

Pakistan Stretches the Koran To Fit Modern Requirements
By C. L. SULZBERGER Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.
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Finance Minister Holds Economic Justice Is 'Sine Qua Non of All Social Justice'

By C. L. SULZBERGER

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KARACHI, Pakistan, April 13—Pakistan is officially founded on the theory that it is a Moslem state, to be run "on Islamic principles," according to Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan. But in a political sense the Koran is being stretched to fit modern concepts and requirements.

Thus the Finance Minister, Ghulam Muhammed, who sometimes goes further in the direction of Socialist thought than Liaquat Ali, says: "Economic justice is the sine qua non of all social justice and is the very foundation of it * * *. No truly Islamic state can be feudal * * *. There is nothing in Islam against the acceptance of the principle of cooperative farming.

"Nationalism in the Western sense is repugnant to the spirit of Islam * * *. In the economic field exploitation in all forms and speculation in trade are forbidden. Wealth must not be allowed to concentrate in single hands."

This Government, led by the wise little Governor General, Khwaja Nazimuddin, a former Bengali Nawab, Liaquat Ali and Ghulam Muhammed, is in no way allowing theocratic principles to deter the accomplishment of needed social reform.

It is pushing an agrarian program designed to shrink large estates and share the land among more and more peasant proprietors. At the same time, it hopes to develop industries with national markets that can provide jobs for landless workers.

Zamindars Ended in East Bengal

The prevailing system in West Pakistan by which landlords—the "Zamindars," who can command labor from tenants—is being gradually terminated. Zamindars have already been legally abolished in East Bengal, making the cultivators directly responsible to the Government, which guarantees their land tenure as long as they pay taxes.

The more feudal West Pakistan provinces have enacted somewhat less drastic legislation. National policy demands reform and permits the provincial assemblies to enact it.

As Finance Minister Muhammed told this writer: "From the very beginning, despite our troubles we have had a three-point policy: to establish a democratic state; to benefit the workers and tillers of the soil by evolutionary reforms; to modernize agriculture and establish home industries."

He added: "We must end economic serfdom and reduce the hold of the rich over the poor, guarantee a minimum share to the crop-

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per. The Zamindars object. We ignore them."

Likewise, explaining the income tax, which in the highest brackets reaches 70 per cent, Mr. Muhammed said: "The rich howl about this, but we do not listen."

70% of Budget for Defense

One thing that handicaps Pakistan's efforts to improve her economy is the fact that 70 per cent of the national budget is spent on defense. Some people hold that if the British Commonwealth would collectively guarantee the territorial integrity of both Pakistan and India, this wasteful figure could be pared.

Pakistan has a five-year economic plan that will cost about \$250,000,000. It is hoped that foreign loans can be obtained to cover the dollar and sterling expenditure of it. The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development sent a mission here to study planned projects, and Pakistan expects to join the International Monetary Fund.

It is hoped that, as industries expand and the land is shared, the threat of communism, especially among penniless refugees, will vanish. One crying need is the building of more schools and the reduction of the vast illiteracy rate. Labor unions are legally free and have full strike rights, although some Cabinet members feel that they "mix too much in politics."

When the British devalued the pound, Pakistan decided not to alter the worth of the rupee, which irked India. It was argued here that the country was on the threshold of industrial development requiring large imports of machinery and capital goods. For this, a lower rupee would have meant higher prices and initial overcapitalization. The country has remained more than self-sufficient in food and general price indexes are falling.

The most critical current economic problem is India's trade boycott, which hurts both nations. It is widely hoped that the new minorities agreement may serve as a step in the direction of the re-opening of commercial relations.

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