MIND IS THE ULTIMATE WEAPON

Defence JOURNAL

A MONTHLY MIRROR & DIGEST OF GEO-STRATEGIC AFFAIRS

- Dismantling Missiles
- A Commonwealth Defence Force?
- Bailey Bridge Inventor Dead

10TH ANNIVERSARY
1975—1985

CONDUCT UNBECOMING?

EXCLUSIVE

Ex-Major General
MOHD AKBAR KHAN
DSO
Talks On
Pakistan's First War
(Kashmir 1947-48) &
First Coup (March, 1951)

ALSO FIELD MARSHAL AYUB'S VERSION OF THE RAWALPINDI CONSPIRACY

MIND IS THE ULTIMATE WEAPON

Defence JOURNAL

A MONTHLY MIRROR & DIGEST OF GEO-STRATEGIC AFFAIRS

Vol. XI, Nos. 6—7, 1985.

Editor-in-Chief
Brig. Abdul Rahman Siddiqi (*Retd.*)

REPRESENTATIVES:

United Kingdom:
Colonel Edgar O'Ballance,
Wakebridge Cottage,
Wakebridge,
Matlock,
Derbyshire DE4 5HD.
Tele: Dethick 627
Code (062—984)

North America:
Osman Siddiqui,
75, Bentworth Crescent,
Ottawa, Canada
Telephone: (613) 8296—416

Saudi Arabia
Brig. Mohammad Nawaz
Pakistan Army (*Retd.*)
P. O. Box No. 10155 Riyadh
Telephones
464—2457 478—5900X3335

Punjab:
Capt. M. Arshad (*Retd.*)
B-25, G.O.R. No. 3, Lahore
Phones: 412642-410065

Subscription Rates:

	Rs.	US$*
Annual:	85.00	8.00
Armed Forces Educational Institutions	80.00	

*(Foreign Rates Exclusive of Postage)

June - July 1985
Price: Rs. 12.00

Cable: STRATEGY
Postal Address:
16-B, 7th Central Street,
Defence Housing Authority, Karachi-46.
Phones : 54 19 11 & 54 49 69
Regd. No. S-3018

Contents

Printed at MA'AREF (PRINTERS) LTD., Defence Housing Authority, Karachi-46 Tel: 541074
Cover Printed at OKHAI PRESS, Urdu Bazar, Karachi.

Of Pakistan's First War and Coup

The Kashmir war, to quote Field Marshal Ayub Khan, started as an "irregular campaign". Soldiers and officers "were out on their own with little direction from headquarters and with considerable responsibility placed in the hands of junior officers."

Brig. Mohammad Akbar Khan, DSO, the hero of the Kashmir war joined the irregular campaign on his own initiative in the first week of the November 1947. That was the time when the tide had turned against us following the refusal of the tribal lashkars to keep fighting in the absence of adequate aid from the government. They had been under heavy machinegun fire at the 4th milestone on the road to Srinagar and urgently needed some armoured cars etc. to sustain the momentum of their advance under enemy fire. The much-needed equipment never arrived and thus literally for want of a horseshoe the battle was lost.

The airlift between new Delhi and Srinagar, could have been preempted even in its initial stages and the Kashmir dispute foreclosed had the tribesmen been properly handled and officially aided as much as they were being encouraged. That unfortunately wouldn't be for want of a clear-cut official strategy: the government looked for a straight victory in Kashmir without burning its fingers into the bargain.

Beginning as a tribal foray with the backing of a provincial minister (Khan Abdul Qayyum Khan) and the connivance of the central government under the overall command of one retired Major Khurshid Anwar (an emergency commissioned officer of the Royal Indian Army Supply Corps—RIASC—turned commander of the Muslim League National Guard) fighting in Kashmir subsequently developed into an irregular campaign officered by the Pakistani regulars and manned mainly by the tribals and partly by army jawans. The outcome of such a hodgepodge and haphazard effort could have been hardly more positive and productive than what it had been.

Brig. Akbar, a career officer of the Pakistan Army, drove off to the Srinagar front "on my own initiative" to stem the tide of the tribal retreat and get the tribesmen back to the front unconditionally. He regrouped his forces (about a dozen army regulars together with the Lashkars whose exact number remained fluid) and partly regained the initiative fatally or fatefully lost at the 4th milestone on the high road to Srinagar.

The Kashmir war had been a truly bizarre affair, layer upon layer, in more sense than one. At the top layer was an unresponsive British high command (Messervy, Gracey, MCcay, Hutton, Tottenham etc.) with their divided professional loyalties and perceptions.

They reported technically to the supreme commander Field Marshal Sir Claude Auchinleck, based in New Delhi. At the second layer were the tribal lashkars raised by retired Major Khurshid Anwar with the active support and backing of the Frontier Chief Minister. According to Akbar Khan, when the prime minister (Liaquat Ali Khan) in September 1947, launched the 'movement of the Kashmir struggle', Khurshid Anwar was appointed commander of the northern sector (Muzaffarabad-Uri-Baramula-Srinagar). He went to Peshawar and with the "apparent help" of Khan Abdul Qayyum Khan raised the Lashkar which assembled at Abbottabad and at the head of which he entered Muzaffarabad on the 24th of October 1947.

At the final and the lowest layer was the government of Pakistan and its civil and military advisers. Apart from the governor-general and prime minister (the Quaid-e-Azam and Liaquat Ali Khan) the war-cabinet or advisory group (call it what you will) comprised the chief campaign organizer, Khan Abdul Qayyum Khan, central minister Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan, Punjab provincial ministers, Mian Iftikharuddin, Sardar Shaukat Hayat Khan (a retired Indian army captain appointed as the chief coordinator or the commander-in-chief of the irregular force fighting in Kashmir and Iskander Mirza, a former army lieut.-col. turned civilian bureaucrat). Akbar Khan was the chief military adviser, planner and field commander reporting directly to the civilian leadership circumventing his own military high command. He admits it was not a "regular posting" and that "I went into fight regardless of proper orders".

Altogether the Kashmir war had been a most extraordinary affair—an overt and covert operation and a boldly fought but indifferently sustained campaign. It had easily been a most confounding hodgepodge of military, para-military and guerrilla forces with a clear-cut strategic objective (the liberation of the whole of the occupied Jammu and Kashmir) but with ad hoc tactical planning and inadequate logistical and material support. The army itself had been divided between the British high command and Pakistani middle and lower ranks adversely to affect the sustained conduct of the operations.

On October 25, the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir acceded to India and fled to Jammu—his winter capital. Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan, the same day, held a meeting at Lahore to consider the grave situation. An Indian armed intervention under the circumstances looked imminent and only prompt and bold preemptive action on Pakistan's part could possibly save the situation. Akbar Khan suggested a tribal attack on Jammu through which ran the only land route linking Delhi with Kashmir. The proposal was turned down on the ground that it could provoke a war.

Alan Cambell-Johnson, the author of *Mission with Mountbatten*, paints the following picture of a crucial day's proceedings in Lahore that is at once lurid and revealing:

"In the middle of to-day's Defence Committee, Auchinleck rang up Mountbatten from Lahore to say that he had succeeded in persuading Jinnah to cancel orders given the previous night for Pakistan troops to be moved into Kashmir. The order had reached General Gracey, then acting Pakistan Army Commander-in-Chief in the temporary absence of General Messervy, through the military secretary of the governor of the West Punjab, with whom Jinnah was staying. Gracey replied that he was not prepared to issue any such

instruction without the approval of the Supreme Commander. At Gracey's urgent request, Auchinleck flew to Lahore this morning and explained to Jinnah that an act of invasion would involve automatically and immediately the withdrawal of every British officer serving with the newly-formed Pakistan Army. Before Auchinleck left him he had not only called off the order, but also invited Mountbatten and Nehru to come to Lahore. . ."

How else could one describe Auchinleck's talk with the Quaid except as a blatant threat and an ill-disguised attempt at blackmail? Either lose Kashmir or lose British officers! What sort of a choice was that? The strangest part of the proceeding was that the individual advising had been based in the 'enemy' capital and yet wielded the supreme command of two countries at war with each other.

It is not known if Gracey invited Auchinleck to Lahore on his own initiative or with the prior knowledge and approval of his governor-general and supreme commander, Jinnah, to whom alone, in all fairness, he should have reported. At all events Gracey's action proved that there had been absolutely no security of information protecting the Pakistani side of the war: C-in-C Pak would not make a move without first consulting his supreme commander sitting in the Indian capital. Even in retrospect the situation would appear to be utterly ludicrous and incredibly strange. How on earth could there be any contact, least of all consultation, between two rival force commanders after the battle had already been joined? That the 'invasion' was called off ultimately as a result of the Jinnah-Auchinleck parlays further underlined the extraordinary strangeness of the situation.

It was this aspect of the war that shocked and frustrated officers like Akbar Khan and egged them on to use their own initiative regardless of their orders. They conceived a deep distrust of their British superiors and decided to go ahead with their operational plans to nullify the accession of Jammu and Kashmir to India by military action. In doing so, these officers risked their careers and lives but the strong patriotic fervour drove all fear and vacillation out of their mind.

The war created in the army a certain ambience of discontent and dissatisfaction against civil and military high commands and their conduct of war that, in their opinion, had been both erratic and inadequate. Frontline soldiers were left wondering as to the real intent and purpose of the government. If Kashmir had really been such a matter of life-or-death as it was made out to be in the press and the diplomatic forums then a clearer and bolder posture would have been an absolute necessity. In case that was not considered prudent and practical for the fear of risking a general war, then an immediate cessation of hostilities and reliance on diplomatic means could have set the military mind at rest and, in all probability, also found a permanent solution to the problem. The government, however, remained divided in their mind all along unable to choose between war and diplomacy. It tried a mixture of both watered down by too much diffidence, inexperience, inadequacy of war materials and, above all, growing civil-military tensions.

With the wisdom of hindsight, one could ask, if we might not have been better off and better placed in Kashmir through more sustained and intelligent diplomacy than through a half-hearted, wishy-washy and wayward military effort. Coming events were to disprove Pakistan's fears that formal recognition of its military presence in the operations would

have provoked India into a general war. In any case, that had been no secret at all. When in May 1948 Sir Mohammad Zafrullah Khan, Pakistan's foreign minister and principal spokesman in the UNO (United Nations Organization) did officially admit the presence of the Pakistani armed forces in Jammu and Kashmir, there was much furore but no general war or even an escalation of hostilities in J & K.

Pakistan's belated confession came close upon some sensational and well-documented disclosures made by an Indian journalist turned spy G.K. Reddy. After his flight from Srinagar where he had lived and edited the weekly *Kashmir Times* (owned and published by one Abdul Rahman Mittha,—a born Kashmiri) Reddy settled in Peshawar along with his boss. The two were treated as state guests under the personal instructions of the Frontier Chief Minister, Khan Abdul Qayyum Khan. Reddy tried for a job in the foreign office without luck, acted as press adviser to the Frontier Chief Minister and Sardar Mohammad Ibrahim, president of the Azad Kashmir government.

He left for India in May 1948 and on arrival in Bombay promptly reported to the offices of the tabloid weekly *Blitz* to hand over all the maps and documents he had showing Pakistan order of battle (ORBAT) in Jammu and Kashmir. He wrote up a detailed account of Pakistan's troop deployment in the area to create a great deal of sensation and make Pakistan look very small in the face.

The war went on in a wayward fashion until December 31,1948, when at midnight, a UN-sponsored ceasefire came into force causing much frustration among the frontline soldiers. Says Akbar Khan: "If we had decided against ceasefire and carried on fighting world opinion would have continued to swing in our favour and ultimately the United Nations would have adopted a course to hold a plebiscite in Kashmir under its own control and responsibility according to a fixed timetable."

Akbar Khan's belief and faith in the effectiveness of the United Nations in finally succeeding to arrange a plebescite was touching but exaggerated one- -a piece of characteristic soldierly naivety and optimism. Akbar Khan was particularly critical of the prime minister (Liaquat Ali Khan) at whose 'behest' he had prepared the plan for the conduct of the struggle in Kashmir. But for reasons beyond his 'comprehension' the government showed 'hesitation' in the conduct of operations "thus losing several opportunities by not taking steps when necessary and accepting a ceasefire when we were at a disadvantage after the loss of Punch".

Ayub in his *Friends Not Masters* also agrees that the "main reason for this discontent was that we had a government which failed to discharge its functions properly." When Akbar Khan's papers were seized, wrote Ayub, "we found among them a thesis in which he had accused the prime minister and everybody else in the government of inefficiency and inability to give decisions". As if to find a justification for his own successful coup d'etat seven years later, Ayub, perhaps quite unconsciously, took a charitable view of Akbar's action. "Akbar Khan's aim was to establish a tidier form of government. He was a brave officer enjoying considerable prestige in the service, but ambitious and a very persuasive talker. He knew how to influence people and he cast his net widely and unobtrusively."

Later events would show that a 'persuasive talker' himself Ayub had been infinitely more ambitious and successful in the art of staging coup d'etat than Akbar Khan. He knew even better than his potential but unsuccessful challenger, how to 'cast his net widely and unobtrusively'. Less impatient of superior authority and more calculated in civil affairs Ayub would hold his card closely to his chest to leave his opponent guessing about his hand till the very last. He proved to the hilt the effectiveness of delayed action in manoeuvring for absolute state power for seven long years. He could have advanced his 1958 martial law by several years, had he so wished, but he would rather wait until the last of the politicians had laid his cards on the table and he alone held the trump. If only he would have shown the same uncanny calm and patience and the capacity for calculated risk as a soldier, he would have won his spurs in the world war and perhaps the war itself in 1965.

Akbar Khan had always been a marked man in the army for his outstanding war record and much-coveted DSO (the only other proud winner of the DSO was an officer of the army medical corps whose name I forget). The Kashmir war covered Akbar Khan with glory and controversy at the same time. Gracey, according to Ayub, considered him "peculiar"—and one of "the Young Turks". This cannot be wholly correct though as Akbar had fought under Gracey during the war. It was also Gracey who had recommended him for and got him his DSO. According to Akber himself Gracey had originally wished to recommend him for a Victoria Cross (VC) but for the fact that another had already been recommended for that and there could not be two candidates for the highest award in the same formation for the same action.

Furthermore, it was Gracey who, in spite of Akbar's peculiarities and irregular involvement in Kashmir war, promoted him major-general and brought him over to the GHQ as his chief of the general staff—the most important principal staff officer (PSO) responsible for training, operations, intelligence, education of the entire army. When Ayub came over to the GHQ as the C-in-C, Akbar had been already there as CGS for a few weeks.

Perhaps the strangest part of the conspiracy was that the C-in-C learnt of it from Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan who in turn had been informed by I. I. Chundrigar, the NWFP governor, who had been tipped off by a serving army brigadier. That a conspiracy was being hatched right in the GHQ and under the nose of the C-in-C himself without anybody's knowledge hardly does credit to the military intelligence. It was certainly strange that the prime minister should have come to know of it sooner than the C-in-C—quite a case of putting the cart before the horse.

Another bewildering circumstance pertained to the legal status of Akbar Khan and his co-conspirator, Major-Gen. Nazir Ahmad Khan in the Pakistan Army. As King's commissioned officers from Sandhurst, both remained subject to the British Army Act even over three years after independence. Akbar took the plea, on his arrest, that, as a KCO, he could not be tried under the Pakistan Army Act. He challenged his dismissal order and arrest both as 'illegal'. Subsequently, the constituent assembly had to pass an act to bring him retroactively and others concerned under the Pakistan Army Act. However, that was nearly six months after they had already been on trial before a special tribunal.

Ayub says that much as he liked to have them tried by a court-martial he could not do so because there were also a number of civilians involved. That might well have been just as good a reason for setting up a special tribunal as the technical hitch arising out of the type of commission the accused held. Interestingly enough, Ayub himself along with several other generals and brigadiers held the King's Commission and was not subject to the Pakistan Army Act.

The Rawalpindi conspiracy had deep roots: "It grew in the soil of discontent and distrust..." writes Ayub Khan. The question is what caused all that 'discontent' and 'distrust'. Ayub ascribes it to "a spate of swift promotions" from junior to senior ranks. "This raised expectations to unwarranted heights. Every officer felt that unless he was made commander-in-chief nobody would believe that he had done well in life..."

Ayub was lucky to have made the grade over the heads of his seniors (Generals Iftikhar and Sher Khan died in the Jungshahi aircrash; Pak. Army No. 1 Mohammad Akbar Khan [Rangrut] was never considered for the top job; and Raza superseded) and viewed those who followed suit either with distrust or lofty condensation. But for his towering personality, clipped Sandhurst accent and elegance of style he was not very highly regarded for his soldierly qualities. He also had an unmistakable pro-British bias which ostensibly earned him the recommendation of the British C-in-C for the top job simultaneously with the distrust and reprobation of his own Pakistani colleagues. The Kashmir war had passed him by helping him to appear in favourable colours to his British superiors but in quite unflattering hues to those of his Pakistani colleagues who had been involved in it either physically or emotionally. The Kashmir war had indeed thrown up a pro- and anti-British lobby in the army and Ayub was identified with the former unlike Akbar Khan who very openly led the other.

A major landmark in the history of the Pakistan Army, the Rawalpindi conspiracy was essentially a highly amateurish exercise in the seizure of state power without any serious homework preceding it. Its roots might have been as deep as Ayub Khan imagined but not deep enough. The overwhelming motivation behind it would appear to be the soldier's fond dream and noble intent to change his country into a veritable utopia simply by switching places with his civil and military superiors. Like plain and simple soldiers everywhere else, they wish to apply their drill-square vision of perfect neatness and clockwork precision to the clumsy, humdrum of power politics. Akbar and his colleagues believed that they would be able to make a better country out of Pakistan simply on the strength of their firepower supported by good intentions and pious wishes. He still believes Pakistan would have had a democractic constitution in 1951, had the 'Pindi Conspiracy succeeded.

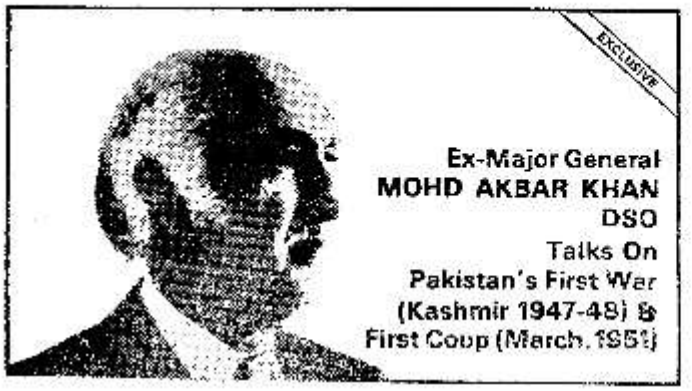
"There would have been no dictatorship, no martial laws, and East Pakistan would never have been separated...." In other words Pakistan would have turned into a democratic dreamland, a true utopia. But for God's sake how?

The ultimate and the awesome question remains that of the delicate equation and balance between ends and means. How could democracy ever be born out of dictatorship's left rib? We have tried this again and again in this country without success. We are trying it now. Let's hope and pray we succeed at last. This country has stayed in the shadows

of war and *coup d'etat* far too long; out of the left rib of Kashmir war was born the Rawalpindi Conspiracy, out of Ayub's first brush with people's power in 1964-65 elections was born one of the principal causes of the '65 war; out of the '65 war was born Yahya and his martial-law and its byproduct—civil war and war—and out of Bhutto's deployment of the army in Baluchistan and elsewhere was born General Zia's martial law. What had been common all along is that it is either war (or a war-like situation) giving birth to a coup or a coup leading to war (1971).

It is time we broke out of the vicious circle once and for all.

—**Brig. A. R. Siddiqi (Retd.)**



Printed below is the first-ever expose of the Kashmir War and the Rawalpindi Conspiracy by Mohammad Akbar Khan (MAK) the principal figure in both the major episodes of our history.

The interviewer is Brig. (Retd.) A.R. Siddiqi (ARS), Editor-in-Chief of DEFENCE JOURNAL.

The Conspiracy

Principal Characters

1. Major General Mohammad Akbar Khan, DSO, Chief of the General Staff.
2. Major-General Nazir Ahmad Khan, Commander, 9 (F) Infantry Division.
3. Air Commodore M. K. Janjua, Royal Pakistan Air Force (RPAF).
4. Brig. M. Latif.
5. Brig. M. Siddique Khan.
6. Lieut. Col. Ziauddin.
7. Lieut. Col. Niaz Mohammad Arbab.
8. Major Ishaq.
9. Major Hasan Khan.
10. Capt. Khizar Hayat.
11. Capt. Zafrullah Poshni.

Civilians

1. Lt. Col. (Retd.) Faiz Ahmad Faiz, Chief Editor, Progressive Papers Ltd. (PPL).
2. Mr. Sajjad Zaheer, Secretary-General, Pakistan Communist Party.
3. Mohammad Hussain Ata — A communist activist.
4. Begum Nasim Akbar Khan.

Approvers

1. Lieut. Col. Siddiq Raja.
2. Major Yusuf Sethi.

ARS: When did you join the Army and from where were you commissioned?

MAK: At the end of 1933, I passed out at Sandhurst and received the King's Commission in the Indian Army. In January 1934 we sailed for Bombay and Morocco. I was posted to a British Regiment the 1st Hampshire Regiment stationed at Nowshera in Peshawar District for one year, as the custom was. From Nowshera we soon moved to Rawalpindi, and spent the rest of 1934 there.

ARS: What was your parent unit and where did you serve with it?

MAK: My parent unit in the Indian Army was 6th Royal Battalion, 13th Frontier Force Rifles which I joined in 1935 at Kohat on the North-West Frontier. This battalion had fought on the frontier and in every other war in the British Empire. We trained for two years in frontier and mountain warfare and then marched to Razmak in Waziristan where we remained for two years. We took part in operations against the Faqir of Ipi. Waziristan was the best training ground for warfare. Enthusiastic officers from all over India vied with each other to get a posting in Waziristan. Service in Waziristan carried a great deal of experience and at the end of it, I was awarded a medal too, apart from the awards granted for gallantry. I was glad to find in World War II that the two years that I had been in Waziristan was the best training for war that I ever had.

Jhon Masters who was later to become a famous writer was also in Razmak at the same time. In those two years we took part in operations all over South Waziristan, Jandola, Shahoor Tungi, Asman Manzai and so forth and also in North Waziristan.

In 1938, we moved from Waziristan to Secunderabad in Hyderabad Deccan. World War II was on the horizon and higher authority had decided that my battalion was to be mechanized. This was a step in the direction of modernization. Our first line transport of mules and horses was replaced with trucks. In early 1939, we trained for mechanized warfare. In April that year, I proceeded abroad on six months leave.

Later, in August, while I was still abroad, my old CO who was at the war office informed that there was likelihood of war breaking out, and so I should return home. I had a car, so I went by road from London to Paris and thence to Genoa in Italy where a few days later I was to catch my ship Conte Biancomano. We sailed from there on time but as we crossed the Red Sea, war broke out and the ship was diverted southwards and did not go to Bombay.

ARS: What and where were you when the World War II began?

MAK: When World War II began, I was aboard my passenger ship which changed its route and went south to Batavia and then to Singapore. At Singapore we changed ships and went to Calcutta. From Calcutta I went by road to Secunderabad to rejoin the battalion. I was then a lieutenant or maybe just promoted a captain. I was given a company to command, and carried on our war training.

Soon the battalion was sent to the war zone in Eriteria. I was left behind to join a new unit, to raise the 7th Battalion 13th FF Rifle at Nasirabad near Ajmer. We raised and trained the battalion for war. During this time I attended a two-month air liaison course at Peshawar. We did a lot of flying with reconnaissance aircraft training which was very handy in World War II because of the large scale of the operations.

ARS: Where did you serve and see action during the war?

MAK: From Nasirabad we moved to Kohat where we were to become part of the defences at Thal against a possible German invasion. At this time Hitler had invaded Russia, sent agents into the tribal area to arouse them and Afghanistan seemed inclined towards the Germans. Should Afghanistan go an invasion of India through the Thal and Khyber Pass became possible. Therefore an elaborate system of anti-tank defences was put up in the Thal and Khyber Pass.

In 1941, I was selected to attend a course at the Staff College, Quetta. I attended this course and was promoted major and appointed a GSO(II) Air Liaison and posted to Trichnopoly in Madras and attached to the No. 1 Indian Fighter Squadron. This squadron in support of an infantry division was to guard against a Japanese threat to the Madras coast.

In 1942, I was posted to Kandy in Ceylon, still in the rank of major and as DQMG (Deputy Quarter Master General) at divisional HQs. Ceylon was very important. While the Japanese army in Burma was moving on, in a seemingly irresistible way from Rangoon to Mandalay, the British were also suffering alarm from the entry of the Japanese Navy into the Indian Ocean. Ceylon was considered vital on the supply route to the Middle East and because of rubber to Britain. Apparently, Wavell was told by the British chief of staff that the preservation of Ceylon was more essential than that of Calcutta. For that reason six brigades were employed to hold Ceylon. I spent nine months in Ceylon. We defended the island and carried out training in jungle warfare. But no clash occurred in this area.

In 1943, I was posted to Bombay to a beach landing group. A beach landing group consisted of an engineer labour battalion and a total of 3,000 technical personnel. I was DAQMG, the senior most staff officer to the commander. The beach landing group was to train for a sea-borne landing on an enemy coast. We assembled in Bombay, trained on the sea coast at Ratnagire and then moved to Coconada near Madras, where we waited for further orders to go to a war zone.

In 1944, my commander and I went to a conference in GHQ, Delhi. We were expecting orders to move to a war theatre but it turned out that there were further delays. With the permission of the commander I decided to seek an interview with the military secretary (MS) to ask for a posting to the war front. The interview was granted quickly enough but when I told the general what I wanted, he said that he could not post me in my present rank. He said the 14th Battalion

prestige in the eyes of the people of Pakistan.

We examined the antecedents of officers and got rid of the doubtful ones. We tightened up on discipline, embarked on extensive training exercises, and I kept moving around and visiting various units. I knew that the cancer had been removed but that there was still a tremendous amount of lost ground to be regained. Paradoxical as it might seem, I was, in a sense, grateful that I had so much to do and that I could lose myself in my work, for the malaise in the political and administrative life of Pakistan was becoming painful. Karachi was a hotbed of intrigues. It was providential that army headquarters were in Rawalpindi. I would come back from my occasional visits to Karachi depressed and distressed, wondering what was happening to the country. Why were people not attending to their work with some honesty of purpose and why could they not evolve some team spirit? Why all these factions, dissensions, and disputes? And why all this malice and distrust? They were all busy destroying one another. It used to take me three or four days to recover from a Karachi visit. I would then say to myself, 'Karachi is over there and we are here; let us run the army.' I found my escape in working harder and working the soldiers harder.

—Friends Not Masters by Mohammad Ayub Khan. Oxford University Press. 1967, pp. 35—39.

At 11 p.m. the enemy, under cover of heavy mortar, grenade and machine gun fire charged my position and penetrated the perimeter. It was pitch dark and fierce hand-to-hand fighting ensued. One Jap charged at me with a sword, I shot him down with my revolver. We had heavy casualties but we beat the attack back. Due to severe wireless jamming, communication with the artillery, who were responsible for defensive fires, failed. No close support was readily available. The supporting battery forward observation party was out of action, having had its officer and four British other ranks killed and all the remaining men wounded. Two Viceroy-commissioned officers were killed and the third wounded.

For an hour the enemy continued firing at our positions and then about midnight they charged the perimiter again under heavy covering fire, yelling at the top of their voices and using flame throwers. They penetrated again, and once again severe hand to hand fighting ensued. We succeeded in throwing them out again. But the Japs had managed to establish a foothold and dig a medium machine gun within twenty yards of the perimeter.

At 2-30 a.m. the most fierce attack was launched on my position supported by morturs, grenade dischargers and heavy machine gun fire, the Japs charging and using flame throwers. All communication had broken down and the night was pitch dark. In the confused fighting it was difficult to assess the exact situation. The enemy were now all around the position and were also engaging the battalion headquarters to my rear. Major Coppen, who commanded the other company in my position and who had broken up the first two attacks, reported to me that his sector was now too thin to hold out much longer. I sent a subedar and ten men from my company to assist him. But by now the enemy had succeeded in establishing themselves on that part of the perimeter and ammunition was nearly finished. I had suffered heavy casualties. One officer, three Viceroy-commissioned officers (VCOs), 31 Indian other ranks and four British other ranks were killed. One officer, forty Indian other ranks and three British other ranks were wounded. I had only twenty eight men left. So at 3 a.m. I decided to abandon the position.

I ordered the men to collect the wounded and to follow me out of the position. I could not move back towards battalion headquarters because the Japs were already behind me and firing from there. So I decided to move forward to the rifle company of the other battalion on my right. Due to this unexpected line of withdrawal the enemy made no attempt to follow up. At 3-30 a.m. I reached the new position and was able to re-establish communication with battalion headquarters. I reported the situation and asked for a concentration of all available artillery on the position vacated by me before the Jap had time to get settled in. Half an hour later the whole of the corps artillery, some 200 guns, brought a concentration on my old position. It was a ten minutes rapid fire called the *earthquake*. It was a most heartening sound. The earth shook up. I asked for a *repeat* and it was granted. The Japs yelled and began to stream back in disorder. We were now on their line of retreat and so I got every one to stand-to and when they came we mowed them down by fire, and hand-to-hand fighting.

At 6 a.m. I sent a patrol to Kanlan Ywathit and it reported that the enemy were no longer in occupation. So at 7 a.m. I reoccupied the original position. All our equipment was recovered. Sixty four Japanese died were counted on the ground. A further twenty eight were found outside the perimeter. It was estimated that the wounded were probably in the region of 100. The dead included the battalion commander, two other officers and two warrant officers. Japanese equipment left included wireless sets, flame throwers and officers swords.

It was for this action that Jamadar Parkash Singh received the supreme honour of a posthumous award of Victoria Cross, and I received the Distinguished Service Order (DSO). General Gracey, the divisional commander, told me later in Pakistan that he had recommended me for the Victoria Cross, but the higher authorities decided that only one Victoria Cross should be awarded for one action and not two.

Ex-Maj. Gen. Akbar Khan: Soldier and Conspirator

Ex-Major General Mohammad Akbar Khan, DSO, had been one of Pakistan's most distinguished soldiers. He fought Pakistan's first and the longest war in Kashmir, practically from start to finish, and according to his own operational plan unaided and unguided by the superior command.

His brave and sustained effort in Kashmir gave us whatever we today have in the shape of Azad Kashmir. At the same time, however, it compromised the strict text-book, professional discipline of the army inasmuch as the field commander and the high command at the General Headquarters in Rawalpindi, did not see eye to eye with each other on the legality and conduct of the war.

Akbar assumed the title of Tariq after the legendary Muslim commander who burnt his boats in Spain to narrow down the choice of his men between the enemy before and the sea behind.

For Akbar Kashmir was nock or nothing, glory or humiliation, victory or defeat — in short — a war of the final objective involving the very existence of his newly-born country.

He did not lose the war tactically but his country did at the level of grand strategy. Akbar blamed an unresponsive, unsympathetic British high command at Rawalpindi and an effete central government at Karachi for the tame, inconclusive outcome.

Out of his deep sense of frustration over the way the war in Kashmir ended was born anger against his military superiors and civilian leadership to serve as the principal breeder of his unsuccessful coup d'etat two years later.

ARS: How many of your other Indian colleagues did also win this high award?

MAK: Among my Indian colleagues on the Burma front none got the D.S.O.—but there might have been some of whom I am not aware.

ARS: Where were you posted on the eve of partition and when did you actually arrive in Pakistan? Please describe your feelings as a Pakistani officer.

MAK: On the eve of partition, I was posted at New Delhi. I was a lieut. colonel and a member of the Armed Forces Partition Committee. Partition came on the 14th of August 1947. My work continued up to the 27th. I was told to travel by train to Pakistan but I had a new car which I wanted to take with me. So I went by road on the 28th. I travelled alone in uniform armed with a rifle and a revolver. I was told that at Jallunder Lieut. Colonel Ayub Khan (later Field Marshal Ayub Khan) of the Boundary Force would meet me to escort me for the rest of the way. I reached Jallunder on time and went to the rendezvous but there was no sign of Ayub Khan. So I proceeded on my journey for the rest of the way. All along the routes there were communal riots and bloodshed. I was stopped several times and questioned but I pretended to be a non-Muslim officer on duty on my way to Amritsar. That evening I reached the border and crossed over into Pakistan. My feelings as a Pakistani officer were enthusiastic.

ARS: **Did you have your own mental picture of the future of the Pakistan Army and of Pakistan?**

MAK: I did not have my own mental picture of what the future of the Pakistan Army would be except that the British officers would be replaced by Pakistanis gradually and the organization would be what it had been in World War II which had been very successful. *About Pakistan, I had a more specific mental picture. I expected it would be a free and modern country where we would be in the majority and where the British pattern of democracy would prevail.*

Kashmir War

ARS: **When did you get yourself actually involved in Kashmir operations? Was it a regular posting or you volunteered and posted yourself to fight regardless of proper orders?**

MAK: I got myself actually involved in the Kashmir operations in the first week of November 1947. It was not a regular posting and I went into fight regardless of proper orders. The tribesmen had withdrawn from the front and a vacuum was created. I was asked desperately by Iskander Mirza on behalf of Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan to restore the fighting at the front. I agreed because I felt something had to be done.

ARS: **Would it be right to assume that the reaction of the British High Command to your voluntary involvement in the Kashmir Operations had not been too good?**

MAK: Yes, it would be right to assume that the reaction of the British High Command to my involvement in the Kashmir Operations in a voluntary capacity was adverse.

A Clandestine Operation

ARS: **Can you recall the earlier stages of the Kashmir operations before you took over?**

MAK: A few weeks after Partition, I was asked by Mian Iftikharuddin on behalf of Liaquat Ali Khan to prepare a plan for action in Kashmir. I found that the Army was holding 4,000 rifles for the civil police. If these could be given to the locals an armed uprising in Kashmir could be organized at suitable places, I wrote a plan on this basis and gave it to Mian Iftikharuddin. I was called to a meeting with Liaquat Ali Khan at Lahore where the plan was adopted, responsibilities allotted and orders issued. Everything was to be kept secret from the Army.

In September the 4,000 rifles were issued at various places and the first shots were exchanged with the Maharajah's troops and the movements gathered weight.

On the 24th of October a tribal Lashkar attacked Muzaffarabad and successfully captured it. The next day they advanced and captured Uri. On the 26th they occupied Baramula.

On the 27th Maharajah fled from Srinagar and acceded to India. That evening Liaquat Ali Khan held a meeting at Lahore to which I was invited. This was to consider what action to take in view of the expected Indian intervention in Kashmir. I proposed that a tribal lashkar should attack Jammu as this was the focal point through which Indian troops would be going to Kashmir. This proposal was not accepted for fear of provoking war.

That evening the Quaid-e-Azam was also in Lahore and according to Alan Campbell in *Mission with Mountbatten* the Quaid had ordered that Jammu should be attacked by the Army. But this order was not carried out.

Two days later on my own initiative I went to the Srinagar front to see how the tribesmen were doing. They were at the 4th milestone from Srinagar held up by a roadblock with a machine gun. I carried out a thorough reconnaissance and saw that the town was surrounded by water which blocked entrance from outside. However, the roadblock could be overcome by an armoured car. I rushed back to Pindi and soon found that Colonel Masud with three armoured cars was willing to go as volunteer in plain clothes. Then I rang up Karachi and spoke to Raja Ghanzanfar Ali Khan (Minister for Kashmir Affairs) to ask for permission. Permission was refused. Thus no help went to the tribesmen and they remained held up at the milestone.

A week later, finding the ground unsuitable for their tactics they broke off engagement and withdrew to Uri, from where also they threatened to withdraw to Abbottabad. An Indian brigade advanced from Srinagar and occupied Baramula. It was at this stage that I was earnestly requested to go to Uri and restore the fighting.

Tribal Lashkars

ARS: How good had been the performance of the tribal lashkars? It is believed that they broke their ranks and went for loot just when they were within sight of Srinagar?

MAK: The performance of the tribal lashkars had been excellent where the ground was suitable for their sniping and hit-and-run tactics. In five days they reached

Srinagar from Muzaffarabad. When the tribesmen reached the outskirts of Srinagar in the last week of October 1947, they were held up by roadblock at the 4th milestone. The ground on both sides of the road was under water and therefore unsuited for movement on foot. The tribesmen attacked the block down the road but were subjected to heavy casualties by heavy machinegun fire. I had just arrived on the spot about midnight to see this. I came to the conclusion that the tribesmen needed the help of armoured cars to overcome the machinegun fire roadblock and then they would be able to enter Srinagar. I rushed back to Pindi where I found Lt. Colonel Masood of the Cavalry who volunteered to go with a troop of volunteers at their own risk and clear the obstacles. I then spoke to a central minister Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan who was present in Pindi to get permission from the Prime Minister. He rang up Karachi but permission was not granted. Thus no help went to enable the tribesmen to enter Srinagar and after another week they withdrew from the outskirts of Srinagar. It is not correct to say that they broke their ranks and went for loot just when they were within sight of Srinagar.

It was part of their agreement with Major Khurshid Anwar of the Muslim League National Guards who was their leader that they would loot non-Muslims. They had no other remuneration.

Major Khurshid Anwar had been an emergency commissioned officer in World War II in the Supply Corps of the Indian Army. Then he had joined the Muslim League and he had been appointed commander of the Muslim League National Guards. In September 1947, when the Prime Minister launched the movement of the Kashmir struggle Khurshid Anwar was appointed Commander of the Northern Sector. Khurshid Anwar then went to Peshawar and with the apparent help of Khan Qayyum Khan raised the lashkar which assembled at Abbottabad and with which he entered Muzaffarabad on the 24th of October 1947— reached Baramula where he delayed the lashkar for two days for some unknown reason.

Two weeks later, he left the Kashmir front departing from Uri with the lashkar in the first week of November. It was after this that I arrived on the scene and began again where the tribesmen had left.

Khan Abdul Qayyum Khan had apparently helped Major Khurshid Anwar with the raising of the lashkar on the frontier. Thereafter he continued to take active interest in Kashmir and helped with the tribal lashkars thronged the Kashmir operations.

ARS: **How long did you stay on the Kashmir front and what major operations did you fight there?**

MAK: I stayed on the Kashmir front for six months to begin with and then went away for one month to Kohat to take over command of my brigade and came back to

the Uri front with my brigade to meet the Indian offensive. There I remained till ceasefire in December, 1948.

In November '47 when I went to the front I had only a dozen men and the Indians had a brigade at Uri. We burnt the bridge at Uri and I raided and armed with rifles local ex-servicemen who kept the Indians under fire. In a fortnight the tribesmen returned to the front and agreed to all my conditions. Under my direction they successfully ambushed a military convoy between Uri and Punch and burnt 36 vehicles. Then I got the tribesmen to surround Uri and keep it under sniping fire so as to prevent them from moving forward.

It was at this stage that foreign correspondents visited this front and they flashed back such headlines as "order out of chaos" and so forth. In Pakistan a lot of publicity was given to the fighting and the people contributed to the war with stores and volunteers. Tribesmen came from all over the frontier to assist in all sectors.

We overwhelmed the garrison at Bagh and took control of the tehsil. We sent a lashkar to surround and isolate Punch from the Srinagar. We captured Kotli, Mirpur, Beri Pattan and the whole area both sides of the road between Jammu and Punch.

Thus in the six months from November '47 to April '48 we took control of the whole area that is now Azad Kashmir.

In May '48 the Indians mounted an offensive on the Uri front with a division. I had one brigade and 800 tribesmen to oppose this. In six weeks fighting we brought the offensive to a stand still at Chakoti. In August I counter-attacked and captured Poonch, taking a hundred square miles.

'Gen. Tariq': Origin

ARS: **Why did you assume the name of Tariq as the commander of the Azad Kashmir forces?**

MAK: I assumed the name of Tariq firstly to hide my own identity from the Indians. Secondly, I selected Tariq in order to inspire others with his example of burning of the boats.

At this time the tribesmen had left the front. I had only a dozen men. And the bridges behind us at Muzaffarabad and Kohala were daily bombed by the Indian Air Force. We had also, as it were, burnt our boats.

ARS: **What were your major mistakes, failings, and weaknesses during the Kashmir fighting?**

MAK: In the first few months of the Kashmir fighting, before our army went in, the major weakness was the shortage of weapons and ammunition. The tribesmen

brought their own rifles but the Azad Kashmiris had to depend on Pakistan Ammunition was short for both.

In May '48 when the army went in, its role was purely defensive to prevent the Indian army from occupying Azad Kashmir. From then onwards the major weakness was the lack of air support on our side while the Indian Air Force fully supported their army. The major mistake of the army was that it did not place sufficient troops across the Jammu-Punch road and thus failed to stop the Indians from relieving Punch in October '48 which had been surrounded and cut off for nine months by the Azads and tribesmen.

ARS: Were you happy with the circumstance under which ceasefire in Jammu & Kashmir was accepted by the Pakistan Government?

MAK: No, I was not happy with the circumstances under which ceasefire was accepted by our Government.

ARS: What further advantage, in your opinion, could we gain had we decided against ceasefire?

MAK: If we had decided against ceasefire and carried on fighting world opinion would have continued to swing in our favour and ultimately United Nations would have adopted a course to hold a plebiscite in Kashmir under its own controls and responsibility according to a fixed timetable.

A Disgruntled Officer!

ARS: Will it be right to assume that you had not been too happy with the Pakistan Government's overall conduct of the Kashmir crisis and war either at the military or the diplomatic levels? My own impression of you had been that of a highly intelligent and disgruntled officer. Would you subscribe to that?

MAK: It is right to assume that I had not been too happy with the Pakistan Government's overall conduct of the war and crisis. I was disgruntled because of that.

ARS: Did you, along with some of your colleagues ever seriously plan to overthrow the Government? You would not often make a secret of your dissatisfaction with various government policies, very particularly, those concerning Kashmir and the nationalisation of the armed forces. Is that correct?

MAK: We did not seriously plan to overthrow and occupy the government. But we were dissatisfied with various government policies, particularly those concerning Kashmir and we wanted to force the governor-general to hold elections and to take action in Kashmir. But even this idea was abandoned at the last meeting held at my house.

ARS: When were you promoted major-general and posted at the GHQ as chief of the general staff?

MAK: I was promoted major-general and posted at GHQ and chief of the general staff in December 1950.

ARS: What sort of an equation did you have with the two Cs-in-C -Generals Gracey and Ayub?

MAK: My relationship with both the Cs-in-C was normal. General Gracey was very appreciative of my work as a soldier, and he openly said so.

Conduct Unbecoming!

ARS: General Ayub took over as the first Pakistani Army chief in January 1951. Barely two months later you, along with several others, were arrested for conspiracy to overthrow the government and arrest your own chief. Prima Facie that was conduct unbecoming of an officer and a gentleman in the strict British military tradition. Would you like to comment?

MAK: Nobody had ever suggested arresting Ayub Khan or anyone else. My dissatisfaction with the government policies was genuine to my thinking, and due to purely patriotic reasons. I was tried for it under an illegal Act, and paid the price for it. I do not consider my conduct unbecoming of an officer and a gentleman; but that of a patriot, ready to lay down his life for his country.

ARS: What was the 'Pindi Conspiracy' all about?

MAK: We were dissatisfied with various government policies, particularly those concerning Kashmir, the story of which is known to all including my role there, which resulted in liberating all the territory which is today Azad Kashmir in which I was known as General Tariq.

We considered bringing pressure upon the governor-general in whatever way possible to hold elections, and to take action in Kashmir after all we had already achieved which was no mean achievement. But even this idea was abandoned by us at the last meeting held in my house.

I do feel that the judgement of the 'Pindi Conspiracy' should not to have been kept a secret, but brought out in the open, the trial was a secret one, and the judgement is still kept a secret even after 32 years! Why ?This raises more questions in my mind, and I feel deprived of what perhaps would be made public in my favour? Favourable or not, the secretiveness has caused more controversy and misunderstandings regarding the whole affair, in the minds of those who are interested and the public.

ARS: Could you recall some of your feelings as a prisoner of conscious during years of captivity?

MAK: My feelings during my imprisonment over such a long time were many and varied, which I cannot at the present moment recall in their entirety, but these come generally in the following order:

(a) Why have I been arrested?

(b) The recalling of all I had done as a soldier for my country?

(c) The risking of life in the Kashmir war and liberating the territory that is today Azad Kashmir.

(d) And naturally as to what would be the ultimate outcome of it all?

I suffered most in the Multan Jail while undergoing solitary confinement, particularly having been taken there as a civilian prisoner, against which my conscience rebelled. I would have preferred to be a prisoner under military law, that being the proper legal procedure.

Later being an optimist by nature, I decided to do the best for my defence, and to accept the inevitable—even if it meant the death penalty. I became cheerful and lived a day today existence, sharing jokes with my fellow prisoners, which was beyond the comprehension of some of them. At no time did I consider myself guilty of a crime punishable with death, my intentions never having been of usurping power—power for myself.

Main Motive!

ARS: What had been the principal motivation behind the whole Rawalpindi faux pax?

MAK: The principal motivation behind the whole Rawalpindi Conspiracy had been the desire that the government should take action in Kashmir. The more was delayed this, the more time would favour India to consolidate her position in Kashmir, which India did and contrive to do.

ARS: Did you ever regret your role in masterminding the effort and its abortive end?

MAK: Yes, it has been a matter of regret to me sometime that I brought so much trouble to bear on myself, my friends and our families.

ARS: Would you agree that the Rawalpindi Conspiracy or what you may call it, was the first military coup, even if abortive, attempted in Pakistan?

MAK: Yes, it would be right to say that the Pindi Conspiracy was the first military coup attempted in Pakistan.

ARS: Would it be unfair to assume that the conspiracy was in fact the precursor of future military coups and martial laws in the country?

MAK: Had the Pindi Conspiracy succeeded. Pakistan would have had a democratic constitution in 1951, action would have been taken in Kashmir and Kashmir would have become a part of Pakistan. There would have been no dictatorships, no martial laws, and East Pakistan would not have separated. Thus there was no resemblance between the Pindi Conspiracy and the coups and martial laws that followed afterwards.

It would be unfair to assume that the Pindi Conspiracy was the forerunner of future military coups and martial laws in the country. In the Pindi Conspiracy there has been no intended establishment of military dictatorship and imposition of martial law. We had only contemplated the holding of fair elections, the framing of a constitution and the establishment of a parliamentary democratic government.

ARS: Would you give a brief description of the top civil and military leadership of Pakistan's earliest years?

MAK: With regard to a brief description of the top civil and military leadership in the early years of Pakistan it is my belief that the Quaid-e-Azam, who was the governor-general, was entirely constitutional who wanted to establish a modern democratic state in Pakistan. But unfortunately, he died before he could give the country a constitution. Khawaja Nazimuddin who took over as governor-general was a decent and democratic minded person but he was ineffective. The mantle of leadership thus fell on Liaquat Ali Khan who was the prime minister. He was a man of moderate temperament and pleasant enough to work with. It was on his behest that I prepared a plan for the conduct of the struggle in Kashmir which he accepted and launched the movement. But thereafter, for reasons which are beyond my comprehension, he showed hesitation in the conduct of the operations thus losing several opportunities by not taking steps when necessary, and accepting a ceasefire when we were at a disadvantage after the loss of Punch.

The military leadership in Pakistan was first in the hands of General Messervy who was C-in-C for six months and then in the hands of General Gracey who remained C-in-C upto 1951.

ARS: What was common between you and your civilian colleagues or collaborators?

MAK: What was common between me and my civilian colleagues was that the government had failed in the conduct of the Kashmir operations, losing several opportunities, taking wrong decisions, not taking steps when necessary and accepting a ceasefire at a time when we were at a disadvantage after the loss of Punch. Further, whereas India had given itself a constitution within a few months after partition, in Pakistan it took three and a half years to pass only an objectives resolution which amounted to nothing. What was needed was a general election,

a constitution, a parliamentary democratic government before which the Kashmir issue along with other issues could be placed.

Faiz et al!

ARS: Could you recall some of the principal traits and characteristics of some of your friends?

MAK: Recalling some of the traits and characteristics of some of my friends—Faiz Ahmad Faiz was a journalist by profession being editor of the *Pakistan Times* but he was a poet at heart and was sensitive in nature. But he was clam in temperament and accepted the situation as it was. He continued to write poetry and sometimes recited Ghalib to us. Major General Nazir Ahmad was known to me the longest, having served together in the same battalion of the 13th Frontier Force Rifles. He was religious and honest but he was a bit oversensitive to the evidence that turned up against him during the trial now and then. Brigadier Latif had received the Military Cross during World War II. His attitude was that of a brave man, defending himself stoutly during the trial but he was very religious and turned to prayers for the future of which he remained optimistic. Colonel Ziauddin had a great sense of humour and he raised the morale of everybody up. He was in-charge of the messing arrangements and gave us excellent food.

ARS: It was generally believed that your late wife had in fact been the moving spirit behind the plot. Would you agree with the impression?

MAK: I do not agree with the impression that my late ex-wife was the moving spirit behind the plot. She had infact nothing to do with the conspiracy. She was tried along with us and was found not guilty.

ARS: How far would you hold yourself responsible for the failure of the plot? It was said that at the time of your arrest you had on your person certain sensitive documents concerning the plot that you were supposed to have thrown away. Is that correct?

MAK: I do not hold myself responsible for the failure of the plot. The fact is that at the last meeting on the 23rd of February 1951, we had all categorically decided to abandon the idea. So far as we were concerned that was the end of the matter. In our case no agreement had been reached to carry out any action. A certain brigadier, who later become a lieut.-general, had informed the government. Action against us followed after we had given it up. A proper court of law, trying us under the existing laws, without change, would not have found us guilty. Instead we were tried by a special tribunal, secondly, under laws specially amended for this case. Even the judgement of this tribunal was never made public. It might have been that there was a dissenting judgement.

At the time of my arrest no sensitive documents were found on my person which I had tried to throw away.

ARS: What had been the most tense moments of your trial?

MAK: It is difficult to say what the most tense moments of the trial had been. The trial lasted 18 months without a break and every day had its tense moments. But I had remained calm throughout and helped my defence counsel with questions for the cross examination of the witnesses.

A Pakistani or a British Officer?

ARS: Why were not you court-martialled?

MAK: The answer to the question why I was not court-martialled is that the government had every advantage to gain from not adhering to the military law. Under the military law, when it became known that some conspiracy was afoot, it was essential that a military court of enquiry should be held at which I would have to be present to cross examine the witnesses. After such an enquiry only it could be decided whether there should be a court martial or not.

Instead of following the procedure of the military law, the government decided to take action against me first and then amended the laws specially to try us by a special tribunal. On the 9th of March 1951, I was arrested and dismissed from service by an order of the governor-general under the Pakistan Army Act. On this order of dismissal, which was served on me, I wrote that the order and my arrest were both illegal. I was a King's Commissioned officer and subject to the British Army Act in which dismissal is possible only after court martial. It was only after six months later when I was on trial before the tribunal that the constituent assembly passed the act making me subject to the Pakistan Army Act with retrospective effect.

By not adhering to the procedure of the military law, the Government gained by the fact that the whole enquiry was held in my absence after my dismissal and arrest. Thus everyone being free to say what they liked. During this time a special law was made called the Pindi Conspiracy Act in which both the provisions of the Evidence Act and the Penal Code were amended. This Act was wholly illegal, and thus after conviction when we had gone on a *habeas corpus* petition before Justice M. R. Kyani of the Lahore High Court. He had accepted our petition and ordered our release on bail.

ARS: There was also a senior—in fact the seniormost serving Pakistani air force officer—Air Commodore Janjua involved in the conspiracy. When and how did you come in contact with him?

MAK: With regard to Air Commodore Janjua, I had known him since before partition when at Delhi we had served together on the Armed Forces Pay Revision Committee. He had a good war record, was very intelligent and an ardent Pakistani.

When in 1947 the liberation movement started in Kashmir and I was conducting operations in Kashmir, he visited me there and gave me enthusiastic encouragement and assistance in the shape of clothing and ammunition from the Air Force depots without permission from the Air C-in-C.

After ceasefire in Kashmir in December 1948, he was of the belief that Kashmir must become part of Pakistan at an early date. He was the seniormost Pakistani officer in the Air Force and would have become the first Pakistani C-in-C, had his career not been interrupted.

ARS: What did you plan to do had you succeeded in your coup attempt?

MAK: The answer to the question, is as follows:—

> We would have pursuaded the governor-general, who was the constitutional head of the state, to dismiss the Prime Minister and dissolve the constituent assembly for failure to give the country a constitution in three and a half years whereas in India a constitution had been adopted in the first six months after independence. (This is not correct since the Indian constitution was adopted on January 26, 1950 or just a little less than two years and a half after independence—*Editor*)—and for failure to take suitable action in Kashmir.

The governor-general would carry out the administration of the country with an interim government at the centre appointed by him from elected members of the ruling party. The provincial governments would carry on as they were but at the centre the governor-general would be assisted by an advisory military council.

First, a new constituent assembly would be elected to frame a democratic constitution for the country. Secondly an internal freedom movement would be started in Indian Kashmir on the lines of the Palestine Liberation Organization (quite apparently an afterthought as no such organization ever existed in 1951. —*Editor*)—which would be materially supported and maintained until India agreed to hold a plebiscite in Kashmir under the supervision of the United Nations. Thirdly, under the new constitution general elections would be held to bring into existence a parliament and to form a new elected government which would take over from the interim government.

After this the members of the advisory military council would revert to their military duties—which would have put me back as an army officer which is what I wanted to be.

Thus, it will be seen that if the Pindi Conspiracy had succeeded the country would have had a democratic constitution by 1952 and Kashmir would have become a part of Pakistan considering the fact that with action we had previously reached within four miles of Srinagar.

Life After Release

ARS: What did you do with yourself after your release?

MAK: I did not complete my sentence in prison. But was released after doing only four and a half years, by an order of Justice M. R. Kiyani on our petition that the Pindi Conspiracy Act under which we were tried was illegal.

After release much of my time was taken by earning my living in business and gaining possession of my share in the property that my father had left. I also entered politics by joining the Awami League of Mr. Hussain Shaheed Suharwardy who had been my defence counsel in the Pindi Conspiracy trial and who now became prime minister. I was made a member of the central working committee of the Awami League.

For two years I attended the evening classes at the Law College, Lahore and in 1963 got the degree of LL.B. In 1968 when I took up residence at Karachi I took up practice at the High Court, Karachi, which I continued till December 1971 when I joined the new government of Mr. Z. A. Bhutto. During this period I also wrote and published the book *Raiders in Kashmir*.

ARS: When did you decide to join politics and the PPP?

MAK: I decided to join politics soon after my release in 1955. I joined the Awami League.

I joined the PPP in 1968.

ARS: What had been your role as top party office bearer?

MAK: Upon joining the PPP, I was appointed a member of the Central Committee which dealt with all policy matters. I was particularly consulted on defence and matters relating to the Army. I was given the special task of organising the People's Guard.

ARS: When did you become the chairman of the National Security Council?

MAK: I did not become chairman of the National Security Council but my first appointment, upon joining the government in December 1971, was adviser to the President on national security. So I dealt with all national security matters.

ARS: Did you have any role to play in the dismissal from service of Gen. Gul Hassan, the last army commander-in-chief under Mr. Z. A. Bhutto?

MAK: No, it was not my idea or suggestion to dismiss Gen. Gul Hassan from service.

ARS: How has life treated you since your retirement? Have you any reflections, any thoughts to offer?

MAK: I believe that life treats one generally according to ones personal attitude towards circumstances; nevertheless there are certain incidents which stand out and these incidents make one happy or upset. As I have stated before I have been an optimist most of my life, as such the things which would hurt most, have been generally ignored by me, or taken in my stride, but some people did behave as though I was an "untouchable", and I have been treated as a 'suspect' by all governments; but I have been treated with great respect also, and still am, infact people from all walks of life, whom I have never met, have come up to me just to shake hands; or to take an autograph!

Field-Marshal Ayub's Version of Rawalpindi Conspiracy

I took over as Commander-in-Chief on 17 January 1951. General Gracey did not say very much to me when he was leaving. Not much can be done in handing over and taking over a job like this and the new man must start all on his own. But he did mention to me, somewhat vaguely, that there was a 'Young Turk' Party in the army. I wanted to know what he meant by that. He was not very explicit, but did say that there were some peculiar people, like Akbar Khan. Two or three months later the Akbar conspiracy, which came to be known as the Rawalpindi Conspiracy, was discovered.

I learnt of the conspiracy from Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan. He was on an electioneering tour at the time and sent for Iskander Mirza and me to meet him at Sargodha railway station. He had called me from Lahore and Iskander Mirza from Karachi. I arrived about an hour and a half earlier than Iskander Mirza. I noticed that the Prime Minister was a little restless. This was unusual because he normally maintained an impeccable calm and never showed any signs of ill-temper. He inquired about Iskander Mirza and said, "What has happened to this damned fellow? Why has he not turned up so far?"

It was lunch time when Iskander Mirza arrived. The Prime Minister asked us to join him at lunch and throughout he continued to talk to us in a normal, almost casual, way. When lunch was over, he leaned back and said, 'Gentlemen, I have bad news for you. It has come to my knowledge that a military coup to overthrow the government has been planned by certain army officers and it is going to be put into effect very soon'. I immediately asked for details. He gave me the full text of the report which he had received from I. I Chundrigar who was then Governor of the North-West Frontier Province. I suggested we should check the facts before taking any action.

Iskander and I went to Peshawar to see the Governor and the police officer who had passed on the report to him, and also the informer. I spoke to the Governor and later met Kiani, the police officer. Kiani did not want to expose his informer but we finally got hold of him. While I questioned Kiani, Iskander Mirza interrogated the informer. It was soon clear that an uprising had been planned. One of the conspirators was Brigadier Siddique Khan who had served in my unit at one time and was then commanding a Brigade at Bannu. He was a rather unstable type, emotional and impulsive. I sent an aircraft for him and told him, 'Siddique, you tell me the truth or I shall string you upside down'. Siddique denied all knowledge and claimed that the report was completely false. We allowed him to go back to Bannu. On arrival there he rang up Colonel Arbab at Thal who, as

it transpired later, was another of the conspirators. Siddique told him that the cat was out of the bag. This confirmed my fear that a serious plot to overthrow the government had been hatched.

By then we had enough material to go back and report to the Prime Minister and he decided that we should take immediate action. Inspector-General of Police Qurban Ali Khan was put in the picture and all the officers and civilians involved in the conspiracy were arrested in their houses the same night. My first idea was to hold a court martial to try the case but the difficulty was that certain civilians were also involved. The Prime Minister decided that a Special Civil Tribunal be set up and the trial held in camera in view of the nature of State secrets. The trial was held in Hyderabad Jail and Suhrawardy was engaged by the accused as defence counsel.

Suhrawardy [illegible] a man who [illegible] and [illegible]. He took great delight in attacking the army officers who [illegible] and I felt he far overstepped the [illegible] in his cross-examination. The Court, however, remained passive. There was nothing I could do about it at the time. The conspirators were convicted and sentenced. Some years later Suhrawardy and his supporters prevailed on the government to release them. That was the prerogative of the government and [illegible], but what I could not forgive was Suhrawardy's unnecessarily harsh and unjustified cross-examination of the army officers.

Afterwards, when we were both Cabinet Ministers, in a Cabinet meeting when the subject of the conspiracy was raised and Suhrawardy made some comment, I rounded on him and said that he had done great harm to the army at the trial, and that he was no friend of Pakistan. He did not reply. Later, when he was to be appointed Prime Minister, I happened to be in Karachi, and Iskander Mirza called me and said, 'We are going to appoint Mr. Suhrawardy as the Prime Minister. In that capacity he will also be your Defence Minister and you know that he would like to settle his account with you.' He suggested that we meet. Suhrawardy came to President's House. I told him that I knew his feelings towards me and that, no doubt, he knew my feelings towards him. But as Commander-in-Chief I would obey and carry out whatever legitimate and lawful orders were given to me. At the same time I would expect that there would be no interference in the internal affairs of the army. Suhrawardy found that an acceptable arrangement and we shook hands on it. I must say that he never interfered with the affairs of the army and whenever I went to him I always found him ready to listen, and to give decisions.

The Rawalpindi Conspiracy had deep roots; it grew in the soil of discontent and distrust and it was able to develop for several reasons. There was considerable unrest among the officers caused by a spate of swift promotions from junior to senior ranks. This raised expectations to unwarranted heights. Every officer felt that unless he was made Commander-in-Chief no one would believe that he had done well in life. It was a curious phenomenon. Perfectly sensible people, Brigadiers and Generals, would go about bemoaning their lot. Each one of them was a Bonaparte, albeit an unhappy one. I used to tell myself that but for Independence I would have been lucky to have become a Brigadier. Even after Independence I would have considered myself eminently successful if I had retired as a Major-General. The most usual military expectation is the command of a unit, the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, and then retirement from service. It was

this sudden devaluation of the higher posts which produced fantastic ideas and ambitions in people.

Then there was the fighting in Kashmir. It started as an irregular campaign. Soldiers and officers were out on their own with little direction from headquarters and with considerable responsibility placed in the hands of junior officers.

But I think the main reason for this discontent was that we had a government which failed to discharge its functions properly. When Akbar Khan's papers were seized we found among them a thesis in which he had accused the Prime Minister and everybody else in the government of inefficiency and inability to give decisions. Akbar Khan's aim was to establish a tidier form of government. He was a brave officer enjoying considerable prestige in the service, but ambitious and a very persuasive talker. He knew how to influence people and he had cast his net widely and unobtrusively.

Although I never thought for a moment that he could be planning to overthrow the government, I had always been a little suspicious of him. I knew of his ambition, of his family background, and also of his political leanings. When, as Commander-in-Chief, I had to promote certain officers to the rank of Major-General, including Akbar Khan, I pondered for some time what I should do with him. I decided to post him to General Headquarters as Chief of General Staff. I did this to ensure that he remained under my eye and also not in direct command of troops. I noticed that as Chief of General Staff he was inclined to neglect his duties and spent a lot of time in Azad Kashmir in meeting the Sudhans and others. I gave him one or two tasks which he did not complete in time. I had told him, for example, that he should arrange the procurement of hard rations such as concentrates which were necessary for our men employed in enemy territory. He kept avoiding me. I said to myself, 'this man is either inefficient or has not got his heart in the job, or his mind is working on something else'. It was a kind of premonition.

The whole affair came as a great shock to me and to all right-thinking people in the army. The prestige of the army had received a grievous blow. People could legitimately ask what kind of a shield had they got. The army had inherited a great tradition of loyalty, sense of duty, patriotism, and complete subordination to civil authority. No one could imagine that when the country was in a difficult situation this great instrument of stability would prove so vulnerable. I shudder to think what would have happened to the army and the country if the conspiracy had succeeded. There were two possible ways of its succeeding: one, swift and complete success without any clash within the armed forces, because the conspirators would have placed people like myself and other loyal senior army officers under arrest, before we could take any counter-action. The army might or might not have accepted this change. In any case, there would have been a period of complete confusion. And then if Akbar Khan and his ilk had been clever enough, they might have been able to hold their positions and control the situation. On the other hand, the chances were that some of us might have got an inkling and moved troops to anticipate and counter the action of the conspirators. The result would have been a clash between units of the Pakistan Army. If that had happened, the Indian Army would have marched in. That was what I was really afraid of. I quickly recovered from the shock and set out to restore the dignity, efficiency, and self-confidence of the army. Once that was achieved I felt that it would regain its

13th FF Rifles was on the Burma front fighting against the Japanese. He could send me there as a captain if I was willing. I said I was willing. He said I was the first Indian he had met who was willing to go down in rank. So orders were issued and I flew to join the 14th Battalion at Imphal. The battalion was in action and I was required to command a company. Soon I was regranted my old rank. The Japanese advance in Burma had been brought to a halt on the Indian border at Imphal and Kohima. Now we counter-attacked and pursued and one Japanese Brigade across the Kabaw Valley (Valley of Death) in the middle of monsoon. The Japanese gave as tough a fight in the withdrawal as in the advance. But this was not a withdrawal yet. We were merely preparing ground for the 14th Army advance into Burma.

Akbar Khan, DSO:
Man and Officer

Born on the Christmas Eve (24 December) of 1912 at Utmanzai (also the home of the Khan Brothers and their family including Wali Khan) in the Peshawar district, Akbar Khan was educated at the Peshawar Islamia College and commissioned from the Royal Military College (now Academy), Sandhurst in 1933. On return to India, he was posted to a British Regiment, the 1st Hampshire for one year.

In 1935, he joined his parent unit - the 6th Royal Battalion 13th Frontier Force Rifles of the Indian Army then stationed in Kohat.

He took part in the Waziristan operations (1936-37) and found himself 'indifferent' to danger. In 1938, the battalion moved to Secunderabad in Hyderabad Deccan (now Andhra Paradesh).

At the time of the outbreak of the world war, Lieutenant Akbar Khan had been aboard an Italian ship returning from Europe and the Middle East after a long vacation. On arrival in Calcutta via Singapore, he proceeded to Secunderabad to rejoin his battalion — the 6/13th FFR. Subsequently, he joined his new battalion, 7/13th Frontier Forces Rifles and stayed with it through the early years of war.

He also did the staff course at the Quetta Staff College during this period and was posted to Kandy, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) in 1942. An year later he was posted back in India to train with a beach landing group in Bombay.

In 1944 when the war in Burma was at its height he requested for posting in the operational area and voluntarily dropped his rank from major to captain since he could not be accommodated in his major's rank.

He distinguished himself in action and was awarded the Distinguished Service Order (DSO) in February 1945. On independence he opted for Pakistan Army and migrated to Pakistan in late August as a lieutenant colonel.

He fought in Kashmir as a brigadier and on his promotion to major-general in December 1950 was appointed CGS which post he held until his arrest consequent upon the disclosure of the Rawalpindi Conspiracy on March 9, 1951. Akbar was released in 1955. He did his law after that and joined the legal profession as well as politics.

Under Zulfikar Ali Bhutto he became a minister and ambassador finally retiring in 1977.

He lives a quiet life now with his wife and daughter in his Karachi Defence Authority bungalow.

Superpower Interests & the Geopolitics of Southwest Asia

Rodney W. Jones

Part II*

The superpowers may introduce new weapons, detection and combat management systems into the forces they earmark for or deploy in the region. Some new technologies will be incorporated in arms transfers from the major supplier countries to recipients in the area.

The principal US military effort for the next five years will stress not so much technological innovation as contingency force availability, readiness, and rapid employment and reinforcement capability. Equipment prepositioning, airlift and sealift capabilities require the greatest attention. Technological innovation will probably play a modest role in these areas in the development of new long-range air transports (the CX requirement to supplement C-5s and earlier transport aircraft) and refinement of logistics ships. Early warning and command and control are already seeing improvements, as the recent US deployment of AWACs aircraft to Saudi Arabia implicitly indicates. A likely area of future development will be non-nuclear standoff systems, including cruise missiles, with precision-guided munitions for long-range attack of ground targets such as airfield, POL storage facilities and railroad staging centers.

Soviet military improvements will probably emphasize the upgrading of equipment and manpower readiness of ground forces stationed in the Transcaucasus and Turkestan Military Districts; augmentation of airborne units, air transport capabilities, and mobile air defenses; and improvements in the combat range, remote target acquisition and standoff firepower of the air forces. Soviet naval improvements will center on the attack mission against US naval assets—which means increasing at-sea sustainability and ship-to-ship missile range and firepower—primarily to put US aircraft carriers at risk and complicate US reinforcement by sea.

Indigenous sources of conflict would present troublesome threats to oil, regional security and Western interests whether Soviet military power and related influence were present in the region or not. The Soviet presence

*For Part I, see Defence Journal, Vol. XI, Nos. 1-2, 1985.

magnifies the dangers and the difficulties of coping with regional security problems. Inappropriate as it would be to ignore this fundamental point, it is also important to recognize that Western responses to the conflict problems of Southwest Asia must be prone to failure if they are not cognizant of the distinctive, historically embedded interests, cultural perspectives, and political dilemmas of this region and the manner in which they engender and shape conflict.

American planners will be concerned with at least four levels of regional conflict in Southwest Asia in the 1980s: (1) regional hostility to alien influence, Western as well as Soviet, inspired by Islamic or Arabic identity; (2) national rivalries reflected in competitive arms acquisition, in certain low-intensity threats to neighbours, and occasionally in full-fledged conventional wars; (3) interstate conflicts involving overt foreign participation via surrogate relationships; and (4) violent intra-state political instability arising from internal social heterogeneity, transational forces, the tensions of modernization and calandestine foreign influence.

Regional Resistance. Underlying the obvious national and sub-national pluralism of Southwest Asia are strong currents of resistance to alien influence. In India, these currents are manifest in the well articulated doctrine of "non-alignment," a doctrine that has broad appeal elsewhere in the area. The rest of Southwest Asia shares with most of the Middle East the traditions of Islam, the memories of empire, and, in the Arabic-speaking regions, certain additional cultural propensities towards a common world view. The Islamic and Arabic bases of identity provide opportunities for regional coalescence on political issues that affect the region, and define Europe and non-Islamic parts of Asia as alien spheres. Anticolonial sentiment is an additional, widely-shared, reinforcement for older currents of regional identity.

The Arab-Israeli conflict and difficulties in achieving peaceful acceptance of the state of Israel have been the principal postwar rallying points for regional sentiment. Western commitments to Israel's security and acceptance in the region are viewed by most other states of the region as the source not only of Western opportunities for imperial encroachment on the area but the explanation for Soviet appeals, as a balancing factor in the region as well. Since it seems unlikely that complete reconciliation of Israel with its neighbours will be feasible in the 1980s, this source of tension will continue to influence conflict propensities in Southwest Asia. Indeed, the radical shift in Iran's orientation on this issue following the 1979 revolution geographically expands the scope of the conflict over Israel.

The principal significance to the West of Southwest Asian regional resistance to alien influence is twofold: on one hand, it represents neither a sufficient barrier to Soviet encroachment nor to intra-regional threats posed by intense national rivalries. On the other hand, it operates to limit the effectiveness of those Western security responses to intra-regional as well as externally-induced conflicts that depend on the cooperation of local states.

Most of the states of Southwest Asia are locked into one or more conflictual relationships with neighbours. The Iraq-Iran war is only the most recent of a number of postwar conventional wars and more numerous low-intensity conflicts precipitated by political threats or unsettled territorial claims. There are at least four main clusters of such national conflict

that are likely to persist in the 1980s: (1) the rivalry between Iraq and Saudi Arabia for Arab leadership; (2) the contest between Iran and the Arab Gulf states over stakes in the Gulf; (3) the Indo-Pakistan conflict: and (4) the attempts by smaller states, particularly the two Yemens, to chart their own courses in regional affairs, usually at the expense of Saudi Arabia or Oman. The Horn of Africa conflicts also have a bearing on Arabian peninsular and Gulf affairs, but can be dealt with here only in passing.

There are also certain strands of cooperation which tend either to moderate or reinforce these national rivalries. The most salient, despite certain lasting suspicions and tensions, has been the pattern of cooperation between Saudi Arabia and the smaller Gulf states, especially Kuwait, Bahrain, Abu Dhabi, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, recently formalized in the Gulf Cooperation Council. Closer political and military cooperation between Saudi Arabia and Pakistan has emerged, and tacit Oman-Pakistan cooperation has been reinforced, since the destabilizing developments in Iran and Afghanistan of the last three years. Relations between Iran and Pakistan have remained cordial despite the revolution, though material cooperation has deteriorated along with Iran's capabilities. Iraq's war with Iran has produced tension-reducing adjustments and new elements of cooperation in Iraq's relations with Saudi Arabia and other Arab Gulf states.

In the early states the Iraq-Iran war caused considerable damage to oil facilities and production in both states, and threatened to escalate into a broader Gulf war. The escalation potential now appears to be largely under control, and the experience probably will prove a sobering one for both combatants as well as their neighbors. Iraq's expectations for a quick and conclusive result were dashed. A crucial political benefit for Iraq, however, may be the at least temporarily dampened Iranian attempts to incite Shi'a rebellion within Iraq. The revolution in Iran and results of the Iraq war thus far have also diminished the military reputations and possibly the perceived urgency of military threats either from Iran to the smaller Gulf states or from Iraq to Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. Iraq has also ceased for the time being to instigate low-intensity conflict in Baluchistan. Saudi Arabia's influence in Arab influence circles is not based on military power but rather on its prestige as the origin of Arab culture, guardianship of the Islamic holy places, oil power and political acumen: the setbacks to Iraq and Iran, however, have enhanced relative Saudi regional influence. By the mid-1980s, Iran and Iraq may have begun to rebuild their power, with potentials for replay of the same conflicts.

India and Pakistan have been at war three times since 1947, nearly once each decade. The probability of renewed conventional (perhaps nuclear-tinged) warfare between them within the decade is quite high. Chronic tension, border conflicts and conventional warfare have characterized the Yemeni relationships with each other, Saudi Arabia and Oman. These conflicts probably will escalate in frequency and intensity in the 1980s. An Arab-Israeli war might seem somewhat less likely after the Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty than before, but the recent Israeli annexation of the Golan Heights certainly suggests it is conceivable. A fifth Arab-Israeli war might have much deeper repercussions on South-west Asia than its predecessors.

Thus far the Soviet Union has refrained from direct involvement or openly siding with either Iraq or Iran in their war. The potential for the Soviet Union joining

either side is there, and will increase in the event there are future replays of this conflict, or future conflicts in the Gulf or on the subcontinent. The introduction of extensive Soviet and Cuban military support for Ethiopia by air and sea in 1977-78 fundamentally altered the outcome of the war with Somalia, and demonstrated Soviet commitment to engage in such a fashion where the circumstances are propitious and strategic gains are possible.

Surrogate Relationships. Surrogate relationships have been anticipated by earlier discussion in some cases. It appeared for some time in the 1970s that the Soviet military supply relationship with Iraq was so intimate and extensive (including, for example, the provision of Soviet naval facilities at Um Qasr, at the head of the Gulf) that Iraq might be used as a Soviet surrogate against Iran, Kuwait or even Saudi Arabia. Iraq never became a true-Soviet surrogate (except in the sense that a certain parallelism of interests may have existed), partly because the Ba'ath political strategy has been to preempt the political ground usually inhabited by communists and partly because the oil revenues freed it from excessive financial dependency.

Soviet surrogate success in Southwest Asia thus far has been exclusively with mini-states—a fact which has its bright side. But North and especially South Yemen, the mini-states in question, are strategically situated in two respects. First, their contiguity and social ties with Saudi Arabia and (in South Yemen's case) with Oman makes them useful for staging destabilization efforts against the Saudi and Omani monarchies; several past unsuccessful instances of such efforts have occurred, and more are certain in the coming decade. Second, Soviet naval bases provided by S. Yemen in Aden and Socotra, when combined with those in Ethiopia on the Red Sea, possess maritime strategic significance either as threats to oil lifelines or as counters to the US naval power in the Indian Ocean upon which emergency response will so heavily depend.

The principal new Soviet surrogate potential for the 1980s in Southwest Asia seems to be in the use of access from Afghanistan to foment Baluch nationalism under Marxist auspices, in the hopes of creating a client state on the Arabian sea. In that case, the Soviets would gain primitive but uninterrupted land access directly to the Indian Ocean, a position overlooking Hormuz and a new vantage point for direct pressure on the Persian Gulf and Pakistan. While unlikely in the 1980s, there is some potential that radical revolutions or political instability would increase Soviet influence in smaller Gulf states, and an objective already pursued, for example, in the Soviet and S. Yemen-supported Dhofar rebellion against Oman.

Finally, there is the technically conceivable Soviet surrogate threat of organizing Palestinians or other dissident Arab groups, or their counterparts in Iran, to attempt sabotage of oil facilities. It is technically unlikely that terrorist threats to oil facilities could effectively disable the flow of much oil for long. While the Soviets might be responsible for the general training of terrorists in such missions it is doubtful that they would direct a comprehensive sabotage effort against Gulf oil. They might utilize surrogates in specific, limited acts of sabotage against some act they deplored by a Gulf state or to produce a sense of uncertainty or intimidation. But this would not be a basic threat to assured oil supply. The threats of political control over or military occupation of oil producing areas are the ones to worry about in the 1980s.

Military Technologies. Military technological change in Southwest Asia in the 1980s, with a few important exceptions, will be largely due to imports from advanced countries.

The superpowers may introduce new weapons, detection and combat management systems into the forces they earmark for or deploy in the region. Some new technologies will be incorporated in arms transfers from the major supplier countries to recipients in the area. Of the regional states concerned, only India and to a lesser extent Pakistan have indigenous weapons production capabilities that could have a singificant impact on regional conflicts in the 1980s; in their cases, the principal technological innovations in this decade are likely to be in nuclear weapons capabilities, a matter of profound importance.

The principal US military effort for the next five years will stress not so much technological innovation as contingency force availability, readiness, and rapid employment and reinforcement capability. Equipment prepositioning, airlift and sealift capabilities require the greatest attention. Technological innovation will probably play a modest role in these areas in the development of new long-range air transports (the CX requirement to supplement C-5s and earlier transport aircraft) and refinement of logistics ships. Early warning and command and control are already seeing improvements, as the recent US deployment of AWACs aircraft to Saudi Arabia implicitly indicates. A likely area of future development will be non-nuclear standoff systems, including cruise missiles, with precision-guided munitions for long-range attack of ground targets such as airfield, POL storage facilities and railroad staging centers. Some consideration almost certainly will be given to the supplemental deterrent and potential combat utility of theater nuclear weapons (TNW), including enhanced radiation warheads (ERW), but the political controversy such weapons tend to generate in allied or friendly states would argue against disclosure of or excessive reliance on TNW, particularly land-based systems.

Soviet military improvements will probably emphasize the upgrading of equipment and manpower readiness of ground forces stationed in the Transcaucasus and Turkestan Military Districts; augmentation of airborne units, air transport capabilities, and mobile air defenses; and improvements in the combat range, remote target acquisition and standoff firepower of the air forces. Soviet naval improvements will center on the attack mission against US naval assets—which means increasing at-sea sustainability and ship-to-ship missile range and firepower—primarily to put US aircraft carriers at risk and complicate US reinforcement by sea.

Arms Transfers. The 1970s brought a significant escalation in the introduction of sophisticated weaponry, especially aircraft, to key Southwest Asian states. The provision of F-14s with Phoenix air-to-air missiles and promise of AWACs aircraft to Iran was followed by the sale of F-15s and commitment of AWACs aircraft to Saudi Arabia, and the supply of F-16s to Pakistan. India has begun a major airforce modernization program, procuring the Anglo-French Jaguar and Soviet MIG-23 and MIG-27 aircraft, and agreeing to the purchase of the French Mirage 2000 and Soviet MIG-29. Improvements in ground combat capabilities and naval equipment, though technically less impressive, is also underway, including increasing submarine procurement.

The 1980s will almost certainly see a continuation and possibly some accelera-

tion of sophisticated arms transfers, though several years will be required to absorb as yet undelivered equipment. The implications for regional conflict are several. First, there will be some intensification of arms competition, notably between India and Pakistan, but also in the Gulf area, especially after the Iraq-Iran war is terminated. Second, future conventional conflicts will show somewhat greater intensity of ordnance consumption rates, and equipment attrition—a trend in Southwest Asia prefigured by the 1973 Arab-Israeli War and the Soviet/Cuban-supported Ethiopian counter-offensive of 1978-79, and at least partly borne out in the experience, albeit slower-paced, of the Iraq-Iran war. Third, the advanced equipment transfers in certain cases may be regarded as a form of equipment prepositioning for superpower engagement in regional conflict. Finally, the sophisticated arms transfers pose increased dangers to US intervention forces in the event that local states equipped with such arms decide to oppose US intervention. The Soviet Union, of course, faces a similar problem in those cases where it is the principal supplier, Iraq potentially being a prime example.

Regional Defence Production. India is the only state in Southwest Asia that currently possesses the diversified, heavy industrial base and extensive scientific and engineering resources needed to support indigenous defense production industries. Pakistan's related capabilities are far more limited; though efforts to expand them are underway they will not, except in the nuclear area, have much impact on the 1980s. The Southwest Asian oil producing countries have been investing in industrial development and manufacturing as well, but remain by and large heavily dependent of foreign technical assistance, and will not in the 1980s have much defense production capacity. Oil revenues from Southwest Asian countries could be used, however to support defense production under sympathetic auspices in Egypt or Pakistan. But both Iraq and Iran, if they invest in defense industries, are more likely to concentrate on developing internal capabilities.

Defence production in India is not particularly innovative, despite official rhetoric, but it has made steady progress in the use or adaptation of foreign technical assistance, designs and licensed technology in its own public sector industrial setting, and has stimulated private sector technology acquisition and manufacturing in key defense-related areas such as electronics and data-processing. Actual defense production is fairly self-sufficient in conventional ordnance light arms and military transport. India also produces light tanks and armored personnel carriers.

Efforts have been made, with only partial success, to acquire an independent, high-performance aircraft development and manufacturing capability, and MIG-21s are produced in India under license. India's space program is ostensibly for peaceful purposes but defense applications are assiduously explored. By the end of the 1980s, India conceivably might be able to produce and deploy short- or medium-range battlefield missiles against Pakistan, and eventually will have a long-range ballistic missile capability relevant to the perceived threat from China, but not before the 1990s.

A potentially growing factor in regional conventional conflicts in the 1980s will be third country weapons transfers among Southwest Asian states. Another could be direct military supply from LDCs, with India a potential local supplier of equipment repair facilities and other technical military expertise. Pakistan is also, of course, a potential source of assistance with manpower or even military units, as its

current relationships with Oman and Saudi Arabia suggest.

Nuclear Proliferation. The most significant military technology innovation that in now materializing in some Southwest Asian countries and which could have major effects on regional conflicts in the 1980s is in the nuclear area. With India a possible exception, nuclear weapons delivery systems in regional states will be aircraft-based and probably unsophisticated. The countries of greatest concern are India and Pakistan. Potentially worrisome nuclear developments in Iran have been abandoned, at least for the time being, as a result of the 1979 revolution. In Iraq's case, the Israeli bombing attack in June 1981 destroyed the near term technical potential. Iraq is likely to rebuild the bombed facility and perhaps develop others, but development of a nuclear weapons capability in Iraq is now improbable before the end of the decade.

Nuclear weapons proliferation is incipient both in India and Pakistan, and the development of limited nuclear military capabilities probably will occur in both during the decade. The probability of a limited nuclear conflict between the two within the decade is not negligible. Other threats posed by nuclear proliferation in the subcontinent include those that arise from possible transfers of nuclear technology or assistance to other states in the region, the adverse impact of nuclear insecurity on domestic political stability and perceptions of conventional defense needs (proliferation is likely, for instance, to accelerate rather than dampen conventional arms competition); the complications that local nuclear armaments will pose for US emergency military deployments and operations in the region; and the increased opportunities for nuclear terrorism by criminal, sub-national or international terrorist organizations.

Policy Implications. American strategy for coping with Southwest Asian conflict in the 1980s will be based at a minimum on the following objectives: assuring the secure flow of energy resources from the region; checking the growth of Soviet political power and deterring Soviet military expansion in the region; limiting risks to the stability of the central strategic balance from regional confrontation or conflict; amelioration of causes and resolution of conflicts among states in the region; and furtherance of conditions favorable for orderly regional political and economic development.

A fundamental question that should be raised is whether the US ought adhere not just to these traditional objectives but to "forward" objectives with much more activist implications, or alternatively ought to trim its containment strategy to conform to drastically changed power realities and political trends.

A forward objective that sometimes is suggested, for example, would be to exploit Soviet domestic socio-political vulnerabilities in order to shrink rather than merely contain Soviet influence in Southwest Asia. Another would be to press for the demise of Opec. The first of these objectives would be fraught with additional dangers. For practical reasons, probably neither would be feasible in the near term. A strategy based on either objective would be hard to sustain.

Similarly accommodationist strategies could be visualized, for example, the tacit parcelling out of spheres of influence, perhaps accepting greater Soviet influence in the Indian subcontinent for abstinence form interference in Iran and the Persian Gulf. "Finlandization" proposals for an Afghanistan settlement, incidentally, could easily work in this direction.

In this author's judgement, major shifts in strategic approach of either sort would be much less productive in the 1980s than upgrading the regional approaches which already have a measure of acceptance. Forward strategies against either the Soviet Union or Opec probably would be perceived by the allies as highly risky, and thus could take a heavy toll on North Atlantic and Pacific alliance relations. Accommodationist strategies on the other hand, would be regarded by allies as failures of commitment and eventually would cause an even more severe strategic deterioration in Western influence in the region.

Upgrading existing approaches, however, requires a great deal of specific work on the solidification of political and security cooperation between the West and Southwest Asian countries, and among the regional countries themselves, based on a much more sensitive understanding of how those countries are evolving. It requires, in addition, completion of those improvements in US military power projection capabilities which are already planned; here the difficulties lie partly in conceptualization, but equally importantly, in resources, lead times and management.

Integrating Politico-Mily. Responses. Political responses to the problems of Southwest Asian conflict cannot be divorced from military considerations any more than military responses can be applied in a political vacuum. Diplomatic and military measures are interdependent elements of any realistic strategy for coping with conflict whether in peacetime conditions or in war. The proper question is not which should have precedence over the other, but rather how should they be integrated (or what is the appropriate mix) for the spectrum of threats faced.

It is true, of course, that resort to the actual "use of force" in peacetime should be rare and normally only where other means do not suffice. But the common tendency to confuse all military measures of foreign policy with the "use of force" must be resisted. Military measures including preparedness to use force may serve the purposes of deterrence and political reassurance; indeed, in peacetime, this is their primary utility. Deterrence forestalls temptations by opponents to resort to force. Political reassurance relieves friends and allies of the full weight of their individual vulnerabilities, and enhances collective security. Military measures with these purposes are integral to political diplomacy. Either, when effective, tends to lower the frequency of actual uses of force.

Devising well integrated responses serving deterrence and political reassurance purposes is difficult for several reasons. First, the spectrum of actual and likely forms of conflict is wide, and the means of deterrence or resistance to some can be ill-suited to others. Second, the states of the region differ radically among themselves as well as with the United States over which are the salient threats, whether their origin be internal or external. This thwarts intra-regional security cooperation, and impedes security cooperation with the United States even by regional states which share close relations. It also produces great tension between country-specific and broader regional policies of the United States. Third, even where close cooperation with the United States is welcome, Islamic and nationalist sensitivities pose obstacles to the objective identification or most efficient implementation of specific security measures, whether in the types of weapons systems procured or in granting foreign access to local military facilities. Fourth, the introduction of foreign security assistance itself can become a focus of domestic political controversy with destabilizing implications. Finally, effective responses also require coopera-

tion between the United States and its Western allies, yet impediments to cooperation result from differences of interest and perspective in the West with respect to Southwest Asia.

What is urgently needed for the 1980s is a strategy that not only integrates objectives and tasks coherently, but also takes each of the factors discussed above into practical account.

Priorities. There has been a running debate since the events of the Iran Revolution, Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and Iraq-Iran war over whether high-intensity or low-intensity conflict potentials are the dominant threat to Western interests in Southwest Asia. Similarly, these events have raised the issue whether conflicts of local origin are more salient than threats of Soviet origin. No totally satisfactory *a priori* resolution of these issues is possible.

What can be said is the following: Conflicts of local origin are prolific. In that sense they are the most common, indeed the prevalent, threats to Western interests in the region. But they are much less likely *per se* to be permanently damaging, or to fundamentally alter the strategic balance, than Soviet high-intensity military threats. Conflicts of local origin in general are much more difficult to prevent, but are more susceptible to amelioration once they materialize. In comparison, Soviet high-intensity military initiatives probably are more susceptible to deterrence, but are more likely when deterrence fails to be strategically decisive. Conflicts of local origin intrinsically are less salient threats.

Yet a general rule that local conflicts are less threatening is misleading on two grounds: First, the exceptions that prove the rule may be the cases that matter. The Iranian revolution, for example, has drastically altered the perceived global as well as regional balance of power, yet it is unique among numerous postwar cases of local instability in having that effect. Second, more important than the intrinsic threats to Western interests are the regional vulnerabilities to Soviet exploitation that conflicts of local origin entail. Given the abundance in this region of such opportunities, Soviet threats to Western interests are likely to materialize most frequently in low-intensity rather than high-intensity conflicts. As suggested before, low-intensity threats may be more common, but whether Soviet or non-Soviet in origin, they are unlikely in most cases to prevail in a decisive way. Yet there could be decisive exceptions, and a series of cumulative lesser setbacks could also prove injurious. Since the more common, albeit normally more manageable, threats to Western interests arise from domestic instability and local conflict in the region, it follows that measures to cope with low-intensity conflict ought to have high policy priority, especially in the day-to-day management of political and economic relations prior to crises.

It does not follow, however, that a sophisticated strategy for low-intensity conflicts precludes the need to prepare a combat capability for high-intensity conflicts. Not only is there a need for a deterrent to offset any Soviet inclination to resort to high-intensity conflict, it is important to bear in mind the interdependence that exists in countermeasures for high and low intensity conflict: local determination to resist Soviet low-intensity moves will become unsteady if there is disbelief in the credibility of deterrence against high-intensity threats. Ultimately, then there is no escape either from the potential decisiveness of the high-intensity threat or the prevalence of the low-intensity threats. Which is dominant is less important because what is salient is

the connection between them. Both will have to be addressed as critical tasks for the 1980s, despite the extraordinary defense budget considerations

The salience of indigenous and Soviet threats, and high- and low-intensity conflict potentials, differs geographically and by country. So does the relative capacity of the US to respond in practical terms to high- and low-intensity threats. Setting policy priorities will have to take these factors into account, along with the relative importance of the real estate or local resources that may be at stake. Today Iran, for example, is far more accessible politically as well as geographically to a Soviet high-intensity threat than Saudi Arabia, but the prospects for receptivity to US assistance in coping with such a threat are far more favorable in Saudi Arabia than in Iran. Iran, on the other hand, has the manpower to be a more effective partner, theoretically, in a combined arms approach to high-intensity conflict than does Saudi Arabia.

The two countries in Southwest Asia that will have unique importance in American strategy in the 1980s will continue to be Iran and Saudi Arabia—this remains geopolitically inescapable. Iraq and Pakistan will also be important, but must on the same scale be ranked several notches below. There should be no illusions about the strategic inter-substitutability of these countries.

Little can be done for the time being to repair US-Iran relations, but a process of rapprochment eventually is to be expected if Iran's independence is not first subverted. Iran probably will look more to Europe and Japan than the United States initially, but Western influence in some fashion will return. It is important not to seem overly eager to draw Iran back to the fold—this tends to feed countercurrents and grandiose presuppositions that Iran's strategic importance *per se* is a shield against its vulnerabilities. Rather, the latent incentives for reconstruction, normalized relations and defense reinsurance should be left for the most part to reassert themselves naturally. This does not preclude American readiness to extend spontaneous support to a friendly regime, should the present one be superseded, or help resist the insinuation of Soviet influence if the present situation degenerates into civil war.

Saudi Arabia's singular importance as the largest international oil supplier and source of moderating influence in Middle East affairs is objectively independent of the recent crises in the area, but those crises have highlighted how vital Saudi decisions and capacities are to the economies of the West and much of the developing world. The resulting competition for Saudi attention has greatly increased its diplomatic influence but, by putting the spotlight on its vulnerabilities, also enhanced them in certain respects. Saudi Arabia is potentially vulnerable to almost the entire spectrum of regional conflict, and least able among the principal states of the region to counter high-intensity conflicts by itself. While it is better equipped to cope with low-intensity conflicts, this is a relative matter, by no means assured, and properly the overriding source of Western concern about Saudi Arabia.

Though Saudi Arabia objectively is highly vulnerable to high-intensity conflict, the probability of such threats materializing from the Soviet Union in peacetime is low because they would be deterred by US security commitments. The probability of regional high-intensity threats materializing is considerably higher, but still likely to be contained by US commitments. This

was underscored by the dispatch of AWACs and other elements of US air force presence to deflect further spread of the Iraq-Iran war. Confidence in the US defense commitment to Saudi Arabia is subject to one important qualification. Serious damage by surprise air attack to oil field installations is difficult to protect against, and it is not fully clear than an Israeli threat of this sort would be deterred under all circumstances. It should be a high priority for US policy in the 1980s to make the intolerability of such action unmistakably binding.

Saudi Arabia is not likely to suffer a revolutionary crisis analogous to that of Iran because of differences in politics and society, including the extensive reach in Saudi Arabia of the large ruling family, its Islamic modalities of government, and its distributionist approach to the oil wealth domestically. But it is potentially vulnerable to sudden political change resulting from discord in ruling circles, commoner dissatisfaction, unrest from Shi'ite population in the eastern province, and destabilizing pressures from immigrant laborers, particularly Yemenis and Arab groups from other neighboring countries. The Royal Family is especially sensitive to the potentially divisive domestic effects of "radical" forces, whether Communist-inspired or Arab in origin, that emanate from other sources in the region. Modernization is bound to intensify cross-pressures in conservative Saudi society, despite the pragmatic flexibility of its political system.

It will continue to be a priority in the 1980s to provide political and security reassurance to Saudi Arabia against regional threats from Iraq and the two Yemens, especially the Soviet/Cuban/East German proxy threats from South Yemen. Local conflicts with these countries are unlikely to swallow territory so much as sow seeds of internal unrest or the overthrow of the monarchy. Saudi leadership of the smaller Gulf states, now somewhat better organized for security coordination in the Gulf Cooperation Council, should be encouraged. US training and equipment for the Saudi military forces is extensive and crucial to security reassurance, and provides the infrastructure to make cooperative US military use of Saudi facilities plausible for certain contingencies.

Saudi Arabia also draws on regional military assistance, particularly from Pakistan. Though ostensibly for training, implicit in the latter relationship is the emergency provision to Saudi Arabia of military manpower by Pakistan from its more substantial armed forces to stiffen smaller Saudi forces. This is another form of regional security interdependence that the US should favour, even though informal multilateral relationships for security purposes add to the management burdens faced by the US.

Since the primary Saudi vulnerabilities to be offset involve threats to domestic political stability, it is crucial to manage the US security relationship in a way that minimizes its own abrasive impact on Saudi politics. Too large or visible a US presence tends to offend local sensibilities and become a target for local dissidents. The same is true of US access that might be interpreted as constraining on Saudi sovereignty. Sensitivities of this sort preclude Saudi authorization of military base rights. It will remain prudent to defer in such cases to Saudi preferences in the interest of keeping the risks to domestic stability low.

The extraordinary stakes in the preservation of Saudi security and stability also require sensitivity in the US to Saudi interests in the development of policies for other countries or the region as a whole.

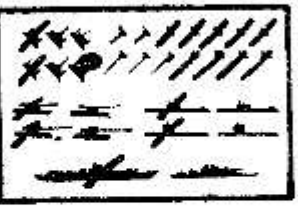
especially in those matters which pertain to the Arab-Israeli conflict or the special relationship with Israel. Saudi involvement in Arab diplomacy vastly expanded after 1973, and Saudi Arabia consequently is much more internally susceptible to divisive Arab pressures as well as potentially exposed, in the event of renewed hostilities, to Israeli military retaliation. Evenhandedness in US Middle East policy is an imperative for Saudi and Gulf security in the 1980s.

The gradual opening of a rift between Iraq and the Soviet Union, which was accelerated by the Soviet tilt to Iran in the Iraq-Iran war, has opened opportunities to restore some Western influence in Baghdad. This opening should be cautiously explored, and the nascent Saudi-Iraq and Jordan-Iraq cooperation should be encouraged. But care should be taken not to further embitter or alienate Iran needlessly.

A revitalization of the security relationship with Pakistan became imperative after the invasion of Afghanistan because of the destabilizing implications of that event for the Persian Gulf, and because Pakistan's support is indispensable for any effective response to the Soviet invasion itself as well as to any new Soviet pressures on Pakistan's borders. Modern defense equipment is essential to Pakistani confidence in its own self-defense capacity. In this case, it also symbolizes a US commitment which can be viewed as a deterrent against high-intensity Soviet threats to Pakistan. Without such US support, Pakistan could not withstand Soviet diplomatic intimidation. It is much less valuable as a counter to low-intensity subversion in Baluchistan, where political and economic measures are more likely to be decisive. The US-Pakistan security relationship could be jeopardized by domestic political unrest within Pakistan (to which it could also be a contributing cause), the tragic rivalry with India, and the nuclear defense element in Pakistan's foreign policy.

Newsletter

WEAPONS • DEALS • RESEARCH • DEVELOPMENT



Project Rivet Cap:
Dismantling Titan II Missiles

T. R. Reid

How do you dismantle a 330,000-pound intercontinental ballistic missile carrying 16,000 explosive gallons of toxic liquid fuel and the largest nuclear warhead in the Free World?

Very, very carefully, according to the Air Force deactivation crew at the Titan II missile silo here on the rolling green plains east of Wichita. But you also have to do it very, very publicly.

For one thing, the Air Force takes pains to ensure that the farm families living near the 18 Titan II silos ringing McConnell Air Force Base are informed of every step as the huge ICBMs are taken apart and carted away. But there's another interested audience: the Soviets.

The Air Force assumes that the Soviets are watching as the mighty rockets are gingerly removed from the nine-storey-deep holes where they have stood at the ready for 22 years. And after each of the missiles is pulled from its den, each empty silo is left alone—uncovered, untouched—for another six months so the Soviets can verify that weapon has been deactivated.

"We don't know exactly how they check," said Col. Jay W. Kelley, commander of the missile wing at McConnell. "It might be a guy driving by in a pickup. Maybe they fly over in a Piper Cub. It could be a satellite.

"All we know is that under the SALT treaty they have 180 days to verify the deactivation of this missile using 'national technical means,' whatever that is. And so we let the silo just sit there for six months before we bury it for ever."

It is well-known that the United States is engaged in a trillion-plus-dollar military buildup. It is somewhat less well-known—except to the farmers here and the unseen Soviet observers—that the country is tear-

ing down the oldest and most lethal single element of its nuclear arsenal: the Titan II missile force.

During the Kennedy administration the Air Force installed more than 50 of the missiles in underground silos in Arizona, Arkansas and Kansas. The 9-megaton nuclear warhead carried by each Titan reportedly was targeted for a Soviet city.

But keeping these giant weapons poised for action, their fuel tanks filled with poisonous liquid propellants, was dangerous and expensive. And the Titan's enormous single warhead did not mesh with emerging strategic doctrines that called for missiles bearing multiple, independently targeted warheads.

Before the Titan IIs were 10 years old, the Pentagon had decided to get rid of them. They were used as bargaining chips in the SALT I talks: It was agreed that weapons such as the Titan II would be removed and their silos would not be filled with new missiles. Shortly after President Reagan took office in 1981, he ordered deactivation of the entire Titan II fleet.

The Air Force gave the mission a formal name—*'Project Rivet Cap"*—and set about the five-year task of dismantling the deadly missiles. The date, all 18 Titan IIs, in Arizona have been removed. Here in central Kansas, 11 missiles remain to be pulled out of the ground, and work began in earnest last week on the 17 Titan IIs stationed near Little Rock, Ark.

The delicate and potentially dangerous deactivation has been entrusted to a carefully trained corps of missile-maintenance experts. The Kansas contingent includes Chief Master Sgt. Eugene Scoular, whose 33 years of service make him one of the few people who have been in the Air Force longer than the Titans have. The casual, loquacious sergeant says removing the 11,000-pound warhead—with a uranium payload equivalent to 9 million tons of TNT—is the easy part. "You haul her out of there with a crane and put her on a truck and say goodbye," he said.

Like all used nuclear weapons, the Titan warheads are turned over to the Department of Energy and shipped to the nuclear fuel plant in Amarillo, Tex. for reprocessing. The tricky part of dismantling a missile is the removal of its liquid fuel. The dimethyl-hydrazine fuel and the nitrogen tetroxide oxidizer with which it mixes for blastoff are potent toxins: in 1978, two workers were killed by leaking fuel at one of the Titan sites near here.

A crew of "propellant transfer specialists" in bulky white spacesuits use a custom-built $280,000 vacuum cleaner to pump the dangerous liquids from the rocket to a fleet of tanker trucks. If all goes well, it takes about eight hours to empty one Titan's fuel tanks. But things sometimes turn sour: A rainstorm comes along. The wind blows too hard. The fuel lines leak, creating a scary phenomenon known to the crews as a "BFRC", which master Sgt. Scoular translates delicately as "Big Flipping Red Cloud". In such cases, fuel removal can take more than two weeks.

The silos, after sitting open long enough for the Soviets to make their verifications, will be dynamited, filled with rubble and covered over, waiting for a 22nd century archaeologist to find them and ponder the purpose of these underground structures.

Courtesy—The Guardian, London, May 26, 1985

A Commonwealth Defence Force Proposed?

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association has proposed the creation of a defence force, consisting of regional deployment units, to assist the smaller countries of the Commonwealth defend themselves. This proposal, made in a report of a study group of the Association, is to be discussed at a Commonwealth Summit scheduled to be held in the Bahamas late next year. The proposed calls for Commonwealth countries in each region to contribute troops to a small, common and well-armed "ready reaction units". This unit could come to the aid of small Commonwealth states that are too poor to afford their own armed forces. Of the world's thirty-eight small countries two-thirds are Commonwealth members. These countries have populations of less than a million. Many independent Pacific and Caribbean islands fall under this category. They are quite defenceless against possible attacks by an enemy or against poachers fishing in their territorial waters, and drug smugglers.

The creation of a common defence force would be a first for the Commonwealth nations which hitherto served as a forum for political and economic talks. It played no military role and is not an alliance. The US invasion of Granada in 1983 aroused the concern of some Commonwealth members who condemned it as an act of blatant intervention. This proposed defence force will not interfere in the internal affairs of members. It would intervene only when invited to do so by a legitimate Commonwealth government. In recent years some small Commonwealth states have been targets of threats and some have been invaded. In the absence of a responsible body which would come to their aid quickly in the case of an emergency these states are helpless.

According to Sir Arnolt Gajo, President of the Senate of Barbados, who is also the head of the study group, 'In any emergency situation it is no use for small units trying to depend on the United Nations for help. We have to get together regionally through the Commonwealth to try to help ourselves.

Attention PAF!

F-104s AVIONICS TO BE UPDATED

A programme designated ASA (Avionics System Update) has been implemented to maintain the effectiveness of the F-104s fighter plane for another ten years. A total of 245 F-104s aircraft were produced by Aeritalia at its Turin facilities. Under the ASA programme the entire avionics system will be revamped (including installation of a new radar system with look-down capability) and the flight and weapons systems will be upgrated (including the addition of an in-flight refuelling system and the Aspide 1A missile). Modernization of military aircraft is a vital part of a nation's defence planning, and the Italian Air Force has already implemented such a programme for its "Atlantic" anti-submarine aircraft.

Other proposals made by the study group were, strengthening the parliamentary governments in small states, a Commonwealth Development Fund and also a common fund set up by Pacific, African and Caribbean trade ministers to stabilise commodity prices.

Inventor of the Bailey Bridge dies

SIR DONALD BAILEY, the inventor of the Bailey bridge which played a crucial role in the Allied victory in the Second World War, died in the first week of May, 1985. He was 83.

The movable military bridge was used in the Normandy landings and carried Allied troops, tanks, and guns over rivers and gorges in Europe. Field-Marshal Montgomery said: "Without the Bailey bridge we should not have won the war."

Sir Donald, who spent much of his boyhood making model bridges from pieces of wood and string, was modest about his achievement, saying that it was just part of his job as a civil engineer. When his knighthood was announced in 1946 and a toast was proposed to him he replied: "I think the toast should be to the men who put the Bailey bridges up."

Sir Donald's bridge, assembled from welded panels linked by pinned joints and made of steel, came in light units easily carried by a few men. Montgomery said: "It was the best thing in that line we ever had."

Sir Donald was born in 1901 in Yorkshire. He was educated at the Leys, Cambridge, and took an engineering degree at the University of Sheffield. He joined the Civil Service in 1928 and was posted to the experimental bridging staff of the army at Christchurch, Hampshire.

The War Office accepted the invention in 1941 and all early experimental work was carried out in the drawing office and workshops of the Christchurch establishment.

The Star War Controversy

On March 23, 1984, President Reagan asked experts to examine the uses of space for protection against nuclear attack. Today, that effort affects US-Soviet relations and arms negotiations, technology development, Nato, and domestic politics. The President was inspired by High Frontier, an idea conceived from anti-ballistic missile (ABM) defense concepts of the 1960s, which envisioned weapons intercepting ballistic missiles. After the Reagan request, the idea was dubbed 'star wars' and became a government project called Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), under command of Air Force Lt. General James A. Abrahamson.

Congress provided SDI with $25 billion for a five year period beginning last April and limited Abrahamson to exploration of these questions: Is a space-based ABM defense feasible technically and strategically? Is it affordable? But while experts are divided on these questions, SDI raised strategic defense to new levels. The Pentagon created a unified command to control space-related military assets and tasked the Air Force to train astronauts and co-ordinate space shuttle flights devoted to nuclear defense. The DOD completed plans for protection of more than 100 earth-orbiting satellites that US forces rely on for reconnaissance and communications. Also, the Pentagon accelerated development of an anti-satellite weapon similar to Moscow's "hunter-killer" vehicle. Should High Frontier prove

unfeasible, these efforts already form a kind of space defense web.

SDI chief Abrahamson recently stated that his firstswing across the US from one industrial center to the next, taught him that American know-how for military applications in space is further advanced than he expected, especially in sensor and microcircuit technology. Abrahamson is confident that speed-of-light laser and neutral particle weapon beam systems can be perfected before the year 2000. And, former Defense Intelligence Agency director and retired Air Force General, Daniel O. Graham, believes that off-the-shelf technology to destroy incoming warheads can be assembled in six years at a cost of $11.9 billion and provide a screen against nuclear attack that would be 88 percent effective. Right now, America's Minuteman land-based intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) silos are incapable of surviving attack by ICBMs, and there is no guarantee that planned MX missiles can be siloed properly. SDI's critics say that 12 percent of Soviet ICBMs breaking through the net could wipe out America's land-based deterrent.

US Secretary of Defense, Casper Weinberger, said this about SDI criticism in December: "It is better to have a leakproof defense in space. However, the value of a less than leakproof but robust system should not be ruled out, especially with respect to inherent values for arms talks." Weinberger believes that Moscow is afraid of losing a capability to launch nuclear strikes, therefore SDI can lead to pressure for ICBM reductions. It is possible, he argues, that the US could divert 12 percent ineffectiveness, the way floodstreams are directed away from populated areas. More encouraging, though, is former NASA Administrator James C. Fletcher's comment that "millimeter-wave radar and laser imaging already enable discrimination and selection of missiles and nuclear warheads." Connecting these technologies to enough accurate, fast and well-protected weapons systems remains SDI's major challenge.

SDI's multi-layer defense concept requires that a Soviet ICBM be engaged first at the end of its boost-phase, when a missile rises above the atmosphere at the start of its trajectory. If this fails, attempts are made to destroy the missile after the booster has burned away but before warheads are released to travel individual flight paths. Should the latter fail, efforts are made to destroy each warhead. Kills during the boost and post-boost phases mean more to a defender, since warheads are then part of the missile. SDI proponents say this can be accomplished because laser beams travel 1,000 miles in less than a hundredth of a second, faster than any missile. Moreover, the skin of a Soviet ICBM is one tenth of an inch thick, which a laser beam can penetrate easily, causing the missile to burn and disintegrate. In addition, neutral particle beams—hydrogen atoms moving 60,000 miles per second—can be used to strike an ICBM in less than one second. These beams would leave from satellites capable of tracking Soviet missiles 24 hours a day. But a Nobel laureate and physicist, Dr. Hans Bethe, claimed last May that SDI could not work. The weight of satellites needed to counter Moscow's 1,400 ICBMs, he said, would be 40,000 tons each, too heavy to be sustained under the number of weapons that must be deployed. Bethe also stated that more than 2,300 satellites costing $1 billion each would be required, putting the cost of SDI in the trillions. Also, a 1984 Office of Technology Assessment (OTA) study for Congress agreed with Bethe, and claimed that the Soviets would use chemicals to put a shine on their missiles to deflect laser beams. OTA added that Soviet ICBMs could be made to spin and prevent particle beam targeting. OTA concluded that a space defense against

Soviet ICBMs, "should not be the basis of a national policy."

President Reagan's science adviser, Dr. George Keyworth, fought back late in 1984 by presenting results of a Lawrence Livermore Laboratory study, which computed that Bethe was guilty of mathematical error, that fewer than 100 satellites weighing under 25,000 tons would comprise an effective space deterrent. Bethe and the OTA had based their findings on need to attack the entire Soviet ICBM inventory at once, and mistakenly added a factor of 25 to their calculations.

Dr. Robert Jastrow, founder of the Goddard Institute for Space Studies, countered Bethe this year by spreading a map of the northern hemisphere, identifying locations of Soviet ICBM fields and marking them with a pin. He rotated a pointer down from the North Pole across each missile base and determined that around 200 satellites using 50 well-spaced orbits, sufficed for a counterattack against Soviet ICBMs.

The Livermore study assumed that less than half the Soviet ICBM force would be used in a first strike and calculated the use of 90 satellites. Dr. Bethe and the OTA revised their estimates and, during congressional testimony, agreed with results of Dr. Jastrow's simple experiment. Livermore scientists added that any shine put on an ICBM would dissolve from exhausts surrounding the missile during flight, and that distances between the Soviet Union and the US would allow for beam weapons to adjust to a missile's spin.

All this means that an ABM defense is possible and, according to Keyworth and Jastrow, might cost less than $200 billion. However, more than the existence of technical means and affordability are required to justify development of an ABM defense. Political and military considerations are equally important.

"SDI's political and strategic uncertainties are many and complex," agrees US arms negotiator, Paul Nitze. Europeans ponder if a successful ABM program in space would cause Washington to worry less about the defense of Europe and withdraw nuclear and conventional forces from Nato. Others are concerned that the Soviets will obtain US ABM technology, learn to counter such or develop similar means, creating another arms race. Dr. Robert Kupperman, former Chief Scientist for the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency worries that space will become a preliminary instead of final battlefield if nuclear weapons remain with either superpower. Kupperman envisions the superpowers annihilating each other's space assets prior to earthborne ICBM exchanges. Why add another phase of warfare, he asks. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Stephen Bryen, worries that Soviets might derive applications from this technology for use in other military categories. This implies that, inside the framework of deterrence strategy and possibilities for arms control, SDI is destabilizing and could cripple instead of terminating the Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD) concept that Washington and Moscow have followed since 1961 to prevent a nuclear exchange.

Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, Les Aspin, told MT that finding out that a space ABM defense will cost $200 billion instead of many trillions does not make the system "inexpensive and affordable", especially of Congress funds earthborne strategic defenses, as well. Several of Aspin's committee members are convinced that acceptance of an ABM defense would end prospects for Pentagon co-operation in reducing America's budget deficits.

In the first year of SDI, technical research out-stripped political, strategic and economic feasibility studies. The Air Force's July, 1984, Homing Overlay Experiment (HOE) served inadvertently as a pilot for future tests in space and proved that beam weaponry can distinguish and engage targets moving at great speeds. Even so, President Reagan said at a press conference in January, 1985, that, at the moment, SDI could only be perceived as research among the uncertainties, inferring that actual ABM development would be a decision for future Presidents to think about.

Marvin Leibstone
Military Technology
MILTECH 3-1985