

*continued from page 27*

Take the case of Iraq. The Anglo-American/French imposition of a "no-fly" zone over southern Iraq in August has accelerated the dismemberment of that state into three parts, a Kurdish north, a central Baghdad region, and a Shiite south. Because of a common denomination, Shiism, as well as diverse geographic and historical factors, a Shiite statelet carved out of southern Iraq would tend to fall under the control of neighboring Iran. This fact, in addition to Iranian ambitions toward other Arab Gulf sheikdoms, will tend to foster the condition for a new Iranian-Arab war.

A Kurdish statelet carved out of northern Iraq will tend to fall under the control of the increasingly ambitious Turkey. Control over oil-rich Iraqi Kurdistan was one of the promises made to the Turkish establishment to induce them to enter the war against Iraq. But the creation of an even nominally independent Kurdistan carved out of Iraq would also inflame the adjacent Kurdish regions in Iran, and in Turkey itself, where a near war between the Turkish army and Kurds is ongoing. For such reasons, the division of northern Iraq will tend to provoke an Iranian-Turkish war. Such a war is made more likely because the Turkish-allied former Soviet republic of Azerbaijan is laying claim to Iranian Azerbaijan.

In the Balkans, the war in former Yugoslavia is rapidly drawing in neighboring powers. If Serbia invades Kosovo as projected, Albania and then Turkey will join the war against Serbia, while Greece will side with Serbia.

In Central Asia, Anglo-American planners are attempting to pit Tajikistan, an Iranian-ethnic republic, against Uzbekistan, which is Turkic. The war could spread into neighboring Afghanistan, already in a civil war, and even into neighboring Chinese Turkestan, whose population is ethnically the same as the new Central Asian republics.

While provoking wars, the Anglo-Americans are hard at work in assembling regional alliances to administer the region on their behalf, most notably a Saudi-Israeli and Turkish-Israeli axis. As part of this effort, the Anglo-Americans are fostering a Camp David-style separate peace deal between Syria and Israel. Under earlier arrangements, Syria and Israel gobbled up Lebanon. Now, it appears, Jordan is set to be "Lebanonized." As far back as 1990, Pentagon planners began reconsideration of an old plan to overthrow the Hashemite dynasty of Jordan and put in its place a "Palestinian state," jointly administered by Israel and Syria. The August arrest of Jordanian parliamentarian Laith Shubeilat on U.S. orders has destabilized the country, especially given the fact that Shubeilat has been associated with a pro-Iraq policy. As Lyndon LaRouche has warned, an Israeli move to blow up the Islamic holy sites in Jerusalem can be expected. Such attempts have been made by Jewish zealots before, under the professed aim of clearing the way for constructing the Third Temple of Solomon. The ensuing riots would set the stage for broader religious warfare in the region.

## Will Afghanistan be partitioned?

by Ramtanu Maitra

Afghanistan may become one of the first major nations to become subject to the "Bernard Lewis plan." The country of 9 million has been subjected to war for 13 years, with millions killed, maimed, or forced to flee the country. Now, as press accounts predict starvation in Afghanistan this winter, the guerrilla and former communist leaders are squabbling for power along ethnic lines. The western powers, which sought to impose peace on the country through the United Nations, have stood by and watched as the country is pulled to pieces. The economic reconstruction of Afghanistan appears to be on no one's agenda.

On Oct. 26, the second phase of the Peshawar Accords, signed by all major Sunni Mujahideen groups, will come to an end, and the crucial third phase will begin, with the purpose of establishing a lasting Afghan government in Kabul. However, bloodbaths during the first two phases and hectic activities in recent days by the Mujahideen leaders, making forays into the neighboring countries, raise little hope for any constructive development during the third phase.

The Peshawar Accord, a dubious document, was signed by 10 Peshawar-based Mujahideen factions on April 19 in the wake of the collapse of the Najibullah government and takeover of Kabul by the Dostum-Massoud combine. The accord was signed following a prolonged meeting between Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and the Peshawar-based Mujahideen leaders.

But the situation following the collapse of the communist regime of Dr. Najibullah in April, has grown increasingly dangerous. Mujahideen leaders, particularly those who had taken shelter in Pakistan during the Soviet occupation (1980-88) and directed guerrilla activities from Peshawar, have turned their guns against each other and have sought help from outside of Afghanistan to seek power or remain in power.

Conflicts, some of historical origin, along ethnic lines, political ideologies, and religious sectarianism have come to the fore. There are distinct indications that the old Khalq and Parchami factions within the now-defunct Communist Party have become active and are adding to the ethnic divisions. Most of the Khalqis are Pushtuns ethnically, while the Parchamis are mostly non-Pushtuns. Now, even non-Mujahideen leaders, such as Rashid Dostum of the Gillam Jam militia, which had served the communist regime faithfully before pulling down the Najibullah government, are now

involved in efforts to carve out a piece of Afghanistan for their respective minority group.

### **Dostum's new friends**

Reports indicate that Rashid Dostum, a renegade Uzbek who has muscled into the interim government by allowing his ruthless militia to oust Najibullah and aligning his group with the Tajik Mujahideen leader Ahmed Shah Massoud, was in Turkey, Uzbekistan, and Pakistan in recent days, meeting high-level government officials. Dostum, an avowed enemy of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, the head of the Hezb-e-Islami group of Mujahideens, the most powerful of all Pushtun groups militarily, has announced that he would not let "his" Uzbek minority be dominated by any Pushtun from Kabul.

President Islam Karimov of Uzbekistan pointed out, following Dostum's visit, that the most important question before the Uzbeks today is to establish a durable peace in Afghanistan. He also noted that "a large number of Tajiks, Uzbeks, and Turkmens are living in Afghanistan with whom we have a blood relationship. . . . We cannot remain indifferent toward the fate of these people."

If the Uzbeks are eager to revive their historical past to justify intervention in Afghanistan's affairs, Tajiks are not far behind. The Jamaat-e-Islami Mujahideen commander, Ahmed Shah Massoud, a Tajik, has made it clear that Kabul cannot remain in control of the Pushtuns, by far the largest ethnic group in Afghanistan. Massoud, who earned his laurels during the Soviet occupation for keeping the Red Army on the run in the Panjshir Valley in northern Afghanistan, had coopted Rashid Dostum to form a powerful Uzbek-Tajik combine against the Pushtun Mujahideens in general, and against Hekmatyar in particular. Analysts in India and Pakistan seem to believe that the Tajiks and Uzbeks will help themselves to the better part of northern Afghanistan. However, the growing conflicts throughout Central Asia, which may pit the Tajiks against the Uzbeks in Tajikistan, may erode this solidarity, and Tajiks may try to find their own little haven somewhere in the north.

### **The other predators**

At the same time, there are indications that neither Saudi Arabia nor Iran is willing to give up its assets, built during the Soviet occupation and nurtured following the Soviet withdrawal in February 1989. Fights have broken out more than once in Kabul between the Shias belonging to the Iran-backed and Iran-financed Hezb-e-Wahadat, and the Sunnis belonging to Ittehad-e-Muslimeen, financed by the Saudis. The minority Shias, a vast number of whom took shelter in Iran when the Soviet tanks rolled into Kabul and have not returned since, have expressed fears that the Sunni-dominated Afghanistan will be anti-Shia, and Sunni leaders like Hekmatyar have done little to assuage their fears. It is evident that Iran is using these Shia refugees as pawns to help carve out

the western part of Afghanistan as an independent country.

The third part, which will consist of Pushtuns, will be the largest of three parts, with Kabul likely as its capital. However, the formation of such a truncated Afghanistan will spell disaster for Pakistan, and the old demands for a Greater Pushtunistan will soon be raised, rejecting the British-delineated Durand Line as the international boundary between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Over the last four decades, Pakistan could contain the campaign for a Greater Pushtunistan, because Afghanistan had remained in one piece and the Pushtun demands were muffled. Unless Pakistan helps to keep Afghanistan as a sovereign nation-state, it is almost certain that it will soon face armed, hostile Pushtuns on its western borders.

There is more than one reason why Pakistan will be facing such music, not the least of which is the involvement in Mujahideen affairs of the Pakistani government in Islamabad. During the Soviet occupation, the Pakistani government, to be on the right side of Washington and Riyadh, and to benefit financially and militarily, had allowed its North West Frontier Province (NWFP) to become the base for guerrilla operations by the Mujahideens against the Soviets. Such a policy led to the mass exodus of refugees from Afghanistan to Pakistan, a vast number of whom are now held hostage by Hekmatyar for his future power play, be it at the battlefield or at the ballot box. Pakistan has allowed its territory to be used freely by foreign intelligence agencies to run amok, under the guise of helping the Afghan refugees, and had used policies which are discriminatory to some Mujahideens.

During this period (1980-92), Pakistan had openly favored Hekmatyar, ostensibly for his group's strong firepower. Hekmatyar, as a result, took the lion's share of arms that came into Pakistan for distribution to the "freedom fighters." Some of these "freedom fighters," Hekmatyar for sure, had developed with the help of the Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) a wide network of heroin manufacturing and distributing. This new enterprise provided huge amounts of cash and arms to Hekmatyar and other Mujahideen leaders. The sums of money from heroin dealing have become so large that Hekmatyar recently boasted that he does not require any arms from Pakistan, and, in fact, can supply Pakistan with some.

Islamabad's decision to throw its lot in favor of Hekmatyar was not an independent one, and was made during Gen. Zia ul-Haq's martial law regime. General Zia, whose reign had gotten a fresh lease from Washington when the Soviets marched into Afghanistan, was making hay with the help of the United States and Saudi Arabia. It was widely known then that the CIA and Riyadh had believed that Hekmatyar, an Islamic fundamentalist of dubious vintage, would be able to grab power and put Washington and Riyadh in the driver's seat, close to the Soviet borders. However, his failure to gain ground quickly, and the collapse of the Soviet Union, imposed new political dynamics. Washington, now free from

the threats of the U.S.S.R., began to dump Islamic fundamentalists it had nurtured before. Hekmatyar was dropped. For Islamabad, however, the decision to drop Hekmatyar could not be taken so easily, and a large number of Pakistani policymakers can be expected to continue to play the Hekmatyar card, while singing a different tune in public.

However, there is little doubt that Hekmatyar has grown increasingly uneasy over the recent developments. He was recently met by Saudi security chief Prince Turki al-Faisal, and reports indicate that the Saudis have asked him to go along with the Kabul government and give up his belligerence. Hekmatyar told newsmen subsequently that he would be eliminated by some in Arab circles. For Islamabad, however, the elimination of Hekmatyar does not eliminate the impending danger over Greater Pushtunistan.

### **More trouble in store**

By allowing a large number of Afghan refugees to settle in northern Baluchistan, Pakistan has changed the demographic scene locally. Baluchis and Pushtuns have come to blows, and the Pushtuns are now demanding the northern part of Baluchistan to be incorporated within the NWFP. However, Islamabad is aware of the Baluch sensitivity. In the 1970s, Pakistan Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto used the military, under the command of Gen. Zia ul-Haq, who later hanged him, to quell what is known as the Free Baluchistan Movement. Although the movement is under control now, there are reports of growing uneasiness among the Baluchis, and the arrival of the chief of the Marri tribe from London will be watched carefully by Islamabad.

Finally, the negative impact of Pakistan's opportunistic use of Afghan refugees shows up in Sindh, the province which has been in a state of turmoil for about a decade. In 1983, President Zia, obsessed with retaining power and afraid that the hanged prime minister's ghost was going to unseat him, went after Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party in Sindh, where the PPP is the strongest party. The alliance that the military dictator forged at that time included secessionist Jiye Sindh people and the Mojahir Qaum Movement (MQM), a non-political grouping of those who had migrated from India prior to and following the partition of the subcontinent in 1947. The monster that General Zia had created then began to take full shape in the 1980s. Added to this were the Afghan refugees, trading heroin. Soon Sindh became an inferno where killings and kidnappings became the order of the day, and the place became flush with heroin money and Kalashnikov rifles.

The present government of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif had formed an alliance following the 1990 general elections with the MQM, to deny the PPP control of the Sindh government. The result was a disaster and when the anarchy reached a new peak, the Pakistani Army had to move in to get rid of criminal elements. The criminal elements, however, had become too strongly entrenched. It also gave the Army no

relief to discover that Islamabad was in contact with the fugitive MQM chief, Altaf Hussain, in London, when Army probes were turning up MQM terrorist cells and torture chambers.

In early October, the Army announced its intention to withdraw from Sindh, and the stage is now set for yet another civilian government. The MQM, the Army claims, has plans to turn the main city, Karachi, into an entrepot, and to separate from Sindh, like Hong Kong or Singapore. Meanwhile, from his London hideout, the MQM chief has warned that if the Army continues to suppress the MQM, Sindh will face the same situation that East Pakistan faced in 1971 before it became Bangladesh.

### **Playing with fire**

If Pakistan's Punjabi-dominated elite is accused of playing with fire, the same can be said about the Saudis and the Iranians. Their role in the Afghan turmoil has been highly destructive, and has been exacerbated by the formation of new Central Asian republics. Along with Turkey, both Iran and Saudi Arabia are deeply involved in promoting forces aligned with them in these republics.

In Tajikistan, for example, following the collapse of the pro-Russian government of Rahman Nabiyeu, more radical Islamic groups, such as the Hizb-e-Nuzhat-i-Islam, are making a bid for power. Based in southern Tajikistan, the Hizb-e-Nuzhat is financed by Iran and armed from Afghanistan. There were accusations made by former President Nabiyeu which indicate that Hekmatyar was involved in supplying arms to the Hizb-e-Nuzhat. In the coming days, Tajikistan will have to undergo a power struggle which will involve not only the Hizb-e-Nuzhat, but also Hizb-e-Communist, Hizb-e-Democrat, etc. Since Tajikistan is within the Community of Independent States, it is yet to be seen what role Moscow will play as the crisis deepens.

Iran is meanwhile in the process of consolidating its position in Central Asia. President Hashemi Rafsanjani, while inaugurating work on a railroad between Iran and Turkmenistan, declared that the railroad will provide a link between landlocked Central Asia and the "open seas through the border of Iran"—indicative of Iran's interest in the region. The collapse of the Nabiyeu government in Tajikistan has been hailed by Teheran Radio as the triumph of the "Muslim people of Tajikistan."

Six former Soviet republics—Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, and Kazakhstan—met with Iran, Turkey, and Pakistan, in Ashkabad, the capital of Turkmenistan, promising to reopen the old Silk Road. Rafsanjani's recent visit to Beijing is indicative that the Iran-China nexus, through the new Central Asian republics, is conceived in Teheran as the future security of Iran. It is likely that Iran, isolated in the region, will exert pressures on the Central Asian republics in order to ensure the success of such a security formulation.