

A Proposal for Peace in South Asia

When Pakistan and India were granted independence, they both joined in the Colombo Pact which now seems to be a forgotten document. This pact was in line with the integrative philosophy of Sri Aurobindo and still continues in effect in the outlined “World University” of New Delhi.

The rejection of the teachings of Oswald Spangler and Arnold Toynbee by both Pakistan and the United States is due largely to the unconscious heritage of both lands of the Aristotelian-Manichean approach, which envisions a dualistic morality. While this is well known and has been broadly criticized it still remains the matrix for most outlooks from these two countries. But the United States accepts a political and some economic determinism, and Pakistan a religious determinism. Disputes with India on any analytical basis lead nowhere but to the common and vicious practice of conclusions without premises; or if premises are advocated, departures therefrom to satisfy the egocentrism of Nations, including India. It ought to be evident from the start that there must be a different approach or series of approaches.

The immediate scaffolding is a sort of molding and melding of the philosophies of Sufism and the Pancha Tantra. As neither of them is seriously studied in the United States, we must go immediately into practical applications therefrom, which, when studied, look like much of accepted practices of the western world of today.

It ought to be obvious that making Kashmir into an Alsace-Lorraine might readily lead to a series of disturbances, as it already has. And while even a cursory glance would show much more resemblance to Switzerland, the domination of channels of communication by the press, radio-TV, and State Department all continue the Aristotelian-Manichean matrix, which do not and have not produced satisfactory solutions. We shall therefore return to the approach of the Colombo Pact and the unfolding of the Sufi-Pancha Tantra teachings:

Water Problems: In both the East and West, the headwaters of the rivers, or the channels of rivers, which reach Pakistan, flow through now Indian-occupied territory. The problems are quite different but in the West they are approached with emotion and feeling and in the East tend to be avoided.

Many people in Pakistan believe it would have been economically better (two interpretations of this phrase) to exchange Bengal for Kashmir. This would have enabled both lands to develop along the lines advocated by Stuart Chase and others, and these developments would have followed ecological principles. But they would have immediately run into snags, in that the peoples of Kashmir—and there are a lot of them in a relatively small territory—would have been given no

consideration; and the Bengalis might have ideas of their own.

When we come to actualities (the term “reality” seems ambiguous today), we find much fear in West Pakistan that India controls the waters which flow into the Punjab and south, and that by so controlling they could affect the whole future of West Pakistan.

There is a need for some amicable settlement of the Punjab waters. This could, on paper, best be done through the Colombo Pact or UN. But again, when it comes to actualities, in the United States, and especially here in California, we find the personnel best fitted to deal with the proper control and distribution of these waters and already AID has sent out teams which have made surveys. The filing away of these surveys has increased the publication of irresponsible editorials, which only confuse issues.

Regarding the Brahmaputra-Ganges Delta, even if East Pakistan were to disappear there would be the same problems of floods and control thereof. Proper precautionary measures would save numerous organizations from soliciting funds after damage has been done. They would also facilitate the measuring of available acre-feet of water, and so promote feasible engineering, agricultural and even river-traffic problems.

Salinity: is one of the worst problems of both India and Pakistan. Often the same men (e.g. Warren Schoonover) have been sent out, but on different expeditions and projects to face what is essentially the same problem. There are at least four ostensible solutions to Salinity, none of which have been logically followed:

- a. Drainage
- b. Soil correction by chemical and other means
- c. Proper plant adaptation
- d. Use of Algae

There has been as yet no attempt to integrate all these and maybe it would not be necessary. Nor can it be held that even all together these would include all the methods necessary or known. While we here in California have actually solved salinity problems, and also sent out men to other countries (e.g. UAR) who have successfully dealt with them, this is not only a matter not of common knowledge but it is most difficult to diffuse.

Desert Problems: These have been successfully dealt with in California and high-power research is now going on in Arizona. Besides this Ohio State University, through our exchange system, has done some remarkable work at Ludhiana in the Indian side of the Punjab; and through research teams has developed a strain of xerophytic Maize in Rajputana, which requires little moisture and can stand up under higher temperatures. Our extremely analytical system of research often

prevents one department from knowing what others are doing, or devaluates some of the finest human efforts.

Protein and Oil Crops: Work on Olive and Avocado in California and Pecan in Texas shows that we can adopt these crops in South Asia to the betterment of human welfare without interfering with traditions. But the establishment of separate and separating institutions dealing with the same crops means unnecessary overhead and also slowness in the dissemination of information.

Soy Bean Failure in Pakistan: There is a tendency to over-evaluate UN agencies, especially those connected with Point 4 and the efforts to increase food supplies. When Pakistan wanted Soy Beans the agency determined that no one country should dominate the program. Seeds were sent for from all parts of the world. The group in charge waited until they could make one huge shipment, which was done. Out of sixty strains, only four were viable (i.e. seeds sprouted) and when it came to growing crops, a single strain remained.

This shows the folly of politically minded people dominating ecologists. There is an increased interest in the study of Ecology both in the United States and South Asia but any conclusions reached by scientists have few outlets due to political control of organizations, and so domination by vested interests. Any Horticulturists would know that strains, which do well in Manchuria or

Europe, would hardly fit into the temperature-moisture-soil complex of Pakistan. But the Ecology of West Pakistan is similar, more or less to that of S. W. United States from Texas to California inclusive; while that of East Pakistan resembles that of S. E. United States more than of any of the "advanced" countries.

Similar failures have occurred in Tree-planting under UN domination.

Food Supplies: There is need for more coordinated effort of US agencies, private and public, and in turn those with the agencies of countries involved, here Pakistan and India in particular. Division of the agricultural assets of the two lands and personnel thereof was about 90/10, India getting most of the available material and personnel. And today both alone and because of our university exchange program much progress has been made. The roadblock here is the domination of India by the "elder-statesmen" in the civil service, which cannot of course be corrected by any external efforts.

There is little knowledge of soil analysis and proper crop adaptation and unfortunately the work of Ford Foundation, while readily acceptable to the scientific tradition, has not made comparative impressions on the civil servants and press of the respective countries. Therefore there is definite need for an overall agency. This has been established but only on paper in Pakistan, and in fact in India, which is far ahead of Pakistan in theoretical organizations for the betterment of Agriculture, but both nations are on a par in their being dominated by civil servants with private non-scientific traditions.

Locusts: It is now known here that the military outbreak was delayed for some years by Locust swarms. The damage caused was considerable, and compelled stringent methods and measures in Pakistan only when the insects came close to Rawalpindi. No effort was made at international cooperation and indeed the press utilized this as a propaganda base from which to operate.

The Locust-havoc can be duplicated by other insects and even by epidemics unless the people are shocked, or otherwise moved into recognition of common problems.

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