

# How to save Quaid's Pakistan

BY WAJID SHAMSUL HASAN

16/9/04 *Th Nation*  
**It is putting salt on the injury to plead with the "boss" with the whip not to give up his army post for "another five years" in the best "national interest", to "save and serve Pakistan".**

*Pch. Pakistan*  
 Pakistan's founder Quaid-i-Azam Mohammed Ali Jinnah had created a country through a vote to be an unadulterated, liberal progressive democracy where religion had nothing to do with the business of the state and its people were to be equal citizens, irrespective of their caste, creed and colour.

The Quaid must be turning in his grave on hearing the loud orchestration by the present regime's surrogates that the survival of "his democratic Pakistan" depends on its Army chief's continuing to wear his military uniform. General Pervez Musharraf's "hum-nawas" (hangers on) do not leave insult at that. They put salt on the injury when they plead with their "boss" with the whip not to give up his army post for "another five years" in the best "national interest", to "save and serve Pakistan". Besides, loudly they remind him, America needs him too. There is no doubt about it. Only someone of his calibre could venture to wage war on his own country's patriotic people to serve its interests.

Since after the death of the Quaid 56 years ago, people of Pakistan have been living from moment to moment with a hope that often slides into a fade that some day they would translate their founder's dream into a reality by re-establishing the fact that it is the people who are the rulers and not the military establishment. And that Pakistan would only prosper as a democracy and not as a garrison state as per the concerted efforts now in hand of our Praetorian rulers.

The bullets that assassinated Quaid's trusted lieutenant - Pakistan's first Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan - just after a few months of the abortive coup led by an army general against him - not only removed one of the most dynamic leaders but also chartered a chequered course for democracy in Pakistan itself. Throughout the post-Liaquat period the country went through hell and high water and the politics inflicted on it by its powerful military, civil and judicial bureaucratic troika led to its break up following a humiliating defeat at the hands of the Indians in 1971.

Quaid's biographer Professor Stanley Wolpert had painstakingly discovered that it was Jinnah who had single-handedly created Pakistan despite tenacious opposition by the Muslim fundamentalists of his time - besides Congress and the British who were averse to his idea of a separate Muslim state. And he did it through a constitutional and democratic struggle. Indeed, nobody could have stopped him if he had written a constitution for Pakistan and imposed it. Nobody would have opposed him as well. But being a democrat first and last, who valued most the general will of the people as the supreme arbiter of power, he made it clear that the constitution of Pakistan would be what people would like it to be. When he was once asked what would be the constitution of Pakistan his answer was straight: he had neither the power nor the intention of determining or dictating a constitution. According to him the "the constitution and the government would be what the people would decide."

Just before he was to come over to his newly created state of Pakistan, senior Muslim military officers of

the Indian army met him in Delhi and in their over enthusiasm and uncalled for exuberance for an undeserved pound of flesh, they suggested that the senior cadre from among them should be consulted before chiefs of the three forces are to be appointed by the new government. He nipped their ambition, being Bonapartic, at that early stage and told them without mincing words that the "appointment of the chiefs would be the sole prerogative of the government of the day".

Not only that, addressing the army officers at the Quetta Staff College (June 14, 1948) he made matters crystal clear to them. "One thing more. I am persuaded to say this because during my talks with one or two very high-ranking officers I discovered that they did not know the implications of the oath taken by the troops of Pakistan. But it is an important form and I would like to take the opportunity of refreshing your memory by reading the prescribed oath to you. I solemnly affirm, in the presence of Almighty God, that I owe allegiance to the Constitution and the Dominion of Pakistan (mark the words Constitution and the Government of the Dominion of Pakistan) and that I will be duty bound to honestly and faithfully serve in the Dominion of Pakistan forces and go within the terms of my enrolment wherever I may be ordered by air, land or sea and that I will observe and obey all commands of any officer set over me'. As I have said just now, the spirit is what really matters. I should like you to study the Constitution which is in force in Pakistan at present and understand its true constitutional and legal implications when you say that you will be faithful to the Constitution of the Dominion."

Much categorical was his warning to the civil bureaucracy. Addressing the Civil Officers of Balochistan at Sibbi (February 14, 1948) Quaid told them point blank: "Pakistan is now a sovereign State, absolute and unfettered and the Government of Pakistan is in the hands of the people. Until we finally frame our constitution that, of course, can only be done by the Constituent Assembly, our present provisional constitution based on the fundamental principles of democracy not bureaucracy or autocracy or dictatorship, must be worked. You officers should realise that these are the principles which should be borne in mind." And again he called upon the

Gazetted Officers (Chittagong, 25th of March, 1948) "You have to do your duty as servants, you are concerned with this political or that political party that is not your business. It is the business of politicians to fight out their battle under the present constitution or the future constitution that may ultimately be framed. You, therefore, have nothing to do with this party or that party. You are civil servants. Whichever gets the majority will form the Government, and your duty is to serve that Government for the time being as servants not as politicians. You do not belong to the ruling class; you belong to the servants."

When I recall Pakistan's chequered history since his death, I regret to say, with a profoundly broken heart, that both our military officers and civil bureaucrats have rendered into tatters his lofty vision of a constitutional and democratic life for the people of Pakistan. And surely, had Quaid been alive to see all those who have been treating Pakistani constitutions as roll of toilet papers changeable every day would have ended up in pillories without recourse to Article 6 of the 1973 Constitution.

Our previous military rulers had sown the seeds of disintegration that culminated in the separatist movements of the majority province; the present lot under General Pervez Musharraf seems to be determined to continue the history. This time, however, it appears to be the turn of the smaller provinces that are being netted from behind by Musharraf and his junta. A UDI. Islamabad's aggressive policies, Musharraf parroted that he will build the Kalabagh Dam. Come what may - without the consensus of the smaller provinces, his war on the people of Balochistan and his army operation in Baluchistan are nothing but dreadful sounds of the death knell.

Before I conclude I would like to share the views of those political parties who have tried to come out favourably between the lines into the recent elections of Musharraf's Prime Minister No.3-Sardar Aziz. In his initial assurances he has promised to give opposition parties that he would genuinely promote the politics of consensus and would like to take opponents along with him to generate a rancorous atmosphere.

No doubt all that seems to be too good to be true. However, one does not lose anything in giving the benefit of the doubt since most of us belong to the last straw in hope to contribute our humble bit in what looks to be an impossible battle to save Pakistan from an inevitable denouement then ultimately taste of pudding is in eating.

Many in Pakistan had looked hopefully for a change otherwise literally heavyweight former Prime Minister Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali to act as Baloch by becoming Musharraf's Junejo Muhi Khan. The manner he left the political scene even make him the mice that roars. I do not know much about the present incumbent but if there is a iota of self-respect in him, I am sure he would try to be something better than a dummy. He referred extensively to the Quaid on the constitutional role of the military and civil bureaucracy so the new Prime Minister learns his politics from Quaid's legacy.

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Before I conclude I would like to share the naivety of those political parties who have tried to read favourably between the lines into the recent utterances of Musharraf's Prime Minister No.3-Shaukat Aziz. In his initial assurances he has promised to the opposition parties that he would genuinely promote politics of consensus and would like to take his opponents along with him to generate a rancour free atmosphere.

No doubt all that seems to be too good to be true. However, one does not lose anything in giving him the benefit of the doubt since most of us believe in clinging to the last straw in hope to contribute one's humble bit in what looks to be a impossible battle to save Pakistan from an inevitable denouement. But then ultimately taste of pudding is in eating it.

Many in Pakistan had looked hopefully at the otherwise literally heavyweight former Prime Minister Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali to act as a real Baloch by becoming Musharraf's Junejo Muhammad Khan. The manner he left the political scene did not even make him the mice that roars. I do not know much about the present incumbent but if there is any iota of self-respect in him, I am sure he would at least try to be something better than a dummy. I have referred extensively to the Quaid on the constitution, role of the military and civil bureaucracy so that the new Prime Minister learns his politics from the Quaid's legacy.