

ONE-UNIT SCHEME AND THE POLITICAL IDENTITY OF SINDH

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ABSTRACT

During the freedom movement, the All India Muslim League strongly supported Sindh's struggle for regaining political identity. Consequently, in 1936, Sindh succeeded in repossessing its political identity, as a Muslim majority province of India. In response to AIML's unequivocal support for the cause of Sindh, the people of Sindh joined the struggle of contouring the political identity of Pakistan. However, after the creation of Pakistan, the political elite of Pakistan began defacing political identity of the federating units including Sindh, by adopting the policies of assimilation and absorption. The one unit scheme was the manifestation of such atrocious policies. Inconsequence of the implementation of one unit scheme, Sindh, that helped Pakistan to attain political existence, was forced to surrender its political distinctiveness as the province of Pakistan. These impetuous centripetal policies were not only the negation of the objectives of Pakistan movement but also played a significant role in hampering the process of national integration.

Sindh had a distinctive politico-territorial identity before it was 'sinned'¹ by Sir Charles Napier in 1843. As a result, Sindh had lost its territorial and political identities. Later on, in 1847, Sindh was amalgamated into the Bombay presidency merely as an administrative unit called commissionerate. Since its merger in the Bombay presidency, Sindh had been striving to regain its political identity, at least, as a governor's province of the British India. The All India Muslim League (A.I.M.L.), being a staunch supporter of provincial autonomy, strongly pleaded Sindh's case of regaining political identity. During the freedom struggle, the A.I.M.L. leadership repeatedly demanded for the establishment of Sindh as a full-fledged province of the Indian federation.

In 1925, the A.I.M.L. in its Aligarh session passed a resolution in favour of the separation of Sindh from Bombay and demanded to constitute the former as a province of the British India.²

On 30th and 31st December 1927, Jinnah faction⁽³⁾ of the A.I.M.L. met in Calcutta. This session forwarded a charter of demands for the future constitution of united India in the form of a resolution. In that resolution, the Muslim League demanded that 'Sindh should be separated from the Bombay presidency and constituted into a separate province.'⁴

In Delhi Muslim Proposals, the Muslim League leadership maintained almost the same position and reiterated the demand of creating the new Muslim majority provinces of Sindh, Balouchistan and NWFP.⁵

Later on, Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah in his famous fourteen points, re-demanded the creation of Sindh province by separating it from Bombay presidency.⁶ Again in the Round Table Conference (R.T.C.), the A.I.M.L. leadership reemphasized its demand of the separation of Sindh from Bombay and its formation as a full-fledged province of the Indian federation.

In March 1933, the British Government presented its own version of the constitutional proposals, based on the R.T.C. deliberations, before the joint select committee of both houses of the British Parliament. Subsequently, in December 1934, the British Parliament passed a bill, which was promulgated as the Government of India Act 1935. In the 1935 Indian act, Sindh was declared as a province of British India and in 1936, it emerged as one of the federating units of British India.

In the light of above argument, one can safely conclude that after nine decades' tireless efforts, Sindh finally succeeded in its struggle of regaining political identity with the unequivocal support of the A.I.M.L leadership.

In response to A.I.M.L's unshattered support for Sindh's struggle for the political identity, the Muslim majority province of Sindh firmly stood by the League's demand of carving out a separate state for the Indian Muslims. In this way, Sindh began playing its role in the struggle of attaining political identity for

Pakistan. Sindh's support for the cause of Pakistan was a rejoinder to Muslim League's uncompromising stand on the issue of provincial autonomy and its commitment to strive for the establishment of the loose federation.

In 1938, the Sindh Provincial Muslim League passed a resolution in favour of AIML's demand of bifurcating India into two separate states on the basis of religion. The resolution further recommended to frame the constitutional scheme in which Muslim majority provinces, Muslim Native states and areas inhabited by majority of Muslims, may attain full independence in the form of federation of their own with permission to any other Muslim state beyond the Indian frontiers to join the federation, and with such safeguards for non-Muslim minorities as may be conceded to the Muslim minorities in the non-Muslim Federation of India.⁷

Sindh supported the cause of Pakistan on the basis of league's commitments made in the Lahore resolution which promised a loose federal structure for the future state of Pakistan in which constituent units would be 'sovereign' and 'independent'.⁸ This commitment convinced the representatives of the Sindh legislative assembly to firmly stand by the Muslim league's demand of carving a state for the Indian Muslims. Consequently, in March 1943, the Sindh Legislature passed a resolution in favour of Pakistan. The resolution says that the Indian Muslims were 'entitled to the right as a single, separate nation, to have independent National States of their own, carved in the zones where they are in majority in the sub-continent.'⁹

All promises made by the Muslim League leadership during the freedom struggle, regarding the provincial autonomy, proved a sore betrayal for the Sindhi leadership after the creation of Pakistan. According to G. M. Syed:

A look at the past will show that the principles enunciated in Dr. Iqbal's presidential address to the All India Muslim League meeting in Allah bad in 1930, the Sindh Muslim League's Resolution of 1938, the 1940 Lahore Resolution and the Sindh Assembly Resolution of March 3, 1943, have all been abandoned. The independence and sovereignty promised to the states joining Pakistan have been denied.¹⁰

Soon after the independence, the province of Sindh was denied the fundamental right of power sharing in the Central Government. Not even a single member from Sindh had been inducted in the first federal cabinet of Pakistan.¹¹ After two months, the Sindh Muslim League Parliamentary Party strongly reacted on the central government's discriminatory attitude towards Sindh and demanded due share of Sindh in the federal cabinet.

Another incident, which reflects the imperiousness of the federal government, was its decision of the separation of Karachi from Sindh. The provincial government, the provincial legislature and the Sindh Muslim League bitterly reacted against federal government's decision but Sindh's voice fell on the deaf ear and Karachi was separated from Sindh. The Sindh Premier, Ayub Khuhro "warned that it would be very dangerous... such development would have adverse repercussions for the Provincial Government and the people there."¹²

The Sindh assembly, on 10th February 1948, unanimously passed a resolution against federal government's designs of separating Karachi from Sindh. The resolution recorded provincial assembly's apprehensions and alarmed that the contemplated move of the Pakistan Government to remove the City of Karachi from the control of the Sindh Administration and to place it under its own jurisdiction as a centrally administered area. This house, therefore, resolves that Karachi must not be handed over to the central administration at any cost, and further call upon the leader of the house and his cabinet colleagues to bring home to the Government of Pakistan that such step would not only cripple Sindh economically and politically, but would also constitute flagrant contravention of the Pakistan Resolution in Lahore in 1940, which emphasizes the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the autonomous units constituting Pakistan....¹³

Notwithstanding the Sindh Legislative Assembly, Sindh Muslim League Council also condemned Federal Government's move and appealed all its colleagues, members of the district and primary branches of the Muslim League and the representatives of Sindh in the Federal Assembly and "very well-wisher of Sindh and

Pakistan to do every thing in his power, to resist this unjust, impolitic and unwise move."¹⁴

Sindh strongly reacted against federal government's decision at mass level; Sindh *Hari* committee, representatives of the local bodies, journalists, lawyers, writers, teachers and students; registered their protest against the federal government.¹⁵ But these endeavours proved futile.

The Federal Government, instead of positively responding peoples' cry and honoring democratically elected institution's demand, hatched an in-house coup against the Sindh premier, Muhammad Ayub Khuhro, who was in vanguard of the movement. Two of the ministers of Khuhro government, Pir Illahi Bakhsh and Ghulam Ali Talpur were instigated by the establishment to rise against Khuhro. They leveled sixty-two allegations of corruption against the chief minister. Consequently; on 26 April 1948, Ayub Khuhro was dismissed on the charges of corruption, misconduct and mal-practices.

On 3rd May 1948, Pir Illahi Bakhsh¹⁶ was nominated as the premier of Sindh and on 22nd May 1948, the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan resolved that the "capital of Pakistan shall be located in Karachi, and that the executive and administrative authority inclusive of legislative powers shall be vested in, and exercised by the Federal Government."¹⁷

It was not just Sindh that was betrayed by the ruling elite of the Muslim league, but other provinces like N.W.F.P. and Bengal were also denied the promised rights of provincial autonomy and self-rule.

On 8th August, just few days before its emergence, the 'provisional government of Pakistan' advised the Governor General, Mountbatten to dismiss the elected government of North West frontier province on the assumption that the chief minister of the province-Khan Sahib, was intended to declare independent state of Pukhtunistan or Pathanistan. Considering the allegation just a pretext to get rid of pro-Congress ministry of the N.W.F. province, the British government turned down the request of the Pakistan Provisional Government. Subsequently, Khan Sahib denied the allegation of conspiring against the emerging state of Pakistan and submitted a "clear assurance to the Governor that as

long as he was chief minister, he would do nothing injurious to the Pakistan Constitution, and he had no intention of declaring an independent Pathanistan."¹⁸ Later on, when Pakistan came into being, the Governor General of Pakistan, Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah issued instruction to the governor of N.W.F.P., under Section 52(5) of 1935 Act, to dismiss the elected government of the province. Nonetheless, the chief minister had a clear majority in the provincial legislative.¹⁹

Notwithstanding numerical majority, the Bengalis were also denied due share in military and civilian bureaucracy. They 'had a bare 5 percent (share) in military elite...only about 30 percent in the civil bureaucratic elite...and 10 percent in the entrepreneurial class.'²⁰ Undoubtedly, this imbalance was inherited by the newly emerged state of Pakistan but it was also undeniable fact that the new government of Pakistan had no plans to eradicate that economic, political and social imbalances and disparities between the provinces and federation. Contrarily, they adopted the 'assimilations cultural policy'²¹ and tried to interpret Pakistani nationalism as the monolithic Muslim polity. In 1948, when Bengalis demanded that the Bengali language should be declared one of the state languages of Pakistan, our political elite, instead of recognizing and respecting their ethno-linguistic identity, declared them lesser Muslims and the agents of the enemies of Pakistan. Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah himself rejected the demand of declaring Bengali language as a state language of Pakistan. He maintained:

Let me make it very clear to you that the State Language of Pakistan is going to be Urdu and no other language. Any one who tries to mislead you is really the enemy of Pakistan. Without one State language, no nation can remain tied up solidly together and function.... Therefore, so far as the State Language is concerned, Pakistan's language shall be Urdu.²²

The first prime minister of Pakistan-Khan Liaquat Ali Khan also rejected the demand of declaring Bengali as one of the State languages of Pakistan. He wanted to have just one State language because he had a deep desire "to knit the country into a single homogenous unit." Comparing the credentials of both languages-

Urdu and Bengali-he maintained that Urdu qualified to be adopted as the sole State language of Pakistan because it was the language of Muslims. However, Bengali could not be declared state language of Pakistan because it had close proximity to Hindu culture and history.²³

The above argument adequately reveals that our founding fathers conveniently backed out their pre-partition commitments of recognizing the cultural plurality of Pakistan and establishing the loose federation instead, they began to define Pakistani nationhood in monolithic paradigms. The denial of due recognition to ethno-linguistic identities, led the Pakistani polity to a severe political and constitutional crisis. That crisis culminated into the political and constitutional stalemate when our leadership failed to device any workable mechanism of political consultation, consensus and cooperation between the federating units and federation. Contrary to that, they tried to resolve the prevailing political and constitutional problems through administrative imperiousness and tried to create a nation of divergent socio-cultural and political identities by assimilating them, against their will, into a monolithic Pakistani identity.

POLITICAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL STALEMATE

Unwillingness, on the part of political leadership of Pakistan, to fulfill the promises of granting autonomy and self-rule to the federating units and reluctance to adopt the democratic norms of majority rule; led Pakistan to the perpetual political and constitutional stalemate. The first constituent assembly of Pakistan, failed in its task of framing the constitution because; the Punjabi-Muhajir ruling elite did not want to devolve power to the people of Pakistan, in general and to the federating units, in particular. Instead, their endeavours were aimed at establishing a state of emigrants who left their "native homes to re-settle in a new land they wished to govern as a nation-state."²⁴ Consequently, they did not sincerely strive to frame the constitution of Pakistan in pursuance of the commitments made by the Muslim League leadership during the freedom movement; contrary to that, they willfully prolonged the enactment of the vice-regal Indian Act of

1935, which provided them absolute authority to run the affairs of Pakistan as the colonial masters.

In 1950, interim report of the basic principles committee, nominated by the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, came to light that predetermined Urdu as the only national language of Pakistan beside that, it recommended a highly centralized state structure for the future constitution of Pakistan. The interim report was severely criticized by the people and intelligentsia because of its centripetal tendencies. Keeping in view, the resemblance of the interim report with the 1935 Indian Act, one of the members of the Constituent Assembly maintained that had Mr. Churchill been the leader of the house, he would have come up with similar constitutional proposals.²⁵ The interim report suggested the establishing of Federal form of Government with bicameral legislature-house of units and house of people. In the upper house-the house of units, the provinces were allotted equal seats however, the lower house-the house of people, was to be elected on the basis of population. Both houses were given equal powers. As far as the centre provinces relations were concerned, the report failed to respond the popular demand of provincial autonomy contrary, the "dictatorial arm of the centre" was "left free to encroach on the provincial sphere..." and the heads of provinces were to be appointed by the Centre instead of being elected by the concerned provinces.²⁶

In response to the recommendations of interim report, a provincial convention was held in capital of East Bengal, on 4 and 5 November 1950, in which it was demanded to establish two autonomous units-eastern and western, and one central parliament, "on the basis of population with powers to deal with foreign affairs, currency and deface only."²⁷

The print media critically discussed and analyzed the first interim report of the basic principles committee. A well known progressive newspaper of the time '*Pakistan Times*' portrayed the report as a sheer "rejection of the federal principles" and the proponent of the "highly centralized state structure" in which "the residual powers" had been vested in the centre instead of provinces. The newspaper also condemned the recommendations made by the report to confer executive authority with the president instead of the prime minister.²⁸

The majority province-East Bengal-also severally criticized the report by depicting it 'anti Bengali',²⁹ and the instrumental 'to create unitary form of government'.³⁰

Taking strong notice of the criticism on the report, Liaquat Ali Khan, put the report in abeyance and invited public to propose amendments in the report.

The second draft of the report was presented in the assembly on 22nd December 1952, in which the principle of parity was introduced between the eastern and western wings of the country. According to parity formula the eastern wing got 60 seats in the house of units and 200 seats in the house of people. That means the East Bengal was allocated 260 seats in both houses as compare to 117 [90, house of people + 27, house of units]; 38 [30, house of people + 8, house of units]; 31 [25, house of people + 6, house of units] and 14 [(5; Baloch states, house of people + 5; Balouchistan, house of units) + (2; Baloch states, house of people + 2; Balouchistan, house of units)] seats to Punjab, Sindh, NWFP and Balouchistan respectively.³¹ It also proposed bicameral legislature and made the council of ministers responsible to the house of people.

Like the first draft of the interim report, the second draft also met with same degree of criticism particularly because of its parity formula. The people could not see any logic in suggesting one federating unit—East Bengal at par with the other five units of the western wing. However, according to the established principle of federation; federal units, large or small, should be allotted equal representation in the upper house. The West Pakistan politicians and intelligentsia strongly condemned parity proposal, considering it against the established norms of the federalism. Politicians and intelligentsia from the Punjab province critically opposed parity formula and depicted it synonymous with the acceptance of the permanent hegemony of "East Bengal over all other provinces of Pakistan." Punjab, Sindh and Balouchistan also reacted against the parity formula. Shaikh Abdul Majid Sindhi, a prominent political figure of Sindh also unequivocally condemned parity and suggested to replace it "by equality of representation to the various units in the House of Units and representation on population basis in the House of People."³² Nwab Akbar Bugti and Yahya Bakhtiar,

from Balouchistan, also criticized parity formula. Unfortunately, mutual concern of western provinces regarding the establishment of true federal system could not gather momentum because of the two reasons firstly, the genuine federal scheme did not suit to the vested interests of the ruling elite secondly, they were considering smaller provinces of West Pakistan as the potential allies of Bengal against the Punjabi-Muhajir nexus.

In 1954, the ruling Muslim league faced a terrible defeat in provincial assembly election in Bengal. This situation posed a serious threat to the ruling elite because their majority in the constituent assembly turned into minority. In these changed circumstances, it became just impossible for the Muslim league leadership to get the constitution, of their choice, passed from the constituent assembly. Consequently, they abandoned the efforts of political dialogue and embarked on the task of imposing constitutional proposals through the political manipulations. Consequently, they coined a new constitutional scheme aimed at perpetuating Punjabi-Muhajir hegemony on the political system of Pakistan. The One Unit Scheme was the manifestation of that mind set which was devised to achieve a dual task of liquidating Bengali majority, and to bulwarking against the Bengali, Sindhi, Pashtoon and Baloch axis in power politics of Pakistan.

ONE UNIT SCHEME

On 23rd July 1954, meeting of the sub-committee; appointed by the Muslim league assembly party, was held to resolve the constitutional problems of Pakistan. In the meeting, Malik Feroz Khan Noon, chief minister of Punjab, presented the One Unit Scheme to be considered as the basis of the future constitution of Pakistan. Elaborating the theme of his scheme he proposed to amalgamate the provinces and states of western wing of Pakistan into a single politico-administrative unit, called One Unit.

Abdus Sattar Pirzado, chief minister of Sindh stalwartly opposed the idea which was unequivocally supported by the non-Punjabi members of the sub-committee including Khwaja Nazimmuddin, Noorul Amin, representatives of Bengal and Khan Abdul Qayoom Khan, representative of the N.W.F. province.³³

Later on, the meeting of Muslim league assembly party was held on September 2, 1954, in which Malik Feroz Khan Noon reemphasized on suggestion of adopting the one unit scheme as the basic principle the future constitution of Pakistan. Once again, his proposal was strongly opposed by the members of sub-committee. Subsequently, when the sub-committee put the matter to the vote, it was defeated with the ratio of 30:2.³⁴

In the next meeting of the sub-committee, Feroz Khan Noon came up with a new idea of merging the political and administrative units of West Pakistan, called zonal federation scheme. Like one unit scheme, the non-Punjabi members of the sub-committee also rejected the idea of zonal federation scheme

When the proponents of unification of West Pakistan failed to achieve their goals through political means, they embarked on the task of exploiting state power to mend the opponents of the one unit scheme. Governor general, Ghulam Muhammad threatened some of the members of the constituent assembly from the smaller provinces that if they did not support West Pakistan merger scheme, he would fix them through the notorious draconian law—PRODA (Public and Representative Office Disqualification Act).

In order to protect the legislatures from the highhandedness of the Governor General, the legislative assembly curtailed the powers of the governor general and reduced him to a ceremonial head of state by amending the Government of India act 1935.

During the second half of 1954, the then chief minister of Punjab, Mian Mumtaz Daultana, in favour of the one unit scheme, released two secret documents. The typed version of these documents was circulated among the prominent political figures of Pakistan. The secret documents have interpreted Pakistani nationhood as a monolithic religious identity. 'Islam and nationalism, faith and patriotism' have been depicted as the inseparable identities and the Muslims are portrayed as 'an indissoluble entity'.³⁵

The depth study of these documents reveals a stern conspiracy of the ruling elite against the smaller provinces of West Pakistan, and the majority province of east Bengal. In order to play dominant role in the emerging course of constitutional democracy, they wanted to generate a vibrant minority by assimilating the

provinces and princely states of West Pakistan into a single political and administrative identity for the purpose to sabotage numerical majority of East Bengal. That's why, they did not want to resolve the prevailing constitutional crises by creating consensus and cooperation among the federating units but they were intended to impose the federal scheme of their choice in which "West Pakistan could speak as one entity."³⁶ On the one hand, they wanted to force smaller provinces of West Pakistan to unite as a single entity against their will and, on the other hand, they compelled East Bengal to abandon its basic political right of making alliances with the smaller provinces of West Pakistan. The main purpose of the scheme was to compel East Bengal to surrender its numerical majority by accepting parity formula. All these efforts were intended to perpetuate Punjabi-Muhajir domination in the power politics of Pakistan.

Furthermore, the author of the documents has emphasizes the need of initiating the vigorous political campaign in support of the one unit scheme. In first step, he wants to select a group of politicians in each province and to assign them the task of propagating and projecting the idea of one unit. In the second stage, he desires to embark on the task of launching propaganda campaign "to win the adherents" of the one unit scheme besides that, he strongly recommends to handle the "disrupters" with "sufficient firmness."

The author has suggested initiating the following two steps to materialize the idea of one unit. Firstly, he seeks urgent and unambiguous support of the central government for the cause of one unit, besides; he desires that the central government should check the anti-one unit activities of Bengalis. Secondly, he wants to take concrete effort to eliminate the opponents of one unit scheme in the smaller provinces. Considering that "the province of Sindh "hold kernel", he strongly recommended to get rid of Abdus Sattar Pirzado, the chief minister of Sindh. He further advises that Pirzado "must be replaced by a person who has character and authority to prepare the ground for Sind (h)'s acceptance of one unit."

For the North West frontier province, another arrogant opponent of one unit, the author has suggested to extend "full

unreserved support" to Sardar Rashid Khan for the purpose to replace incumbent chief minister, Khan Abdul Qayoom Khan.³⁷

In pursuance of advice of the author, the Sardar Abdu Rashid Khan replaced the chief minister of NWFP, Khan Abdul Qayoom and Muhammad Ayub Khuhro replaced Abdus Sattar Pirzado as the chief minister of Sindh. Later on, Rashid Khan refused to support the one unit scheme considering it against the will of the people of his province. He also suggested the political elites of Pakistan that "the wishes of the people and their representatives should be ascertained before taking final decision."³⁸ Contrary to Rashid Khan's refusal, Ayub Khuhro supported the one unit scheme knowing the fact that the people of his province were overwhelmingly against the idea of one unit.

Like other provinces, Sindh also very strongly reacted against the unification scheme at all levels. The chief minister of Sindh, Abdus Sattar Pirzado very courageously rose against the one-unit scheme. He "had not only himself opposed the scheme publicly but had also obtained the signature of 74 out of 110 members of the Assembly in support of his stand."³⁹ Pirzado was punished for the crime of not obliging to the ruling elite of Pakistan. He was removed and replaced by Ayub Khuhro who "had been disqualified for seven years under P.R.O.D.A. [Public Representative Office (Disqualification) Act]." Khuhro "was rehabilitated and made the chief minister of Sindh in spite of the fact that he was not even a member of the Sindh Assembly."⁴⁰

Following the instruction of the author of secret documents, Khuhro handled the "disrupters" of the one unit scheme in Sindh with "sufficient firmness". He put Abdus Sattar Pirzado, G. M. Syed, Pir Illahi Bakhsh, Kazi Fazlullah, and many more anti-one unit politicians behind bars. He was so harsh in handling the opponents of one unit that did not even spare the speaker of provincial assembly of Sindh and detained him on the charge of intriguing to homicide the members of the Sindh cabinet.

Anti-one unit newspaper *Al-Wahid* was banned for one year and its editor Shaikh Abdul Majid Sindhi was sent to prison.

As the reaction to Khuhro's highhandedness Sindh Day was observed all over the Sindh. The students of Sindh Madarsah organized a protest meeting that followed by a procession in which

ladies and children also participated. The participants of the rally appeared from the Aaram Bagh on camel carts holding black flags, wearing black bands and shouting slogans against the atrocities of the Khuhro government. The schools and colleges of Karachi and other cities of Sindh remained close. In Mirpur Khas twenty thousand students took out a procession chanting slogans: One unit *Murdahbad* (down with one unit), Ayub Khuhro *Murdahbad* (down with Ayub Khuhro). Similar protest meetings and processions were also held in Nawabshah and Kandiaro. The Khuhro government used executive authority against these processions consequently, several students had been arrested.

Z. A. Bhutto, who was a prominent lawyer during those days, strongly condemned Khuhro government's atrocities against the people of Sindh and denounced the one unit scheme. Signifying the role of Sindh in the creation of Pakistan, the former demanded equal share for Sindh in the federal structure of Pakistan. In a press statement he maintained: "Sindh played a valiant part in the creation of a state in which she expected to be an equal partner of all component units. Sindh still stands for what equitable distribution of political power between all the provinces and merely between the two major units." Tracing the roots of political independence of Sindh deep into the ancient history of Indus civilisation, he said:

Relentless efforts are being made to write the last chapter of Sind (h)'s history by those who erroneously think that the ancient land of Moenjodaro came into existence only when the British deemed it prudent to cut up the subcontinent into small areas for administrative purposes. Thus the battle of Miani is a figment of our imagination. It is most painful to have baseless accusations hurled at us merely because we are striving to preserve all that is dear and sacred to us. It really was a question of vested interests; a feudal lord would not have become a Chief Minister in order to ram One Unit down our throats.⁴¹

Notwithstanding mass protests and intellectual urgings, Ayub Khuhro remained determined to create conducive atmosphere for the implementation of one unit through the political

manipulation and by manifesting of the brutal force against the politicians and people of his own province. On December 11, 1954 Sindh Assembly passed a resolution in favor of the one unit scheme. One of the politicians of that time portraying the chaotic and tyrannical political situation of the capital of Sindh has maintained: "Hyderabad was converted into a military camp to decide a purely constitutional issue. The unification proposal has been passed with the aid of province-wide intimidations, coercion, repression and suppression of public opinion."⁴²

Sindh was the last province that jumped on the one unit bandwagon. Before Sindh, all the provinces and states of West Pakistan had, willingly or under duress, accepted the one unit scheme.

On December 17, the Governor General issued an Executive Order of establishing a council for the administration of the province of West Pakistan. The council presented its report in support of the one unit scheme. Subsequently, the Governor General issued ordinance to establish the province of West Pakistan and appointed Mushtaq Ahmed Gurmani and Dr. Khan Sahib as the Governor and Chief Minister respectively of the new province. But the ordinance remained suspended in pursuance of the federal court's pronouncement that the Governor General had no power to amalgamate the provinces. Hence, the scheme remained dormant until the new constituent assembly came into being.

As soon as the second assembly began its work, the one unit bill was tabled and the house approved it on September 30, 1955. During the discussion very strong voices were heard in the house against the bill. A prominent politician from Punjab, Mian Muhammad Iftkharuddin strongly condemned the move by saying that the main purpose of the bill was to prevent smaller provinces of West Pakistan to join hands with Bengal against Punjab. Hence, according to him, the bill was not aimed at unification of the various provinces of West Pakistan but its seminal purpose was to "perpetuate certain groups in power."⁴³ Hussain Shahid Suhewardy, earlier he was the proponent of the one unit scheme but later on he changed his mind because of strong public opinion against the scheme, also bitterly criticized the bill. During the

discussion in the house he maintained that he was opposing the move because "it lacked representative character". Pointing figure at Ayub Khuhro's atrocities in Sindh, he advised the ruling elite to seek much of the support of people for the move not from the members of the legislative assembly "who have either been hoodwinking, cajoled or threatened into voting in a particular manner."⁴⁴

Finally the bill was endorsed by the Constituent Assembly on September 30, 1955, with 43 votes in favor and 13 against. The Governor General signed the bill on October 5, 1955 and it came into effect on the same date. Consequently, the provinces of Sindh, Punjab, N.W.F.P.; chief commissioner's province of Balouchistan and Balouchistan State Union; Karachi and the States of Khairpur and Bahawalpur were merged into a unified administrative unit (One Unit) called West Pakistan Province.

The unfolding events of the post-one-unit era adequately reveal that the unification scheme could not meet its objective of national solidarity, economic development and political stability. The dismal performance of the West Pakistan administration, even forced the people like Ayub Khuhro to publicly criticize the functioning of the West Pakistan government. Blaming the political elite of Pakistan for betraying the smaller provinces he maintained, "many attractive promises were made with the smaller provinces with regard to the economic stability and development of the country.... But all the hopes and promises proved believed nothing of the kind has been done."⁴⁵

To sum up, the one-unit scheme was an atrocious betrayal of the commitments made by the founding fathers of Pakistan with regard to the 'independent' and 'sovereign' status of the constituent units of Pakistan. By imposing one-unit, political identities of the provinces had been defaced without realizing the fact that in fact, these provinces had bestowed political identity to Pakistan in 1947 by casting their votes in favour of Pakistan scheme.

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2. G. Allana, *Pakistan Movement: Historic Documents*, (Karachi: Paradise Publishers, 1968), p. 60
3. Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Sir Muhammad Shafi took diverging stances on the question, whether the Muslim League should cooperate or boycott the Simon Commission deliberation. This situation led to a schism in the A.I.M.L. A group of leaguers who followed Mr. Jinnah's line, branded as Jinnah League. On the other hand, a faction of leaguers who stood by Mr. Shafi identified as Shafi League. As a result, two separate annual sessions were organized in December 1927, by Jinnah and Shafi leagues in Calcutta and Lahore respectively.
4. G. Allana, op. cit., p.67
5. M. H. Saiyid, *Muhammad Ali Jinnah: A Political Study*, (Karachi: Elite Publishers, 1970), p.117
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7. Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada, *Evolution of Pakistan*, (Lahore: All Pakistan Legal Decisions, 1963), appeared in Sikandar Hayat, Shandana Zahid, (eds.) *Reader: Genesis of Pakistan Movement*, Vol. 2, (Islamabad: Allama Iqbal Open University), pp. 48-49
8. Khalid. B. Sayeed, *Pakistan: The Formative Phase*, op. cit., p. 113
9. Ibid., pp. 115-116 on the authority of G. M. Syed *Struggle for New Sind*, Karachi: 149, pp. 93-94
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