Pakistan: American Economic Colony

We wish to acknowledge the receipt of a copy of PAKISTAN TODAY (Autumn 1961), devoted to "The Burden of U. S. Aid" from the editor and publisher: Hamza A. Alavi of London, England with the request that we refer to and comment on same. Upon digesting the contents of this 48-page exposè of what is behind the "altruism" of capitalist foreign aid programs and the reaction of Mr. Alavi and "Khusro" (his anonymous student co-author) to America's military "alliance" with Pakistan, we would comment as follows:

The "progressive and radical Pakistanis" who oppose the policies of the present military junta in that nation and its present subservience to the United States are naive, indeed, to expect a different approach from the hard-headed businessmen who run American policies. And, on the other hand, the tears they shed for their impoverished countrymen are so many crocodile tears when one considers that they seek but to replace the dominance over the Pakistani working class by the American bourgoisie with a dominance by their own bourgeoisie. That such a state of affairs is impractical in this day of foreign-aid colonialism is hardly subject to debate. That any material benefit would accrue to the Pakistani working class, could the unlikely happen, is even less debatable.

There is, however, much of interest to socialists in **"The Burden of U. S. Aid."** Those who believe in the myth of United States altruism in its foreign aid program, for example, might well ponder the following paragraph from an official U. S. document entitled "Technical Assistance: Final Report of the Committee on Foreign Relations" March 12, 1957, quoted by "Khusro":

> "Technical Assistance is not something to be done, as a Government enterprise, for its own sake or for the sake of others. The U. S. Government is not a charitable institution, nor is it an appropriate outlet for the charitable spirit of the American people. That spirit finds its proper instrumentality in the numerous private philanthropic and religious institutions which have done so much good work abroad. Technical assistance is only one of a number of instruments available to the U.S. to carry out its foreign policy and to promote its national interest abroad. Besides Technical Assistance, these tools of foreign policy include economic aid, military assistance, security treaties, overseas information programs, participation in the U. N. and other international organizations, the exchange of persons, programs, tariff and trade policies, surplus agricultural commodities disposal policies, and the traditional processes of diplomatic representation."

In other words: Don't confuse business with kindness.

That the authors of **"The Burden of U. S. Aid"** are aware of the emergence of a new type of colonialism,* however, is made quite clear. They tell us plainly that:

> "Old fashioned Imperialism has been identified perhaps a little too much with foreign investments and direct colonial rule. There are those who are inclined to regard the level of foreign investment almost as a measure of Imperialism. But in the post-war world the volume of foreign investments in under-developed countries, in terms of the relative magnitude of real resources transferred, has not been very large, especially in Pakistan. Instead of the classical picture of surplus capital rushing out from the high wage economies of the developed countries in order to seek super profits through the exploitation of cheap labour in the under-developed countries, it has clearly preferred to seek highly productive employment in the industrially advanced countries. Its concern (in Pakistan) has been more the securing of markets and the sources of supply of raw materials than avenues of direct investment."

* See the Dilemma of Africa, W. S. No. 1-1962, for analysis of new colonialism.

And "Khusro" goes on to explain that in the three years between 1957 and 1960 there was no increase in foreign investment in Pakistan manufacturing although there was, in the same period, a rise of more than 40% in the "overall total of foreign investments — the main increase being in the field of Commerce followed by investments in Mining."

But the new-type colonial power, America, is by no means content to muscle Pakistani businessmen out of the trade and the raw material of this Near East American "colony." Appreciating the strategic military importance of Pakistan in a possible future war with the Soviet Union, the United States has negotiated a military "alliance" with the Ayub regime but a strange alliance, indeed. Pakistan is committed, under the terms of the pact, to defend American interests in the Near East, but nothing is said of the need for America to rush to the aid of Pakistan in the event she is attacked by aggressors, as for example India, or the Soviet Union, as a reaction against the "alliance" with her American enemy. In other words, America has in effect created for itself a colonial army to the same extent as did the old colonial powers with their system of direct action.

And what of the cost in hard cash, an item of utmost importance and one of the weaknesses that undermined the position of the old colonial powers? According to Mr. Humphrey, the Sec'y of the Treasury in the Eisenhower cabinet:

> "The military aid, and to what extent it may be continued as I see it, is just a matter of how much cheaper can we do it that way than we can do it another way. That is just a matter of figuring it out every time. As long as we can save some money by doing it, I am for it. As long as we can save some boys I am for it."

And Congressman Vorys in a statement in the House Hearings on the Mutual Security Act (1956) showed that:

> "...last year it cost $5,900 to have an American soldier overseas, without a gun in his hand. This program costs the U. S. $744 per each man in service *with weapons* in his hands, *placed where our Joint Chiefs think he ought to be for our mutual security.*"

The new-type colonialism is, indeed, a money-saver and as such, a paying proposition for the capitalist class.

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It is one thing to analyze a situation adequately. It is another thing to offer solutions that make sense. The writers and publisher of **Pakistan Today** have done an admirable job in examining and laying bare the basis of U. S. involvement in Pakistan. But as mere "left-wing" or liberal oppositionists to the present regime in their country they cannot possibly advocate, even if they understood, the only sensible program for the majority of the Pakistanis. How can they possibly understand that the future of Pakistan is tied up, inexorably, with the movement for world socialism? They are the "outs" of Pakistan capitalist politics who aspire to become the "ins." They can protest that "What we need from the U. S. above all is an act of withdrawal from involvement in our internal affairs," but in the final analysis, "freedom" to them can means nothing more than the freedom of the Pakistani bourgeoisie to exploit their working class, free from American or other foreign dominance in such matters.

There is no future, however, for the Pakistani working-class in such a policy. An exchange of masters will not solve their problems. As do the workers in the rest of the world, they need world socialism. Only a socialist world is worth struggling for. A continuation of capitalism, whether under military juntas, "Communist" dictatorships, or capitalist "democracies," can lead finally only to wealth for the few, poverty for the many, wars and the possible liquidation of the human race.

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