even greater significance is the fact that demographic developments seem to be further stacking the odds against the Baluchis. On the one hand, there is continuing dilution of the Baluch population within Baluchistan, resulting both from the steady migration by outsiders (Afghans, Punjabis, Sindhis, Hazaras, etc.) into the area, some of it beginning well before independence; and the recent massive movement of mainly Pashtu-speaking Afghan refugees into Pakistan, large numbers of them into parts of Baluchistan. Economic growth, increasing steadily in Baluchistan over the past decade, has been a magnet for migrant labour—especially Pathans. Every new industry or mine opened in the province brings greater numbers. As industry spreads westward into Baluchistan from Karachi, it brings Punjabi skilled and Pathan unskilled labour in its wake. Even before the latest refugee influx (discussed below), Pathans claimed (publicly) that they were the majority tribe in the province or (privately) that they were at least the single largest group.

At the same time, there is a steady exodus of Baluchis out of their homeland in search of economic opportunity. The outflow has been both to urban industrial centres within Iran and Pakistan (especially Karachi) and abroad to countries of the Persian Gulf area. From the Baluchi standpoint, in any event, the ‘impropriety’ of census-taking is clear.

The Pathans

In the 1981 census, Pashtu was given as the language spoken in about 13% of Pakistan’s households. Pashtu speakers accounted for over 99% of total households in the FATA and for over 68% of households in the NWFP (see Table). Much of the Pashtu-speaking population of Pakistan is Pakistan’s second largest, following the Punjabis. Hence, at least in numbers it possesses considerable advantages over the much smaller Baluch community in relations with the central government. Moreover, since Pashtu speakers enjoy a comfortable (roughly two-thirds) majority in the NWFP (not to mention their growing strength in neighbouring Baluchistan), they are in no immediate danger of being reduced to the status of minority in their own homeland.

Migration of Pathans, both to urban areas and abroad, is very substantial. Reportedly, there are over one million Pathans in and around Karachi. This exodus will be compensated for, to some extent at least, should very many of the recent Afghan refugees choose, or be forced, to remain in Pakistan.

Ethnographically, the greatest advantage Pathans possess in comparison with the Baluchis is the existence—in the form of Afghanistan—of a co-ethnic 'kin-state'. Roughly half—the
dominant half of Afghanistan's population, officially reported in 1979 to be 13.5 million, is Pashtun. The larger, but politically weaker, Pashtun population of Pakistan, regardless of its true inclinations, potentially can force concessions from the central government by playing upon Islamabad's anxieties over Afghan irredentism.

**RELIGION**

The Pathan and Baluch tribal groups are almost entirely Muslim. In this respect, they have much in common with the rest of the population in the three states which they inhabit. Pakistan is about 97% Muslim; and both Iran and Afghanistan are close to 99% Muslim. The vast majority of Pathans and Baluchis adhere, moreover, to the Hanafi school of the Sunni sect of Islam, which is in harmony with at least two of the states, Pakistan and Afghanistan, both of which are predominantly Sunni.

Religious uniformity is not complete, however. Almost 90% of Iran's population belongs to the Shi'a sect of Islam, a fact which sets the mainly Sunni Iranian Baluchis apart from the dominant Persians (and from their provincial cohabitants, the Seistanis) not only in culture and language but in religious sectarian interests as well.

Even without such sectarian differences, it would still be very easy to overstate the strength of the Islamic bond between the tribesmen and the rest of society in these states. To begin with, there is a vast discrepancy between the Islam of the ruling elites and the Islam of the tribesmen. Most Baluchis and Pathans are illiterate and non-Islamized, and their cultures display heavy traces of their nomadic and warrior traditions. Hence, their devotion to Islam, while considerable (on occasion even fanatical), is typically simple and unadorned, and their understanding of it limited and riddled with superstition. Tribal religious observance thus provides the host society with grounds for ridicule as well as for praise.

Another underlying handicap on the Islamic bond is the powerful loyalty to clan and tribe which persists among tribesmen and which, as many current observers of the disunified ranks of Afghan rebels have detected, continues to claim their highest allegiance. This has acted as a brake on the utility of Islam as an integrative force, and, as has long been the case among both Baluchis and Pathans, on all efforts to weld solidarity among the tribal units themselves.

An equally basic reason for Islam's failure to ensure greater cohesion between the tribes and their host societies, however, is the obvious fact that religion is vulnerable to political exploitation and manipulation, and has been widely employed as a partisan political weapon by both governments and oppositions in all three countries.

So long as the secular-minded Pahlevi ruled Iran, for example, sectarian differences between the Baluchis and Persians were largely muted. But domination of Iran by revengeful and militantly religious Shi'i clerics after the Shah's overthrow in 1979 opened wide the ancient Sunni-Shi'a cleavage in that land. Sunni Baluchis clearly had reason to distrust the Islamic pretentions of the Khomeini regime, when it reportedly favoured and armed the local Shi'i Seistanis. Pakistan, for another example, having been created only recently and at great human cost specifically as a homeland for the Muslim religious community of the Indian subcontinent, has relied upon the Islamic bond to hold intact its diverse society more than either of the other two states. It was declared an Islamic Republic in 1964; and special Islamic provisions are well entrenched in its constitution. The Martial Law regime of General Zia ul-Haq took a further step towards an 'Islamized' Pakistan in February 1978 with the formal promulgation of Islamic laws, most notably in regard to penalties for criminal offences. These developments have been greeted with surprising hostility by tribesmen (including devout Muslims), many of whose leaders tend to view them as politically inspired efforts to increase the popularity of, and thus to strengthen, the central government.

It is apparent that Islam, when politicized, is as much given to division as to cohesion.

**SOCIAL ORGANIZATION AND CULTURAL VALUES**

Geographically isolated on the fringes of more powerful civilizations for much of their modern history, Pathans and Baluchis have been relatively successful in preserving intact cultural values and forms of social organization. Now that their homelands have been absorbed into the modern state system, with its characteristic emphasis on centralized authority and on political and economic integration, unprecedented stress on the most basic elements of Pathan and Baluch identity is inevitable. Neither group is likely to escape profound social and cultural transformation. The exact character of their adaptation is likely to vary considerably, however, since the two tribal groups are in key respects very different.

The difference is most apparent in social structure. Both groups are highly segmented into tribes, clans and sub-clans. But whereas Baluch tribes, at least in Pakistan, are typically centrally organized and Baluch tribesmen essentially subordinate clients of powerful chiefs (tumandars or sardars), Pathan tribes are characteristically de-centralized and clan headmen (khans) must compete for followers in a cultural milieu in which male individuality and equality are valued above all else.

Pathan tribal organization is at bottom anarchic. A man is Pathan by virtue of his enrolment in a particular group than by his manifest behavioural conformity to traditional Pathan customs foremost among which is the unremitting assertion in every public forum of male autonomy. As the Pathans say, one must not merely speak Pashtu, one must also do Pashtu. Would-be leaders must live up to rigorous standards of bravery and risk-taking, defence of honour, responsibility and aggressiveness. To meet social expectations of hospitality (melmastia), Pathans must be lavish hosts, regardless of expense, and must extend protection to their guests, at whatever peril to their personal safety. Baluch tribal organization, on the other hand, is essentially hierarchic, and submission to the authority of the chief is the basis of tribal affiliation.

In reality, Pathan tribal organization falls well short of its egalitarian ideal: major distinctions of rank, as between the landed khans of their landless retainers, are obviously characteristic of Pathan society. At the same time, in Baluch tribal organization the authority of the sardars is by no means absolute or free of social restraints in spite of the hierarchical structure of the chain of command. Nonetheless, there is a substantial difference between Pathan society, where submission to leadership is generally hedged with qualifications and is at least partially a matter of choice, and a large component of Baluch society, where dominance by the sardar and his section leaders (wadera or takkars) is the central element in tribal organization.

These differences aside, the fact remains that neither Baluchis nor Pathans can escape the transformative impact of modern society. For the Pathans, reckless spending and indifference to the accumulation of wealth for its own sake are increasingly untenable values. For the Baluchis, the sardari system is a pale substitute for the power of modern bureaucracy.

Whether the tribesmen are to have much voice in defining the terms of contemporary change has much to do with the surviving strength of traditional tribal or sub-tribal loyalties. We observed earlier that unification of the separate tribes had proven a virtually impossible task among both Pathans and Baluchis throughout history. It is far from certain even today that pan-tribal allegiance to a Pathan or to a Baluch nation has effectively replaced narrower loyalty to the tribe, clan or sub-clan.

Pathan nationalism has not really been put to a major test in Pakistan since 1947. In so far as we accept the behaviour of tribal insurgents in neighbouring Afghanistan as a reliable guide to Pathans in general, there can hardly be much confidence in their ability or willingness to rise above inter-tribal feuds and rivalries.

Baluch nationalism, on the other hand, has been subjected to a fairly clear test in Pakistan during the course of the insurrection of the 1970s. The results were not spectacular. The great majority of Baluch tribes either sided with the government or, as was the case with the tribes of the Makran area, simply sat out the conflict. No doubt, the government resorted to bribery and intimidation of tribal leaders to achieve this result. No doubt, also, there were elements
in many tribes which supported the insurgents, sometimes actively. The fact remains, however, that very few tribes took the field in the most recent test of Baluch nationalism.21

**ECONOMIC CONDITIONS**

It is hazardous to generalize about economic conditions in the tribal areas of Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan. One reason for this is an acute shortage of current, reliable and comparable statistical information on income distribution, morbidity and life expectancy that would provide accurate clues to living standards. Another is that conditions vary considerably from place to place, as between the sedentary agriculturalists Pathans of the Frontier’s regular districts and the freer, but probably poorer, Pathans of the highland Tribal Agencies. There is not much doubt, however, that the tribal areas are among the more impoverished and least developed regions of all three countries.

According to data compiled by Burki, economic power in Pakistan is clearly concentrated in the Punjab; Baluchistan and the NWFP are economically the weakest of the country’s four provinces.24 According to Issawi, Iran’s southern regions, in particular the two most heavily Baluchi-settled provinces of Kerman and Baluchistan-Seistan, are much poorer than the northern regions.25 In certain respects, at least, conditions seem most severe in Baluchistan. By and large, the Baluchis occupy the driest, hottest and most desolate parts of it. What little precipitation there is in the province occurs at the higher elevations in the northern districts, where few Baluchis are settled. Cultivable land is very limited. Subsistence farming, often combined with semi-nomadic pastoralism, is typical. Baluchistan has the lowest literacy rate (10.3%) in Pakistan;26 and informants report high rates of disease and malnutrition.

Apart from their relatively impoverished condition, the tribal areas of all three countries share at least one other fundamental characteristic: their local economies are all gradually being integrated with the modern market-oriented national economies and, simultaneously, being brought under a vast web of central bureaucratic controls. In practical terms, this has meant the construction of roads and growth in transport, the spread of commercialized agriculture and the institutions and technology to sustain it, the promotion of land reforms and of changes in systems of land tenure, increasing pressures for the migration of local manpower to distant cities and to areas abroad, the opening of new industries and - above all - a steady decline in the tribesmen’s traditional economic autonomy.

Salzman provides an especially good description of the way in which Iran’s Baluch tribes have been economically ‘encapsulated’ over the years. Stripped of their function as war leaders, the sardars of such tribes as the Yarahmadzai serve as local functionaries in a vast client network reaching from Tehran down to the smallest tribal village. The sardars act as middlemen or brokers for the bureaucracy’s transactions with the tribesmen, channelling information and resources into tribal areas, lobbying for tribal interests, and doling out government patronage in return for political docility.27 Economic integration, not necessarily improvement in the economic lot of tribesmen, is the objective.

This basic economic transformation has occurred in all three countries regardless of the regime in power, although some leaders, such as Iran’s Mohammad Reza Shah, Pakistan’s Bhutto, or the Marxists who came to power in Afghanistan in 1978, have shown more determination than others to accelerate the process. With his ‘White Revolution’ of 1963, the Shah launched a well-publicized bureaucratic effort of socio-economic reform (see below). Bhutto, with at keen an appreciation of the political uses of economic incentives as the Shah, greatly intensified development programmes in both the NWFP and Baluchistan during the 1970s.28

As one would expect, tribesmen are poorly represented in management of the modest modern sector of economic enterprise in the tribal areas of Baluchistan and the NWFP. What manufacturing industry exists is concentrated almost entirely in the provincial capitals of Quetta and Peshawar.29 In both, outsiders exercise disproportionate influence. The situation is most extreme in Quetta, the only city of any size in Baluchistan, where Baluchis are a very small minority of the city’s population and where manufacturing and commerce are almost entirely monopolized by non-Baluchis. The province of Baluchistan produces the bulk of Pakistan’s natural gas and is the site of numerous coal and other mineral operations; but Baluchis have little control over these activities.30

There is no question that some members of tribal society welcome the changes which accompany economic development of their areas. In my discussions with tribal leaders in recent years, most were emphatic in their support of economic development programmes. Ordinary tribesmen appear similarly inclined. One experienced observer of the Baluchis has recorded her amazement at the rapidity of ‘de-tribalization’ among tribesmen employed in the Sui gas fields in Bugti tribal area. Within a short time after employment, many had become lath operators, truck drivers, clerks and mechanics. Some had cut short their hair, and were dressing in European-style garments, eating tinned foodstuffs, and, in some cases, learning to speak Urdu and English. Almost overnight, their aspirations – and possibly their loyalties – appeared to have shifted very fundamentally.31

Of course, the changes are not universally welcomed or their benefits evenly distributed. For some tribal leaders, especially those with strong political ambitions, economic integration means more than the erosion of their authority. This may be the motive behind the efforts of some Baluch and Pathan leaders, for instance, to further integrate the economy of the Sui gas fields in Bugti tribal area.32 Such obstructionism should not be seen as having obscurantist motives, however, since virtually all the Baluch leaders make it clear that they welcome economic development – once political autonomy is acquired.

For others, the arrival of government controls is a threat to economic livelihood. In 1979, the Pathan, Baluch, and Kurdish tribal areas of Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan together reportedly produced three times as much opium as was produced that year in South East Asia’s notorious Golden Triangle.33 The governments of Ayatollah Khomeini and President Zia ul-Haq responded with massive crackdowns on the production and consumption of narcotics; but the tribal areas are yet sufficiently free of effective central controls to make enforcement of a ban on this enormously lucrative enterprise virtually impossible.

Whether welcomed or not, economic integration appears to be highly destructive of traditional tribal relationships. Among Pathans, politically and economically prominent landholders (khans) are traditionally obligated to be selfless in regard to the accumulation of wealth and to display unstinting generosity towards their followers. The monetary rewards of urban markets now offer an alternative way to obtain status, and many of the khans apparently no longer live up to expectations. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, according to the anthropologist Jon Anderson, the acquisition of expensive agricultural technology, especially tractors, by khans of the Ghilzai Pathan tribe eastern Afghanistan both mirrored and accentuated the trend toward more competitive economic relationships. The tractors facilitated the individual accumulation of wealth; hence, patronage of traditional tribal clients declined as a means for the maintenance of status.34

Among Pakistan’s Swat Pathans, the same basic process contributed to the 1970s to the growth of severe class conflict between peasant croppers and their disgruntled tenants. The increasingly monetized economy, according to Charles Lindholm, had already isolated the landholders from their traditional clients. When land reforms promulgated by the Bhutto government threatened to strengthen the tenants at the expense of the khans, enmity deepened and in some places erupted in violence.35

**PART II: GOVERNMENTS AND TRIBESMEN IN CONFLICT**

**PAKISTAN**

A recent and perceptive study by Shahid Javed Burki asserts that Pakistan’s contemporary political and economic weakness is due primarily to the fact that Pakistani society was ‘born polarized’.36 Partition, he says, resulted in a huge influx of some eight million migrant refugees from India (mohajirs). By the time of the 1951 census, they accounted for nearly 25% of the population of what is now Pakistan, and for over 46% of the population of its 19 largest
British policy has proven extraordinarily tenacious. This is especially apparent in the pattern of recruitment to Pakistan's armed forces. The British idea that certain of India's ethnic groups possessed more martial qualities than others created a highly imbalanced military recruitment policy. Punjabi Muslims, the single largest group in the British Indian Army at the time of independence, were the chief beneficiaries of the policy. But Pathans from the NWFP were also especially heavily represented. The government of Pakistan has always been reluctant to release detailed data on the ethnic composition of either the enlisted or officer grades; but available evidence strongly suggests that the tradition of 'martial races' is alive and well and that the Pathans continue to benefit from it at least as much as the Punjabis.

In a recent analysis of the Pakistan military, Stephen Cohen states that percentages of ethnic recruitment since independence have not changed dramatically from what they were under the British during World War II. But in the areas that later became Pakistan, British recruitment then, according to the figures given by Cohen, was 77% from the Punjab, 19.5% from NWFP, 2.2% from Sind, and about .06% from Baluchistan. Of the 24 generals in the Pakistan army in June 1959, according to another author, 11 were Pathans and 11 were Punjabis. So dominant had Pathans become in the country's military establishment by the time Bhutto came to power in the 1970s, in the judgment of the distinguished scholar Shahid Javed Burki, that Bhutto, apparently concerned lest their ethno-regional identity interfere with their loyalty to him, launched a major reorganization of the officer staff.

While there is no question that many Pathans have risen to prominence through the military, it is easy to exaggerate the collective benefit for Pathans as a whole of the military recruitment policy. One reason is that the number of districts from which military recruits have generally come is astonishingly limited. Three districts in the Punjab (Rawalpindi, Jhelum, Campbellpur) and only two (settled) districts in the NWFP (Kohat, Mardan) account for 75% of all ex servicemen. Hence, most of the NWFP, including the tribal Agencies, is in fact poorly represented in the military. Another reason is that military socialization, while it may not succeed in instilling a national outlook in every Pathan recruit, unquestionably contributes to the dilution of tribal culture. Ayub Khan was a Tarin Pathan, no doubt. But he was raised in a non-Pashtu-speaking district (Hazara) of the NWFP, and was apparently not particularly well versed in the Pathan culture. In a country in which the role of the military has often been that of a 'Baluch Raj', we should understand it to have been one of detribalized Pathans only.

To say this is not to scorn the Pathan achievement—or to discount entirely the advantages which Pathans may derive as a group from the prominence of Pathan individuals in the military. In a country so often ruled by the military, such a position would clearly be unreasonable. One need only contrast their situation with that of the Baluchis to sense the potential long-term political importance to the Pathans of a highly selective military recruitment policy. The British classed Baluchis among the martial races. However, perhaps because Baluch tribesmen proved less adaptable to military life than Pathans, they were recruited to the military in very small numbers. As suggested above, that apparently continues to be the situation at present. There is absolutely no likelihood that a 'Baluch Raj' will grow out of Pakistan's military establishment. Minimal representation in the military, we might add, is only one aspect of Baluch political weakness in Pakistan. They have been just as poorly represented in the bureaucracy. Very few Baluchis have ever held key positions in the central government of Pakistan, from which they are virtually excluded. In the Pakistan army, in the eastern part of the Baluch homeland. Only four of the 179 persons who were nominated to central cabinets in Pakistan from 1947 to 1977 were ethnic Baluchis, according to a recent study, and only one of them (Aktar Bugti) was named prior to the 1970s. Even within the province, Baluchis had been almost entirely excluded from decision-making positions until the early 1970s. According to one estimate, of the roughly 40,000 civilian employees of all kinds in Baluchistan in 1972, only about 6% (or about 2,400) were Baluchis, and about 1% were Baluchis, and most of them reportedly held inferior jobs. Thereafter, a brief period of provincial self-government set in motion a trend toward increased local tribal recruitment to official positions.

There is some irony in the fact that Baluchis have fared better in neighbouring Punjab in this respect than in Baluchistan. In the last Punjab provincial cabinet during the Bhutto era, according to one informant, three of the twelve cabinet ministers were of Baluch
As part of the compromise worked out in winning broad acceptance of One Unit in West Pakistan, the numerically preponderant Punjabis had acquiesced to a representational formula in the National Assembly biased against themselves. But this well-intentioned political concession (which was withdrawn in 1967) was rendered meaningless by the authoritarianism inflicted on the country by Ayub Khan for over a decade beginning with the declaration of Martial Law in 1958. From then until its dissolution immediately after Ayub’s fall from power in 1969, One Unit was a convenient focus for minority grievances of all kinds stemming from alleged Punjabi domination of government.

The government was accursed, among other things, of aggravating already large regional economic inequalities by awarding the Punjab a disproportionate share of public funds for education, health and other development projects; of causing rifts among non-Punjabs by favouring certain communities in areas outside the Punjab; and for forcing Punjabi culture on the country.46 Opposition to One Unit was strong among both Pathans and Baluchis, but agitation against it took especially violent forms in Baluchistan. There, for over a year in the late 1960s, a situation which at times bordered on open rebellion persisted between the large Bugti tribe, living in Sibi district, and the central government. Bugti antagonism had been aroused by what the tribesmen felt to be the government’s politically motivated method of distributing scarce and extremely valuable barrage (irrigated) land in the area. In late August 1967, Bugti tribesmen showed their displeasure by opening a major breach in the Fat Feeder Canal of Guddu Barrage, sending irrigation waters careening over a rival tribe’s lands and causing serious problems for the government. Armed forces were sent in to curb the spread of lawlessness, and in May 1968 Akbar Khan Bugti, the powerful sardar of the Bugti tribe, was detained under the Defence of Pakistan Rules. The affair was finally settled in November 1969, but not until there had been numerous armed clashes, aerial bombings, and severe casualties suffered on both sides.47

The One Unit Controversy

The plan advanced in the mid-1950s for consolidating the various entities of West Pakistan into one province was basically a remedy for the constitutional stalemate then threatening the unity of Pakistan’s two wings. The formation of One Unit was a device intended to hinder East Pakistan (Bengali) manipulation of inter-ethnic rivalries in the West and thereby to help increase acceptance of constitutional parity between the two wings in the National Assembly. As a byproduct, it was hoped the scheme would also help assure more equitable and efficient administration. As things turned out, the plan’s principal accomplishment in the West was to lend legitimacy to the varied grievances of the minority ethno-linguistic groups (Sindhis, Pathans, Baluchis) against the majority Punjabis, while contributing little or nothing to interving amity.

A. The Early Post-Independence Period (1947-1957)

For almost a decade after independence, the government pursued a policy towards the tribal areas best described as one of ‘benign neglect’. It maintained a very low military profile, abandoning some cantonments and allowing roads to deteriorate in many areas. Indeed, government control of parts of the Pathan tribal areas, according to James Spain, probably declined in this period.44 Economic expenditures steadily increased, but major efforts at economic development were noticeably absent virtually everywhere in the tribal belt.

The central government did not shy away entirely from the use of armed force during these early years in its efforts to establish government authority in tribal areas. In the spring of 1948, for example, it resorted to military force to compel the accession to Pakistan of Kalat State, whose ruler, Mir Ahmed Yar Khan, had set about to secure independence.45 But government use of coercion in this case was mitigated by its action a few years thereafter in constituting the Baluchistan States Union (1952-1955), which provided the princes substantial autonomy and postponed their final day of reckoning. While the tribal areas thus had very little economic progress to boast of in this period, that fact has to be balanced against the considerable political autonomy which they did enjoy.


In contrast to the early post-independence period, in which laissez-faire policies predominated, the long Ayub Khan era which followed it was marked by a powerful assertion of central authority in virtually all aspects of its relationship with tribal areas. The process was already underway by 1955, with the announcement of the One Unit scheme (amalgamation of West Pakistan into one province). It was given added impetus with the final collapse of parliamentary institutions and the implementation of martial law under Field Marshal Ayub Khan in 1958. Ayub vastly increased the powers of the military, including stepped up garrisoning in tribal areas; promulgated a new and much more authoritarian constitution (1962); created a centrally-patronized network of local representative institutions (Basic Democracy) throughout Pakistan; promoted a variety of development programmes in tribal areas; and gave unfailing support to the steadily increasing authority of the central bureaucracy implicit in the One Unit provincial system.

The 1973 constitution was drafted by a multi-party parliamentary committee (including members of the political opposition) chosen from the National Assembly elected in 1970. While certainly more ‘democratically’ authored than was Ayub Khan’s in the early 1960s, it was stamped indelibly with Mr. Bhutto’s political philosophy. The constitution endorsed the federal administrative structure restored in 1969. It contained numerous guarantees of the rights of ethnic minorities. Among these was a provision protecting the right of groups to preserve and promote a distinct language, script or culture (Art. 28). Other provisions discouraged parochial, racial, tribal, sectarian and provincial prejudices (Art. 33); committed the state to eradicate economic and social inequality among regions (Art. 37); required that people from all parts of the country be enabled to participate in the armed forces (Art. 39); and...
acknowledged the right of provincial assemblies to adopt measures for the teaching, promotion and use of a provincial language in addition to Urdu, the national language (Art. 251). The constitution restored to the provincial legislatures the competence over the tribal areas under the Frontier Crimes Regulations (Art. 247).

Basically, however, the constitution of 1973 strengthened the power of the central government far more than it protected the rights of tribal or other minorities. Provincial autonomy was granted in principle; but there was no devolution of power.44 A National Assembly was authorized, with an upper house whose delegates were drawn in equal numbers from the four provinces. But for a period of ten years from the adoption of the constitution, the possibility of a vote of no confidence was virtually eliminated by a special provision (Art. 96/5).

The constitution’s initial authoritarian tendencies were gradually augmented, moreover, by legislative enactments further abridging fundamental rights and strengthening the powers of the central government. Such, for example, was the effect of the Constitution (Fifth Amendment) Act of 1976, which drastically curtailed whatever remained of judicial restraint upon the government’s use of preventive detention to hound the political opposition.45 In practice, at least, Bhutto’s constitution proved to be less a limit upon, than an extension of, his authoritarian regime.

**Insurrection in Baluchistan**

Between 1973 and 1977, eastern Baluchistan was swept by a major tribal rebellion against the government of Pakistan. It involved large elements of both the Baluch and Brahui groups. As many as 55,000 tribesmen, the Mengals and Marris most prominent among them, were engaged in the struggle by 1974. They were arrayed against a government force of perhaps 70,000 troops equipped with some of the most sophisticated and lethal weapons of modern warfare. Casualties were high on both sides: Selig Harrison estimates that at least 5,000 insurgents and over 3,000 government troops lost their lives in hundreds of bloody engagements.46 In the course of the conflict, large quantities of livestock are said to have been destroyed, and the normal flow of food supplies to insurgent-controlled tribal areas in the province interrupted, resulting in considerable suffering among the civilian population as well.

The government of Pakistan maintained that the conflict had been provoked by a small clique of tribal chiefs (sardars) determined to resist any form of socio-economic change that might erode their absolute feudal authority.47 The tribal chiefs contended, and many scholars agree, that the insurrection originated largely in Mr. Bhutto’s utter intolerance of the limits to his authority symbolized by the more autonomy-minded chiefs.48 Not an archaic system of absolute feudal authority.49 The tribal chiefs contended, and many scholars agree, that the insurrection originated largely in Mr. Bhutto’s utter intolerance of the limits to his authority symbolized by the more autonomy-minded chiefs.48 Not an archaic system of absolute feudal authority, it was argued, but rather a modern phenomenon involving a complex of economic factors and tribal demands for greater political autonomy.49

The government stocks; of trafficking in illicit food and weapons and of undermining the legitimate system of roads, schools, dispensaries, and so on; of undermining government stocks; of trafficking in illicit food and weapons and of undermining the legitimate system of roads, schools, dispensaries, and so on; of undermining government law enforcement agencies in the province; and of failure to stem a rising tide of tribal depredations against innocent people.46

One need not exonerate the NAP leaders either of complicity in at least some of these activities or of ruthless political ambitions of their own to suspect the central government of a one-sided interpretation of events. But in gaining a major foothold for provincial autonomy, they had already wrung a significant concession from Bhutto; it seems unlikely that they would have so quickly and so clumsily risked destroying it. The central government’s evidence of seditious behaviour and intrigue with foreign forces on the part of the NAP leaders, at least what was brought out in the government’s case for the dissolution of NAP, heard before the Supreme Court in June 1975, was almost entirely circumstantial.50 If tribal leaders are to be believed, Bhutto was himself directly responsible for many of the illicit and violent activities—including extensive arms smuggling into Baluchistan—for which they stood accused.

Following several incidents of tribal violence in late 1972 (see Appendix for Chronology), and the discovery of a large cache of Soviet weapons in the Iraqi Embassy in Islamabad on 10 February 1973 (which the government maintained was intended for secessionist forces in Baluchistan), Bhutto abruptly ended the brief experiment in provincial self-rule. He appointed Akbar Khan Bugti, the sardar of the large Bugti tribe and arch-rival of the NAP leaders, as Governor. Bugti, however, proved an unwieldy instrument of Bhutto’s will and was forced to resign in less than a year. For some time, Bhutto sought to retain the appearance of self-government in the province; but as the insurgency spread, accommodation of tribal interests gave way almost entirely to repression.

Ghaus Baksh Bizenjo and Ataullah Khan Mengal, as well as NAP president in Baluchistan, Khair Baksh Marri, were arrested. Pathan NAP leaders continued to function freely until a series of violent incidents in the NWFP, culminating in the assassination of Wali Khan and provincial Home Minister in mid-February 1973, when Bhutto replaced both Sardar Ataullah Khan Mengal, both powerful and respected party leaders, as Governor. Bugti, however, proved an unwieldy instrument of Bhutto’s will and was forced to resign in less than a year. For some time, Bhutto sought to retain the appearance of self-government in the province; but as the insurgency spread, accommodation of tribal interests gave way almost entirely to repression.

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When Bhutto took over as President of Pakistan on 20 December 1971, his party, the Peoples Party of Pakistan (PPP), was securely in control of the Punjab and Sind, but it had very little support in either the NWFP or Baluchistan. In the General Elections of 1977, the PPP had won only a single seat in the National Assembly from the NWFP, where it polled less than 15% of the popular vote, and none at all from Baluchistan, where its share of the popular vote was a meagre 2%. It had done just as poorly in the provincial assemblies, having captured only 4 of 40 seats in the NWFP and none at all from Baluchistan. In Baluchistan, despite the majority of the opposition parties, the National Awami Party (NAP) emerged in the strongest position, having won 3 seats in the National Assembly from each of the two border provinces, and 8 and 13 seats, respectively, in the provincial legislatures of Baluchistan and the NWFP. The NAP, whose President was Khair Abdul Wali Khan, the son of the veteran Pathan nationalist Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, was at this time basically a regionalist alliance of Baluchis and Pathans. Founded in 1957, it was in some measure the ideological descendant of the Khudai-Kidamatgars.

On 25 December 1971, within days of assuming the Presidency, Bhutto attempted to override the results of the elections by appointing one of his own supporters, Ghaus Baksh Raisani, to be Governor of Baluchistan. Under pressure, however, Bhutto eventually relented and agreed to let NAP, in coalition with the religious-based and ultra-conservative Jamiat-ul-Ulema-e-Islam (JUI), form governments in both of the border provinces. The decision was formalized in the so-called Tripartite Agreement of 6 March 1972; and on 27 April, the NAP-JUI leaders assumed the reins of government in the two provinces. Mir Ghaus Baksh Bizenjo and Ataullah Khan Mengal, both powerful and respected leaders of Brahui tribes, became Governor and Chief Minister, respectively, in Baluchistan, and Arbab Sikander and Maulana Mufti Mahmud occupied the same positions in the NWFP.

This accommodative formula lasted less than ten months, until mid-February 1973, when Bhutto replaced both Governors, dismissed the government of Baluchistan, and the government in NWFP resigned in protest. Bhutto justified his action on the grounds that the NAP-JUI government had allowed—indeed, had patronized and encouraged—the spread of lawlessness and violence throughout the province, and that its goal, in concert with foreign anti-Pakistan forces, was no less than to bring about the country’s dismemberment.

Specifically, Bhutto accused the NAP leaders in Baluchistan of surreptitiously arming their tribal allies with weapons lifted from government stocks; of trafficking in illicit food and weapons and of brazenly obstructing Federal efforts to curtail the smuggling of weapons into Pakistan from abroad; of interfering with the government’s attempts to bring modernization to the province in the form of roads, schools, dispensaries, and so on; of undermining government law enforcement agencies in the province; and of failure to stem a rising tide of tribal depredations against innocent people.46

The government claimed that many tribal rebels had surrendered under terms of amnesty granted by Mr. Bhutto; but several thousands are known to have fled to neighbouring Afghanistan where they obtained sanctuary and where many remain in government camps today.51 In spite of Bhutto’s premature announcement (October 1974) of the end of the insurgency, it dragged on fitfully until his government fell in the summer of 1977. The Martial Law administration released the NAP leaders from prison at the end of the year and all hostilities ceased.
The uneasy truce reached in 1977 between the martial law regime of General (later President) Zia ul-Haq and the Baluch nationalists still held ten years later. Indeed, by 1987 Baluch nationalism, at least as a political force, seemed dormant. Martial law, not lifted until the end of 1985, itself had exercised a powerful dampening effect on political activity of any kind in the province. So too had the paucity of popular Baluch political leaders. A number of those who had led the nationalist movement in the 1970s, including Ataullah Khan Mengal and Khair Bakhsh Marri, had gone into self-imposed exile abroad and had not returned. Thus far, new leaders had failed to emerge, even from tribal and subtribal interests that have not emerged. In the meantime, wielding a variety of incentives and disincentives, the Zia regime has resumed its predecessor’s efforts to integrate the Baluchis more fully into the economic and political life of Pakistan.

The presence throughout Baluchistan of the central government’s military and paramilitary forces, as well as the apparatus of its administrative and developmental organizations, has increased dramatically over the past decade. Enormous effort has been expended on improving communications, on road-building and airfield construction. Expenditure on economic and social programmes, including education, in Baluchistan has been vastly increased. By the mid-1980s, Islamabad was officially claiming, in fact, that per capita public development expenditure in Baluchistan was the highest in Pakistan, and that Baluchistan’s share of national development resources (over 9%) in 1986-87 was almost double what it deserved strictly on the basis of its population alone.14

In contrast to its aggressively integrative policy in respect to Baluchistan, the Zia regime was initially much more wary of asserting central governmental prerogatives in the NWFP – especially in the highland tribal belt (FATA) straddling the border with Afghanistan. The government’s laziest faire policy towards the hill tribes did not extend to the settled districts, however, and, with the dramatic change in the regional security environment arising from Soviet military occupation of Afghanistan at the end of 1979 (see below), the policy soon shifted even in regard to the hill tribes. By late 1985, the government’s determination to reassert Islamabad’s authority in the highland tribal belt, motivated in part by the tribesmen’s massive involvement in illicit heroin and arms traffic, had led to major armed clashes between central forces and tribesmen. In Khyber Agency, west of Peshawar, the struggle took on the appearance of open warfare. There, in March 1986, a government force allegedly as large as 8 battalions, backed up by artillery, assaulted the fortress-like home of an offending Afridi chieftain, Malik Wali Khan Kukikhel, reducing it to rubble. Islamabad ultimately settled the matter peacefully with the aged tribal leader, rewarding him with a huge reparation payment for the damage to his stronghold.15 By no means, however, did these measures resolve the underlying issues.

Among both Pathans and Baluchis, resentment of central (meaning Punjabi) controls over the borderlands continued in the 1980s to fuel recruitment to anti-government political movements. In 1979, in the early days of martial law, Ataullah Khan Mengal and Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo founded a successor to NAP called the Pakistan National Party (PNP) to serve as a vehicle for Baluch nationalist strivings. Its programme urged that Pakistan be recognized as consisting of four separate and equal nationalities, each of which should have maximum autonomy within its own, geographical territory. Disarmament (design as well as currency and communications) were to be left to the central government, and even these were to be administered by an agency in which all four nationalities were equally represented.16 The National Democratic Party (NDP) was formed not long thereafter by Khan Abdul Wali Khan as a vehicle for Pahlan nationalism. Both these parties eventually adhered to the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy (MRD), an eleven-party national alliance founded in 1982 to topple the Zia government.

The first major outbreak of ethnic minority violence in the Zia period actually occurred neither in Baluchistan nor in the NWFP, but in the Sind. There, in late summer 1984, an MRD-led agitation erupted in widespread and prolonged anti-government demonstrations. The agitation was forcibly repressed and thousands were jailed. Before it had ended, however, the demand for governmental decentralization and ethnic autonomy had become the single most explosive domestic issue in Pakistani politics.

In late 1985, leaders from all three of Pakistan’s minority provinces gathered in London to form the Sindhi-Baluch-Pakistan front, an organization that set the radical demand for a confederal form of government as its principal objective. In summer 1986, elements of the NDP and PNP leaderships merged these two parties with a number of left-oriented groups to form the Awami National Party (ANP). Bizenjo pulled his faction of the PNP out of the merger at the last moment, frustrating the effort to bolster Pathan-Baluch cooperation and to build a broader-based national front. There was a clear trend, nevertheless, towards a radicalized regionalist brand of politics. The ANP took a stand against Pakistan’s alleged militarist government, against US influence (Pakistan’s foreign policy’s focal point) in the region from Kabul, and against construction of the Kalabagh Dam on the Indus river. The latter was a particularly contentious issue among Pathans, who accused the government of plans to flood parts of the Pathan homeland in order to bring benefits mainly to the Punjab.

Severe ethnic rioting broke out in many of Pakistan’s cities in the course of 1986. Riots in Karachi, the worst in its history, pitted migrant Pathans from the NWFP against Urdu-speaking migrants of Indian origin (mohajirs). Tensions arising from the widespread perception of ethnic inequalities were clearly building within Pakistan. The war in neighbouring Afghanistan was exacerbating these tensions, not least among the Baluchis and Pathans.

**IRAN**

Spread thinly over the remote and arid southeastern part of Iran, the 500,000-750,000 Baluchis of Iranian Baluchistan represent a very small fragment (less than 2%) of the country’s population, estimated in 1979 at 36 million.41 Most of them dwell within the northeastern provinces of Baluchistan and Sistan (1966 population = 503,845), whose eastern boundary is the 590-mile long Goldsmid Line separating Iran from Pakistan; but there are considerable numbers in portions of neighbouring Kerman and Khorasan provinces. The Baluchis have been on the periphery of all the major socioeconomic and political developments which have transformed Iran in the 20th century. But while they have had little direct role in shaping events, they have unquestionably been radically affected by their consequences.

Iranian Baluchistan’s relative isolation was first seriously disturbed in modern times by the British, whose influence in the area spread from India in the last half of the 19th century. Britain’s paramount concern for the region’s security was formalized in August 1907 by the Anglo-Russian Convention of St. Petersberg, which recognized a British sphere of interest in the territory reaching from the Afghan frontier to Bandar Abbas on the Straits of Hormuz. During World War I, British-occupied forces were deployed in this area; but until a coup d’état brought the determined Persian nationalist Reza Khan to power in 1921, the Baluch homeland remained relatively autonomous, run largely by local hereditary chiefs who had little difficulty fending off the failing Qajar dynasty’s feeble efforts to control them.

For Reza Khan, whose vision of statecraft later found some inspiration in European fascism, the export of autonomy and lawless tribes, concepts of Tehran and free to plunder caravans and to raid upon settled villages, was intolerable. The tribesmen, like everyone else, had to be disciplined and made productive members of Iranian society if Iran was to be successful in gaining release from the grip of European imperialist powers. As Minister of War and the most effective leader in the government of the last of the Qajars, Ahmad Shah (1909-1925), Reza Khan launched a series of pacification campaigns to restore central authority in the tribal areas, and by the time of his accession to the Peacock Throne and founding of the Pahlavi dynasty in 1925 he had made considerable headway.42

Systematic pacification of Baluch tribes was begun in 1928. Raiding was terminated, tribal forces broken up, weapons confiscated, and civil and military administration imposed. Young men were conscripted into the army. Offending chiefs were executed or exiled. Nomadic tribesmen were encouraged, in some cases forced,
to settle in agricultural villages. New roads and railroads helped to link them with the wider market economy. By 1935, the power of the tribal chieftains to defy the State had been crushed in all parts of Baluchistan and more successfully than in Pakistan. At no time since then have the Iranian Baluchis posed a serious threat to the central authorities.63

With the Anglo-Russian occupation of Iran in 1941 and the subsequent forced abdication of the Nazi-sympathizing Reza Shah, Teheran’s control of Baluchistan was temporarily interrupted. But it was not long before central authority reasserted itself. The lessons of the immediate post-World War II period, when Kurdish and Azerbaijani autonomous republics were declared in the Soviet-occupied zone of northern Iran, were not lost on the second of the Pahlavis – Mohammad Reza Shah. Like his father, the new Shah recognized very early the enormous strategic importance to Iran’s territorial integrity of the country’s immense tribal population, including the Baluchis.

Under Mohammad Reza Shah, central authority manifested itself in Baluchistan mainly in the form of a watchful military and administrative machinery tightly controlled from Teheran. These were augmented to some extent, particularly after 1963 with implementation of what the monarch hailed as a White Revolution, by attempts to introduce social, economic and political reforms. The centerpiece of the White Revolution was the breakup of large estates and the distribution of land to poor peasants; but vast human and material resources were also to be poured into female emancipation, literacy, health and other social welfare and development programmes.64

By the end of the 1960s, according to Salzman, a variety of development programmes were underway in Iranian Baluchistan; and plans had been laid for improved roads, marketing of handicrafts, irrigation projects, as well as for additional educational, health and veterinary services.65 The construction of a huge air and naval base at Chah Bahar on the Baluchistan coast, begun in the 1970s, was also expected to contribute to development of the province. By the time of the Shah’s fall from power, however, the promises of the White Revolution – at least in so far as Baluchistan was concerned – remained largely on paper. No signs had appeared, moreover, that the monarchy was interested in encouraging greater cultural or political self-expression among the Baluchis, even of the limited sort long accepted in Pakistan. On the contrary, in the 1970s Teheran’s response to upheavals on the other side of the border was to repress the Baluch language, dress or any other expression of Baluch identity even more vigorously than before.66

Like his father, Mohammad Reza Shah was forced to give up the throne long before he had accomplished his declared objectives. But unlike his father, when the last of the Pahlavi went into exile on 15 January 1979, he left behind a revolutionary and as yet unresolved situation.

Impact of the Islamic Revolution

Temporarily, at least, Iran’s government has come into the hands of fundamentalist Shi‘ite clerics, the long-exiled Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini foremost among them, who had been excluded from power during the Pahlavi era and whose social prestige had been eroded by the Shah’s forced march into modernization. They declared Iran an Islamic Republic on 1 April 1979, then promulgated a constitution giving both the Ayatollah and the Shi‘ite fundamentalist Shi’ite clergy, in turn, political power. For example, King Amanullah (1919-1929), who sought to recreate the independent hill tribes who straddled the official boundary paid little attention to it, they continued to play an important role in the political struggles waged on both sides of the Line – a tradition which they were still upholding in the late 1980s. In fact, in Afghanistan, which, in sharp contrast to either Iran or Pakistan, is basically still a tribal society, the loyalty of the tribesmen has been indispensable to the successful exercise of political power. For example, General Mujahideen (Amir-muhammad) inspired by his grand tour of Europe (which included Mustafa Kemal Ataturk’s secular Turkish republic) in 1928, returned to Afghanistan determined to force its rapid modernization. His reforms, which included the unveiling of women, had hardly been announced, however, when the unappreciative Pashtun tribesmen drove him from the country.68 The quartet of detribalized Marxist Pashtuns (Nur Mohammad Taraki, Hafizullah Amin, Babrak Karmal, and Najibullah), who sought to transform Afghanistan into a Workers’ and Farmers’ State (1978-1992), inspired by his grand tour of Europe (which included Mustafa Kemal Ataturk’s secular Turkish republic) in 1928, returned to Afghanistan determined to force its rapid modernization. His reforms, which included the unveiling of women, had hardly been announced, however, when the unappreciative Pashtun tribesmen drove him from the country.68 The quartet of detribalized Marxist Pashtuns (Nur Mohammad Taraki, Hafizullah Amin, Babrak Karmal, and Najibullah) sought to transform Afghanistan into a Workers’ and Farmers’ State (1978-1992), inspired by his grand tour of Europe (which included Mustafa Kemal Ataturk’s secular Turkish republic) in 1928, returned to Afghanistan determined to force its rapid modernization. His reforms, which included the unveiling of women, had hardly been announced, however, when the unappreciative Pashtun tribesmen drove him from the country.68

For a number of reasons, Iran’s Islamic revolution was bound to cause stirrings of discontent among Baluchis, as well as from other ethnic and tribal minorities. First of all, for decades Baluchis had been among the beneficiaries of the Pahlavi government’s patronage. Economic resources had been used extensively to assure the tribesmen’s loyalty and submission to Teheran; and the authority of tribal leaders had become directly dependent upon the continuity of programmes through which these resources were made locally available. The potential threat to this clientelist relationship stemming from the new regime’s anti-reformist inclinations, as well as from the inevitable replacement of local and provincial bureaucratic officials, must have had an upsetting effect on Baluch leaders.

Second, the Baluchis were likely to be apprehensive of the regime’s religious orthodoxy, which threatened to take forms offensive to the Baluchis’ Sunni faith. Ironically, it was the essentially secular Pahlavi regime which had earlier this century provoked religious revivalism among the Baluchis, who, in Iran as in Pakistan, had previously given little attention to religious matters. The Khomeini government’s sectarian chauvinism seemed bound to invest the Baluchis’ Sunni sectarianism with the same anti-State symbolism as was inspired by the Pahlavis’ ruthless pacification campaigns. Third, the new constitution erected a framework of government no less unitary than that of the Pahlavis, and promised no more autonomy or self-government to the tribal areas. At the time of the Shah’s overthrow, Iran was administratively divided into 23 provinces (ostans), each governed by royally-appointed Governors-General. Provincial boundaries mirrored administrative requirements rather than ethnic-linguistic realities; Baluchistan, for example, had expanded in 1959 to embrace mainly non-Baluch Seistan. Provincial councils (anjumans) were established in 1968; but Baluchistan has never known a directly-elected provincial legislature of the sort which flourished (briefly) among the Baluchis in neighbouring Pakistan. Nor does the qualified federalism of Pakistan seem any more likely now in Iran than it was under the Shah. In summer 1980, the government of Ayatollah Khomeini, conforming to past practice, appointed a non-Baluch Shi‘ite Muslim as Governor of the Sunni Baluch-majority province of Baluchistan and Seistan.

AFGHANISTAN

Since the conquest of the Persian Safavids and founding of the indigenous Durrani dynasty in Kabul in 1747, Pashtuns (Pathans) have been the dominant element in Afghan society. But with the exception of the first fifty years or so of their rule, during which the Durrani empire reached from the Oxus River to the Arabian Sea, and from Delhi to the heart of Persia, embracing virtually all of modern Pakistan (including Baluchistan), theirs has been a story of gradual erosion of their dominance. After the 1890s, when the spread of a new religious revivalism, the Movement of Islamic Revolution following the Marxist coup of April 1978 was merely the latest of countless struggles – between nomadic and settled tribes, between (western) Durrani and (eastern) Ghilzai Pashtuns, and between Tajiks and the Uzbeks or other peoples to the north of the Hindu Kush – to have blighted Afghanistan from within over the past two centuries. And the Soviet military intervention launched in December 1979 followed upon a century and a half of struggle involving, among other contenders, the Russian czars and their Soviet successors, and the British Empire and the United States, to bring Afghanistan within the orbit of this or that foreign power.

The Durand Line, the product of a treaty concluded between the Afghans and British in 1893, formalized not only the loss of Baluchistan in half, but the partitioning, roughly in half, of the Pashtuns. However, since the independent hill tribes who straddled the official boundary paid little attention to it, they continued to play an important role in the political struggles waged on both sides of the Line – a tradition which they were still upholding in the late 1980s. In fact, in Afghanistan, which, in sharp contrast to either Iran or Pakistan, is basically still a tribal society, the loyalty of the tribesmen has been indispensable to the successful exercise of political power. For example, General Mujahideen (Amir-muhammad) inspired by his grand tour of Europe (which included Mustafa Kemal Ataturk’s secular Turkish republic) in 1928, returned to Afghanistan determined to force its rapid modernization. His reforms, which included the unveiling of women, had hardly been announced, however, when the unappreciative Pashtun tribesmen drove him from the country.68 The quartet of detribalized Marxist Pashtuns (Nur Mohammad Taraki, Hafizullah Amin, Babrak Karmal, and Najibullah) sought to transform Afghanistan into a Workers’ and Farmers’ State (1978-1992), inspired by his grand tour of Europe (which included Mustafa Kemal Ataturk’s secular Turkish republic) in 1928, returned to Afghanistan determined to force its rapid modernization. His reforms, which included the unveiling of women, had hardly been announced, however, when the unappreciative Pashtun tribesmen drove him from the country.68

Following the Third Anglo-Afghan War of 1919, Afghanistan succeeded in persuading the British to relinquish control over Afghan foreign policy. For the next sixty years, until the Soviet invasion of 1979, Afghanistan remained politically independent and neutral (in World War II and as a member of the non-aligned movement in the post-World War II period). At the same time, it...
underwent profound, even if at times subtle, socio-economic change. This became especially pronounced after 1953, with the designation of Prince Sardar Mohammad Daoud Khan as Prime Minister and the acceleration of external – especially Soviet – economic assistance. Throughout this period, its ‘tribal problem’ remained uppermost in Afghanistan’s internal and external affairs.

Afghanistan’s contemporary tribal problem has several dimensions. The Pashtuns, who are the single largest group in the country and probably half or so of its population, themselves contain many diverse and often conflicting elements. Most are sedentary or semi-sedentary farmers. Perhaps 2.5 million of them are nomads, perhaps the largest remaining nomadic population in the world. Others belong to the small but influential Persian-speaking, urban middle class of largely detribalized professionals, businessmen and bureaucrats. The tribal population is divided into a bewildering assembly of tribes, clans (khels) and other subdivisions. To a large extent, the internal politics of Afghanistan is the intra-tribal politics of the Pashtuns. Discussion of it would far exceed our purposes in this report.

Afghanistan’s tribal groups virtually all overlap with neighbouring states; hence, its tribal problem is inherently an international one as well. We return to this aspect below in the discussion of the ‘Pashtunistan’ question.

Since the Pashtuns share the country with many other groups, we need here to look briefly at the manner in which Pashtuns have dealt with ethnic minorities, in particular the small Baluch population, in a land where they are the dominant community. The Afghan Baluchis, being Sunni Muslims, are of the same religious community as the Pashtuns. Their language is, like Pashtu, of Iranian origin. Their numbers are small (only 100,000, or less than 1% of the population, if Brahuis are excluded). And they occupy a sparsely-settled and little developed desert area along the Afghan border.

In the past, all of these factors helped to shield them against active Pashtun discrimination. Though they possessed no particular cultural rights, basically they were left alone.69

As Pashtun nationalist feelings have developed in the 20th century, so too has the tendency to foster a single Pashtun identity among all citizens of Afghanistan. In the past, this was accomplished, in part, through a policy of neglect (i.e., by withholding official recognition from all other groups except the Persian-speaking Tajiks – the country’s second largest group – whose tongue is yet the true lingua franca of Afghanistan). There were also efforts actively to promote the Pashto language and culture. Schooling in Pashto was mandated in some non-Pashto areas, its literature was publicly subsidized, and in Article 35 of the 1964 constitution, Pashto was named the sole national language (with Dari, or Persian, it was also one of two official languages).70

The pro-Soviet coup of 1978 brought a dramatic change at least in formal cultural policy. In contrast with Iran, where in 1979 the Islamic revolutionary regime of Ayatollah Khomeini rejected constitutional recognition both of ethnic minorities and of the Sunni religion, the new Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, according to Eden Naby, adopted an unusually accommodative ‘nationalities model’ akin to that of the Soviet Union.71

In autumn 1978, only months following the April coup, four languages (Uzbek, Turkmen, Nuristani and, in spite of the limited number of speakers, Baluchi) were singled out for recognition in addition to Pashtu and Dari as official languages of Afghanistan. Facilities for propagation were pledged, and steps were taken to implement the new policy in four areas – participation in government, education, publication of periodicals, and cultural expression. A Baluchi-language weekly began publication in September 1978. Beginning in September 1979, Baluchi-speaking first graders were presumably able to attend classes in their own language, if they so chose. And there were plans, according to Naby, to provide complete Baluchi-language schools in Baluchi-majority areas.72

As of 1980, the Marxist regime was still heavily Pashtun; and there had been no move towards territorial decentralization: Afghanistan’s 24 provinces were all still ruled from the centre through governors appointed by the Revolutionary Council. It was also clear (since groups larger than the Baluchis, such as the Brahuis or the Shi’ite Hazaras, were denied recognition) that the policy was motivated at least partially by regional strategic (and propaganda) considerations. Nonetheless, the Afghan Baluchis, one of that country’s smallest minorities, had become – at least on paper – one of its most protected.

PART III: INTERNATIONAL ASPECTS

THE CONTEMPORARY ‘GREAT GAME’

The area between the Hindu Kush Mountains and the Arabian Sea is the setting today for an intensified international power struggle worthy of the ‘Great Game’, the name coined in the 1800s for the ruthless and often deadly intrigue that characterized over a century of Anglo-Russian rivalry for control of Central Asia. In the contemporary version, there are new players, new weapons and new tactics, and the stakes, which now include control over the vast and fabulously rich energy resources of the Persian Gulf, are probably of wider significance than ever before. Both for the Baluchis and Pathans who inhabit the contested areas, and whose fortunes now as in the past are perilously dependent on the outcome of the struggle for its control, this new version of the ‘Great Game’ must have a familiar sound.

The frontier tribesmen have always been pivotal elements in the struggle. Efforts to pacify and control them occupied the British for many years in endless diplomatic wrangling and in a very costly succession of often fruitless military campaigns. By the end of the 19th century, they had subdued most of Baluchistan and had reduced Afghanistan, though not the border tribes, virtually to the status of a British dependency. But that did not last long. The Third Anglo-Afghan War of 1919 loosened Britain’s grip; and from then until British withdrawal from the Indian subcontinent in 1947, an assortment of Turkish Pashas, Russian Bolsheviks, German Nazis and others competed with the British for influence in Kabul.73

With Britain’s departure from the area, the ‘tribal problem’ fell to the three governments under which the Baluchis and Pathans lived. Iran’s tribal populations had been effectively pacified by the 1930s, and the new Shah appeared capable and willing to rule as firmly as his father. Pakistan inherited the bulk of the Baluch and Pathan tribes, including some elements which had not previously beenpacified. It counted on a common religion to bind them to the State. Afghanistan’s boundaries enclosed an extraordinarily heterogeneous population, virtually every segment of which could claim ties with a large co-ethnic group in neighbouring Iran, Pakistan or the Soviet Union – a situation which the British had helped to create but were no longer present to police.

There were grounds for renewed tribal conflict within the tri-state area itself. In all of the three countries the political loyalties of tribesmen were suspect. And there was Afghanistan’s backing of a separate Pathan homeland, or ‘Pashtunistan’. But from the very beginnings of these UN-mandated settlements these umbrella groups made much more deadly by the threat and the reality of foreign interference in tribal affairs – by the renewal, that is, of the ‘Great Game’.

Even before independence came, India’s Hindu-majority Congress party had espoused the cause of Pathan nationalism; and on numerous occasions since then it has given Pakistan’s tribal minorities at least favourable publicity and moral encouragement in their struggles with Islamabad. Material Indian assistance (to the rebellious Baluchis in the 1970s, for example) has been more often alleged than proven; but since India conceded Pakistan’s separate existence in the first place only with the greatest grudging, it is no wonder that Pakistanis widely suspect Indians of conniving with the tribes over the country’s future dismemberment.

In the early 1950s, the United States implemented its containment doctrine in Central Asia by joining the Northern Tier states of Turkey, Iran and Pakistan – but not Afghanistan – in a cordon sanitaire directed against the Soviet Union.74 To Afghanistan, the only one of the four Northern Tier states excluded from the alliance system, the United States provided economic assistance alone. To the others, the United States supplied generous amounts of modern military equipment. With these acts, the United States planted the West’s defensive frontier squarely in the middle of the Baluch and Pathan homelands, rendering the tribesmen literally frontline participants in the Cold War. What that meant in material terms was driven home to rebellious Baluchis in both the 1960s and 1970s, when Pakistan’s armed forces used US-made weapons in the struggles against them.
Pakistan, Afghanistan's bitter regional rival.

Afghanistan would have complicated America's relationship with the north might revive the aggressive foreign policy which it had pursued south of the Oxus River in the 1920s. The Soviet Union's emergence as a superpower in the aftermath of World War II raised fears in Afghanistan that its neighbour to the west was unilaterally planning the conquest of the second leg (Iranian and Pakistani Baluchistan), but how? In 1973, Iraq offered a $2 billion aid package to Afghanistan, which included the opening up of an alternative land route for Afghan trade through Kerman province to Chah Bahar on Iran's Baluchistan coast. The offer never came to fruition. Political upheavals in all three countries – Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan – were soon to place the region on a very different path. Most catastrophic of these upheavals was the overthrow of the Daoud Khan regime in Kabul.

The Marxist Coup and Soviet Intervention in Afghanistan

The Marxist take-over in Afghanistan in April 1978, followed by a massive increase in Soviet economic and military assistance and, less than two years later, by direct military intervention in December 1979, injected an entirely new element into the contemporary struggle for control of Central Asia. Half-forgotten images of the centuries-long czarist quest for a warm-water port surfaced fears that the Soviet Union, which had realized its non-legal territorial claim of a Soviet corridor to the sea. The principal question, it seemed, had become not whether the Kremlin planned the conquest of the second leg (Iranian and Pakistani Baluchistan), but how? If the Soviet Red Army was preparing a frontal assault on the area between Afghanistan and the Arabian Sea, the presence of a few million tribesmen would hardly matter. If, on the other hand, the Soviets planned a more discreet strategy of subversion, then the tribesmen mattered a great deal.

In regard to the latter possibility, there was plenty of evidence to fuel speculation. The most popular leader in Baluchistan was the Marxist-oriented Sardar Khair Bakhsh Marri, whose large and powerful Marri tribe had formed the backbone of the 1970s insurgency. Khair Bakhsh himself was domiciled in the 1980s in Kabul. Several thousand of his armed tribesmen were located in camps in Afghanistan just north of the Pakistan border, having fled there in the mid-1970s, and presumably could be mobilized by the Afghans for guerrilla action in Pakistan. Militant Baluch groups, such as the influential Baluchistan Students Organization, openly expressed sympathy and support for the Soviet-backed regime in Kabul.

For their part, Afghanistan's leaders lost no time in affirming the inseparability of Baluchis and Pathans. In one of his first public statements upon becoming president of Afghanistan at the time of the Soviet intervention, Babrak Karmal, as had both of his Pashtun predecessors Taraki and Amin, pointedly announced his backing for the ‘legitimate aspirations’ of both the Pathan and Baluch tribes. Most of the evidence tying the Soviet Union to subversive activities in Baluchistan was, however, circumstantial. Hard evidence that Moscow was actually preparing to exploit tribal discontent in Pakistan's Baluchistan province was lacking. Inevitably, a dispute arose among Western analysts over Soviet intentions. In a major study of the Baluch nationalist movement published in 1981, for example, Selig Harrison took the position that Soviet intervention in Baluchistan was most likely to occur in retaliation against threats to its own position in Afghanistan. So far as he could judge, the Kremlin was not acting in Afghanistan on the basis of any ‘grand design’ of territorial acquisition or urge for access to the warm waters of the Arabian sea. On the contrary, he argued, Moscow’s temptation to invoke its ‘Baluch card’ was contingent to an important extent on American and Pakistani policies in the region.

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In 1987, after more than eight years of war in Afghanistan, the controversy over the potential for Soviet involvement in Baluchistan stood unresolved. Barring restoration of Afghanistan to a genuine non-aligned status – an eventuality many deem unlikely – the controversy over Soviet ambitions in Baluchistan seemed bound to persist.

Paralleling the controversy over Soviet involvement in Baluchistan was an even fiercer debate among observers over the implications of Afghan-Soviet involvement in Pakistan’s Pathan-inhabited North-West Frontier area. There, the ‘Pashtunistan’ question, a matter of concern to both the Pakistan government and the military, had by 1987 acquired an extraordinarily lethal dimension.

THE ‘PASHTUNISTAN’ QUESTION

With the approach of Britain’s withdrawal from the subcontinent after World War II, hopes were rekindled in Kabul that the tribal territories lost a century earlier – and in whose affairs the Durrani Afghan kingdom, notwithstanding treaty commitments, had never ceased to be a major participant – could finally be recovered. The Afghans tried to persuade the British to renegotiate the boundary and made public their opposition to the Partition Plan a few months before the transfer of power. But their efforts failed. The Pathans gave resounding approval to union with Pakistan in the July referendum and when Pakistan was born on 15 August 1947, the Durand Line stood as its permanent frontier (see Appendix II for chronology of events).

In Afghanistan’s frustrated aspirations for the unification of Pathans east and west of the boundary were laid the foundations of the Pashtunistan (also Pathanistan, Pakhtoonistan, etc.) question, an issue which has heavily burdened Afghan-Pakistan relations ever since 1947. It was largely responsible for the complete severance of diplomatic relations on two occasions (1955, 1961); for the repeated disruption of trade between and transit through both countries (a matter with particularly severe consequences for the economy of landlocked Afghanistan); for literally hundreds of border violations; for several major outbreaks of armed violence involving thousands of tribal and/or regular forces (especially in
Pashtunistan demand has undoubtedly stemmed, nonetheless, of Pakistan west of the Indus River and south to the Arabian Sea, essentially to the present boundaries of the NWFP or embrace all within Pakistan. In its boldest formulation, it envisions a fully Pakistani Pathan leader Abdul Ghaffar Khan), it requires little. There is no universally accepted definition of the Pashtunistan claim. 'Peshawar would absorb Kabul, not Kabul Peshawar'. In its ruling circles. As Qureshi points out, the demand for separate Pashtunistan has represented only one part of the Afghan approach to the frontier issue: parallel to the demand for a Pashtan state separate from both Pakistan and Afghanistan was the Afghan demand for renegotiation of the international boundary engineered by British diplomacy at the end of the 19th century. Repeated denunciation of the Durand Line, in spite of its seeming incompatibility with the Afghan claim for naked self-interest in a Greater Afghanistan lurked within the altruistic call for Pashtunistan.

The Pashtun claim is not simply irredentist, however. More secure access to the sea (or to the mineral and other resources of the Baluchistan corridor) is alone a powerful incentive. An equally powerful incentive, perhaps, is simply the physical survival of Afghanistan, whose own ethnic integrity, in the absence of sustained attacks on its neighbour's, might be thought in jeopardy. While the Afghan government has taken no care to exclude from Pashtunistan the non-Pashtun groups (Nuristanis, Hazaras, Chitralis, Sindhis, Brahuis, Baluchis) settled inconveniently within its proposed boundaries, it has always been noticeably careful to exclude its own Pashtans, lest the claim for Pashtunistan result inadvertently in a truncated Afghanistan (or in a Greater Pakistan). Were political amalgamation ever to come, Caroe warned darkly some years ago, 'Peshawar would absorb Kabul, not Kabul Peshawar'.

The Pashtunistan issue has waxed and waned over the last several years in response both to internal as well as external pressures. Pakistan's announcement of the One Unit scheme in 1955, from the Afghan point of view at least, heaped insult on top of injury. It precipitated massive demonstrations in Afghanistan, followed by caretaker demonstrations in Pakistan leading ultimately to a diplomatic rupture, the mobilization of Afghan armed forces, the suspension of trade and transit for five months, and - of greatest long-term significance - a more receptive atmosphere for the major Soviet economic and military aid overtures which commenced late that year with the Khrushchev-Bulganin visit to Kabul.

Sardar Daoud Khan's forced resignation from the position of Prime Minister in 1963, the result in no small measure of widespread dissatisfaction with his hardline and economically painful Pashtun policy, sparked an almost immediate improvement in relations with Pakistan. His return to power ten years later (1973) coincided with the brief NAP interlude and outbreak of tribal rebellion in FATA, as well as with Afghan successes in Sughnistan and for Baluch and Pathan demands for regional autonomy again strained relations with Islamabad. The promising efforts of Daoud and Bhatto to effect a reconciliation in the summer of 1976 fell victim almost immediately to dramatic political turnabouts in both countries - Bhatto's overthrow in 1977, Daoud's in 1978. The latter event resurrected the demand for Pashtunistan, joined this time, however, with a simultaneous and carefully orchestrated appeal to Baluch cultural nationalism (discussed above).

The Baluch have reciprocated with warm demonstrations of approval for the new regime in Kabul, much as they had done in return for Afghan support in the time of Daoud Khan. Observers may wonder how Baluch claims for autonomy or for their own Greater Baluchistan can be reconciled with the demand for Pashtunistan, when it seems to embrace much of Baluch territory. The NAP period stands as evidence, nonetheless, that Pathans and Baluchis can collaborate politically. Whether they can move from an expedient political alliance to disposal of fundamental territorial questions - including the vexing matter of Quetta, the Pathan-dominated but Baluch-ruled provincial capital - remains in doubt.

The demand for Pashtunistan has always sounded less strongly in Pakistan than in Afghanistan. This has probably been the result in part of Pakistan's policies toward the Federally Administered Tribal Areas, where the British tradition of subsidy and tolerance of local autonomy continues essentially unimpaired. It has also been due in some measure to the powerful economic ties which have developed over many decades between the NWFP and the rest of Pakistan (and to the lack of compensating economic attractions in Afghanistan). It has probably been related as well to the fact, discussed earlier, that Pathans have enjoyed extraordinary prominence in Pakistan's military establishment and, as direct outgrowth of that, in its ruling circles.

Afghans may today regret ever having raised the Pashtunistan issue. It drove a deep wedge between Afghanistan and Pakistan, and opened the door wide to Soviet penetration of Afghan military and political circles. As a weapon in Kabul's diplomatic arsenal against Islamabad, the Pashtunistan demand seems in fact to have backfired - to have done more damage to Afghanistan than to Pakistan.

The Pashtunistan issue is clearly not dead today. Indeed, events now unfolding in the region may well breathe new life into it. One such event is the massive exodus of refugees from strife-torn Afghanistan.

THE PROBLEM OF AFGHAN REFUGEES

By 1987, the refugee exodus from Afghanistan had reached staggering proportions. According to a United Nations study released in November 1986, as many as 5 million Afghans - roughly one-third of Afghanistan's entire pre-war population - had already fled Afghanistan, about 1.9 million of them to Iran and most of the rest, over 3 million, to Pakistan. Thousands more were arriving each month. Most of those in Pakistan were housed in over 300 refugee camps scattered all along the 1500-mile-long Pakistan-Afghan border. Roughly 74% of the refugees were in the NWFP, 20% in Baluchistan, and about 4% in Mianwali district in the Punjab.

The social and economic impact of this human influx on the host populations was enormous. Roughly every sixth person in the NWFP and Baluchistan was a refugee. The tribal belt (FATA) was especially hard hit. There, every third person was a refugee. In many districts and tribal agencies, the refugees accounted for over half, or nearly half, the total population. In Kurram Agency, the worst affected, refugees in 1986 numbered well over 350,000 against a local tribal population of some 250,000.

Apart from humanitarian and economic considerations, the refugee situation posed a gigantic security dilemma for Pakistan. The various Afghan resistance groups functioned openly in the camps; and insurgent fighters moved freely back and forth across the border. Pakistan's support of the resistance groups (mujahidin) was one of the worst kept secrets of the war. With each advance in sophistication in resistance weaponry inevitably came heightened threat of Soviet retaliation against Pakistan and of a wider war. In fact, spillover of the war into Pakistan's tribal territories has increased dramatically in the last few years. In late 1986, the Pakistani government informed the National Assembly in Islamabad that Afghanistan had committed over 450 ground and air violations on the Pakistan-Afghan border during 1985 and 1986, killing and injuring more Pakistanis than Afghan refugees. In the same period, devastating terrorist attacks, against both refugees and Pakistanis, had become almost daily occurrences. According to one report, they averaged fifteen per month in 1986. Afghan jet bombings of Pakistani border villages and refugee camps in North Waziristan and Kurram tribal agencies in the early months of 1987 were the most devasting air attacks on Pakistani territory of the entire war.

Even if the government of Pakistan had wanted to observe strict non-interference in Afghan affairs, however, it was not certain that it had the capacity either to police the border effectively or to

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16
compel acquiescence to its policies by all those who dwelt in the highlands on both sides of the border. Between Islamabad and Kabul stood the Pathan tribal belt, amongst whose inhabitants small arms manufacture and smuggling had long since reached the state of a high art. There was never any question that they were at least indirect participants in the war; and their loyalty to either side in the struggle was always in doubt.

The massive influx of refugees, the overwhelming majority of whom were Pashtun tribesmen from Afghanistan’s eastern provinces, also created difficulty in regard to the ethno-political balance in Pakistan. There would have been little problem had the refugees been merely temporary sojourners, awaiting the cessation of hostilities or a change in regime so that they might return home in safety. But with the passage of time, the probability grew that many would never leave Pakistan.

Wherever the refugees settled, they were competitors for limited economic resources. Hence, even in the NWFP, where the population is of the same basic Pashtun stock, some misgiving over the influx was inevitable. The refugees were necessarily political competitors too, however, most clearly so in Baluchistan where the political fortunes of Baluchis and Pathans depended heavily on the province’s already precarious ethnic balance. No wonder, then, that as early as July 1979 the Baluch nationalist leader Mir Ghaus Baksh Bizenjo chided the government for turning Pakistan into a mahajran (‘land of immigrants’) and demanded that the Afghan refugees be sent back to their own land. His sentiment has been echoed many times since then among both Baluchis and Pathans. The war’s increasing spillover into Pakistan has vastly magnified their fears and resentments. By 1987, in fact, the feeling was widespread in Pakistan that the country’s engagement in the Afghanistan war threatened to make Pakistan’s borderland tribal minorities as much victims of the war as the Afghan refugees.

**CONCLUSION**

The ‘tribal problem’ in the tri-state region of Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan has existed for a very long time. It was a serious problem for the Moguls, Persians, Sikhs, British and numerous others long before the modern nation-state made its appearance in the area. It would certainly exist today even had the 1970s been more placid, even had governments in the region been more stable, even had there been no Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, even had global dependence on Persian Gulf oil far less than it is. There would have been a tribal problem regardless of the events which gave the ‘arc of crisis’ its name.

The problem has undoubtedly grown more complex and acquired a new vocabulary. Those who contended with it in earlier days did not worry much about social and economic development — about the impact of urbanization and industrialization on population movements; about the commercialization of agriculture and the displacement of nomadic pastoralists; about literacy rates and health care; or about the installation of tubewells or widening use of tractors in tribal areas. At one time, tribal leaders could not invoke the universal right of self-determination, or mobilize their people with the ideology of Marxism-Leninism. Until recent decades, governments could not encourage tribal insurrections from afar via international shortwave radio, or crush them with helicopter gunships.

The Baluchis and Pathans are engulfed in a torrent of fundamental social change whose ramifications go well beyond immediate events. Any more than non-tribal peoples in the area, they can not be shielded from some of the harsh consequences of it. The migration in recent decades of hundreds of thousands of tribesmen out of their homelands was precipitated by economic and technological forces against which legislation (even if governments wished it) might prove impotent. Growing global resource scarcities render less probable than ever that exploitation of fossil fuels, mineral and other riches of the tribal areas will be tempered by concern for tribal welfare. The likelihood diminishes that the government of Pakistan, faced with a rapidly mounting population and enormous pressures on limited land and other resources, will sacrifice control over any part of the national economy to the wish for genuine tribal autonomy — or ever seriously consider turning over 40% of its territory to the effective control of 3% of its population.

However defined, whether as improvement of tribal welfare or as prevention of violent conflict, there is clearly no simple solution for any aspect of the tribal problem we have surveyed. This would be the case even if the governments of Pakistan, Iran and Afghanistan were committed unswervingly to improve the lot of tribsepeople. It would also be the case even if these governments were left alone to sort out their priorities and organize their resources without external interference. In this region of the world, that is not likely to occur.

The territorial integrity and political independence of these countries have been severely threatened in the contemporary period. The governments of all of them can be expected to argue that sheer survival has priority over the satisfaction of this or that tribe’s demands, no matter how just. One may reply that there would have been less threat had these governments all along been more attentive to tribal interests. The dreary truth, however, is that whatever the willingness of these governments, other governments have been motivated to interfere with and to manipulate tribal discontent in the strategically vulnerable border areas.

There is no more explosive tribal situation in the world at present than that of the Baluchis and Pathans. One has only to observe that as much as one-third of the population of one of the three states, Afghanistan, has recently fled to the other two to recognize its immediate urgency. But one must also recognize that the ‘arc of crisis’ has become such not only by accident but by the design of political strategists to appreciate how difficult will be the search for peaceful and mutually acceptable resolution.

**NOTES**

* This report draws upon field research in Pakistan undertaken by the author on ten separate visits over a period of almost fifteen years. My debts to individuals and to institutions during this period for help in understanding the Baluchis and Pathans are too numerous to list here. I am deeply grateful to them all. Naturally, I alone am responsible for any errors of fact or interpretation.


8. Spain, *The Pathan Borderland*, p.188.


11. Selig Harrison, ‘Nightmare in Baluchistan’, *Foreign Policy*, No.32 (Fall 1978): 137

12. For an argument in support of a larger estimate, see Baloch, *Searchlights on Baloch*, pp.15-24.

22 Philip C. Salzman, 'Continuity and Change in Baluchi Tribal Leadership', 432-433.


19, No.3 (Summer 1971): 334; and Satish Kumar, 'The Ethnic Factor in Soviet-Afghan Relations', 102.

18 See Dupree, Afghanistan, pp.95-111.


16 Philip C. Salzman, 'National Integration of the Tribes in Modern Iran', in The Middle East Journal, 25, No.3 (Summer 1971): 334; and Harrison, 'Nightmare in Baluchistan', p.155.

15 See, for example, Burki, Pakistan Under Bhutto, p.96; Syed, 'Pakistan and its Neighborhood', 420; and Kumar, The New Pakistan, pp.229-231.

14 Brian Spooner, a close observer of Iranian Baluchistan, placed their importance as the province's leaders. See, for example, The New York Times, 3 September 1980, p.A3.


8 see Harrison, 'Nightmare in Baluchistan', 145-156; Naby, 'The Ethnic Factor in Soviet-Afghan Relations', 102.


6 Salzman, 'National Integration of the Tribes in Modern Iran', 332-333.


3 According to a report, as many as 7,000 Pakistani Baluch families remained in Afghanistan after the collapse of the insurgence. Salamat Ali, 'Baluchistan: An Unheal is Forecast', Far Eastern Economic Review, 19 October 1979, p.40.

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1 Spain, The Pathan Borderland, p.221.


Ibid., pp.205-208.

Burki, Pakistan Under Bhutto, p.93.


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See, for example, Burki, Pakistan Under Bhutto, p.96; Syed, 'Pakistan and its Neighborhood', 420; and Kumar, The New Pakistan, pp.229-231.

For text of the Agreement, see ibid., pp.10-11.

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See Attorney General Yahya Bakhhtar's Opening Address in the Supreme Court of Pakistan on 'The Dissolution of National Awami Party' (Rawalpindi, 19, 20 and 23 June 1975).

Feldman, From Crisis to Crisis, p.195. Sardar was restored in 1969.

According to one report, as many as 7,000 Pakistani Baluch families remained in Afghanistan after the collapse of the insurgence. Salamat Ali, 'Baluchistan: An Unheal is Forecast', Far Eastern Economic Review, 19 October 1979, p.40.


Dawn, 4 March 1986.


Richard W. Cottam, Nationalism in Iran (Pittsburg: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1979), pp.59-62. See also Salzman, 'National Integration of the Tribes in Modern Iran'.


Salzman, 'National Integration of the Tribes in Modern Iran', 332-333.


Salzman, 'Continuity and Change in Baluchi Tribal Leadership', 432-433.

Dupree, Afghanistan, pp.441-457.


Naby, 'The Ethnic Factor in Soviet-Afghan Relations'.

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Khalilzad, 'The Superpowers and the Northern Tier', 10-12. See also Dupree, Afghanistan, p.508.


Khalilzad, 'The Superpowers and the Northern Tier', 20.


Ibid., 90. See also the same author's Iran and Pakistan: Cooperation in an Area of Conflict, Asian Survey, 17 (May 1977): 474-490.


Qureshi, 'Pakhtunistan', 110.


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*The Muslim* (Islamabad), 16 November 1986.

*The Muslim* 3 October 1986.


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C. General


APPENDIX I

INSURRECTION IN BALUCHISTAN: A Chronology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20 Dec 1971</td>
<td>Bhutto takes over as President of Pakistan; ban on NAP lifted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 Apr 1972</td>
<td>Baluchistan Province begins self-rule under Interim Constitution; NAP-JUI coalition government formed under terms of Tripartite Agreement with Bhutto's PPP. NAP leaders Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo and Ataullah Khan Mengal named Governor and Chief Minister.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 Nov 1972</td>
<td>Attacks on Punjabi settlers by Marri, Kahloie, and Lehri tribesmen reported in Pat Feeder area of Katchhi district.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Feb 1973</td>
<td>Federal forces ordered to Las Bela district, near Karachi, to repel reported tribal invaders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Feb 1973</td>
<td>Arms cache discovered in Iraqi Embassy in Islamabad; Bhutto government alleges link with NAP in Baluchistan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Feb 1973</td>
<td>NAP Governors dismissed in NWFP and Baluchistan; elected NAP-JUI government dismissed in Baluchistan; Akbar Khan Bugti and Jam Ghulam Qadir appointed Governor and Chief Minister of Baluchistan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Feb 1973</td>
<td>NAP-JUI government in NWFP resigns in protest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 May 1973</td>
<td>Ambush of eight Dir Scouts near Sibi by Marri tribesmen reported; first major action against government forces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 1973</td>
<td>NAP leaders Khair Baksh Marri, Ataullah Khan Mengal, and Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo detained.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Aug 1973</td>
<td>Permanent Constitution promulgated; Bhutto assumes office of Prime Minister.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Nov 1973</td>
<td>Abdul Samad Khan Achakzai, key anti-NAP Pathan political figure in Baluchistan, assassinated in Quetta.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Dec 1973</td>
<td>Governor Akbar Khan Bugti leaves office; Mir Ahmad Yar Khan, the Khan of Kalat, takes over as Governor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Apr 1974</td>
<td>Bhutto declares amnesty for all captives in Baluchistan and announces that all military operations in support of civil administration in Baluchistan to cease on 15 May.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Feb 1975</td>
<td>NAP President Wali Khan, in press conference at Quetta, accuses Bhutto government of using aircraft against Marri tribes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Feb 1975</td>
<td>Karachi weekly Outlook exposes spread of insurrection in Baluchistan; emergence of PFAR (Popular Front of Armed Resistance Against National Oppression and Exploitation in Baluchistan) reported.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Oct 1975</td>
<td>Bhutto announces end of organized resistance in speech at Quetta; states that full amnesty granted over 5,000 Marri and Mengal tribesmen claimed to have surrendered or been captured.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Feb 1975</td>
<td>Hayat Mohammad Khan Sherpao, PPP leader and provincial Home Minister in NWFP, assassinated in Peshawar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Dec 1975</td>
<td>Mass arrests of NAP leaders, including Wali Khan; government alleges sabotage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 Jun 1976</td>
<td>Government decrees ban on NAP.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Apr 1976</td>
<td>President's (Federal) Rule imposed in Baluchistan; provincial legislature suspended and government dismissed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 Jun 1976</td>
<td>Abolition of sardari system announced by Bhutto in speech at Quetta.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Mar 1977</td>
<td>Elections held for National Assembly; allegations of PPP rigging precipitate nationwide violence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Jul 1977</td>
<td>Bhutto's government overthrown by military; Martial Law declared by General Zia ul-Haq.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Dec 1977</td>
<td>Martial Law government releases Wali Khan and other NAP leaders from prison; insurrection ended.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX II

THE 'PASHTUNISTAN' QUESTION:
A Chronology

12 Nov 1893  Durand Agreement establishes Durand Line as boundary between British India and Afghanistan.

3 Jun 1947  Announcement of Partition Plan for Indian sub-continent reopens dispute over possession of Tribal Territories.

21 Jun 1947  Afghan Prime Minister Mohammad Hashim Khan reveals Afghan sentiments in regard to the boundary question in interview at Bombay; Afghanistan's need for a corridor to the Arabian Sea asserted; Afghan support indicated for Pathan independence or incorporation in Afghanistan.

20 Jul 1947  Abdul Ghaffar Khan's Khudai-Kidmatgars boycott British-supervised referendum in NWFP on question of accession to India or Pakistan; union with Pakistan endorsed by overwhelming vote.

15 Aug 1947  Pakistan becomes independent.

30 Sep 1947  Afghanistan votes against Pakistan's application for admission to United Nations on grounds that Pakistan resists pacific resolution of Pashtunistan issue (vote retracted same year).

26 Jul 1949  Afghan parliament (Loya Jirgah) votes support for Pashtunistan and officially declares Durand Agreement and other Anglo-Afghan boundary treaties null and void.

August 1949  Afghan government announces support of 'Pashtunistan Government' founded by groups of dissident tribals in Pakistan's Tribal Territories; radio and press denunciations of Pakistan intensified.

July 1950  Soviet Union concludes trade and transit agreements with Afghanistan.

1950 – 1951  Afghan tribal raids on Pakistan border areas reported; Pakistan interferes with transit of Afghan import/export trade through port of Karachi.

19 May 1954  Mutual Defence Assistance Agreement concluded between Pakistan and the United States.

8 Sep 1954  Pakistan joins US-backed Manila Pact (SEATO).

March 1955  Afghan government denounces proposed One Unit scheme in Pakistan.

30 Mar 1955  Pakistan Embassy in Kabul ransacked by mob; flag of Pashtunistan hoisted on Embassy flagpole; Afghan consulate in Peshawar later attacked in retaliation.

May 1955  Diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan severed following widespread demonstrations in both countries; Afghan armed forces mobilized; trade and transit suspended for five months.


December 1955  Soviet leaders Bulgarin and Khrushchev visit Kabul; express 'sympathy' for Afghanistan's Pashtunistan policy.

March 1956  SEATO Conference at Karachi endorses Durand Line as international frontier between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

September 1957  Full diplomatic relations restored between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

September 1960  Pakistan armed forces repel major Afghan incursion of Pakistani territory at Bajaur.

19-21 May 1961  Pakistan armed forces again repel major Afghan incursion of Pakistani territory at Bajaur.

August 1961  Pakistan bans entry of Afghan nomads (Powindahs) into Pakistan; requests that Afghanistan close consular and trade missions in Pakistan.

7 Sep 1961  Diplomatic relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan severed for second time; trade and transit suspended.

9 Mar 1963  Sardar Mohammad Daoud Khan, Afghan Prime Minister and major protagonist of Pashtunistan, resigns.

29 May 1963  Teheran Agreement restores diplomatic relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan after 22 months; frontier re-opened and trade resumed; Pashtunistan issue becomes dormant.

2 Sep 1969  Pakistani Pathan leader Abdul Wali Khan participates in 'Pashtunistan Day' festivities held at Kabul.

17 Jul 1973  King Zahir Shah overthrown in Kabul; Daoud Khan returns to power; Afghanistan declared a republic.

1973–1977  Afghanistan provides sanctuary for Baluch guerrillas during tribal rebellion in Pakistan; Afghan propaganda couples appeal for 'Greater Baluchistan' with demand for Pashtunistan.

7-11 Jun 1976  Prime Minister Bhutto of Pakistan makes state visit to Kabul; reconciliation set in motion.

21-24 Aug 1976  President Daoud Khan of Afghanistan returns visit; both sides agree to resolve Pashtunistan issue peacefully.

27 Apr 1978  Daoud government overthrown in Marxist coup; Khalq leader Nur Mohammad Taraki becomes President of Democratic Republic of Afghanistan; hard line on Pashtunistan revived; anti-government insurgency launched.

14 Sep 1979  Taraki government overthrown; power seized by Prime Minister Hafizullah Amin; tribal rebellion spreads.

24-27 Dec 1979  Soviet armed forces invade Afghanistan; Amin government overthrown; Parcham leader Babrak Karmal becomes President.

15 Jun 1981  Pakistan and the United States reach agreement on six-year $3.2 billion security assistance programme.

June 1982  U.N.-sponsored 'proximity' talks between Pakistan and Afghanistan on war in Afghanistan begin in Geneva.

31 Dec 1985  Martial law lifted in Pakistan.

24 Mar 1986  Pakistan and United States reach agreement on six-year $4.02 billion security assistance renewal programme.

4 May 1986  Ex-secret police chief Dr. Mohammad Najibullah replaces Babrak Karmal as General Secretary of the ruling People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan.
### Table 1: Population According to Mother Tongue in Pakistan, 1981 (by household)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Number of Households</th>
<th>Per cent of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Punjabi</td>
<td>6,051,356</td>
<td>48.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pashtu</td>
<td>1,651,223</td>
<td>13.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sindhi</td>
<td>1,478,621</td>
<td>11.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siraki</td>
<td>1,235,830</td>
<td>9.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urdu</td>
<td>955,039</td>
<td>7.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baluchi</td>
<td>379,148</td>
<td>3.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindko</td>
<td>305,505</td>
<td>2.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brahui</td>
<td>151,958</td>
<td>1.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>353,197</td>
<td>2.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>12,561,877</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### Table 2: Population According to Mother Tongue in Baluchistan (Pakistan), 1981 (by household)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Number of Households</th>
<th>Per cent of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baluchi</td>
<td>214,208</td>
<td>36.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pashtu</td>
<td>147,884</td>
<td>25.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brahui</td>
<td>121,958</td>
<td>20.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sindhi</td>
<td>98,899</td>
<td>8.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siraki</td>
<td>18,164</td>
<td>2.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urdu</td>
<td>8,101</td>
<td>1.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindko</td>
<td>785</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>16,659</td>
<td>2.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>589,886</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### Table 3: Population According to Mother Tongue in North West Frontier Province, 1981 (by household)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Number of Households</th>
<th>Per cent of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pashtu</td>
<td>1,099,620</td>
<td>68.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindko</td>
<td>291,832</td>
<td>18.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siraki</td>
<td>63,635</td>
<td>3.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjabi</td>
<td>17,639</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urdu</td>
<td>13,368</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sindhi</td>
<td>869</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baluchi</td>
<td>702</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brahui</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>122,176</td>
<td>7.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,810,022</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### Table 4: Population of the NWFP and FATA (Pakistan), (by division and district, 1981)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division/District</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peshawar Division</td>
<td>4,547,024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mardan District</td>
<td>1,506,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peshawar District</td>
<td>2,281,752</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kohat District</td>
<td>758,772</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dera Ismail Khan Division</td>
<td>1,348,280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bannu District</td>
<td>710,786</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dera Ismail Khan District</td>
<td>635,494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazara Division</td>
<td>2,701,257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kohistan District</td>
<td>465,237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mansehra District</td>
<td>1,066,588</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbottabad District</td>
<td>1,169,432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malakand Division</td>
<td>2,466,707</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chitral District</td>
<td>208,560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dir District</td>
<td>767,409</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swat District</td>
<td>1,233,001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malakand Protected Area</td>
<td>257,797</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total NWFP</strong></td>
<td><strong>13,259,875</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### Table 5: Population of Baluchistan (Pakistan), (by division and district, 1981)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division/District</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quetta Division</td>
<td>1,830,183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quetta District</td>
<td>381,566</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pishin District</td>
<td>378,597</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zhob District</td>
<td>361,647</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lorai District</td>
<td>387,898</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chagai District</td>
<td>120,455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sibi Division</td>
<td>1,005,437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sibi District</td>
<td>130,678</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kachhi District</td>
<td>305,215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasirabad District</td>
<td>394,454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kohlu District</td>
<td>175,090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total NWFP and FATA</strong></td>
<td><strong>13,259,875</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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