

BOOK REVIEWS

Middle East Impasse : Sadat and Camp David by Mira Rahman, published by Ashif Rahman printed at BR-AC printers, Dacca, pages 172, price Tk.50/-

Middle East is the most volatile region in world politics. Four bloody wars have broken out within a quarter of century causing a massive loss of life and property. The people of that region were always deprived of the blessings of peace. The geopolitical situation of the region with its enormous resources has made it a theatre of superpower rivalry. The creation of Israel and the Arab-Israeli conflict are the main roots of the whole problem. The Arab-Israeli conflict has turned a civilized nation (the Palestinians) into refugees. But the tragedy is that no remarkable attempts were made to solve the long term dispute.

In 1977 late President Anwar Sadat of Egypt made an attempt to accomodate Israel and visited Jerusalem in quest for peace. It was only the start of the long run negotiation process. And after extensive efforts the Camp David Accords were signed among Egypt, Israel and the United States. But the pertinent questions are : why did Egypt under Sadat try to sign a separate agreement with Israel within the frame work of the Camp David Accords? What were the internal compulsions which forced Sadat to do that and why was the United States so much interested to play the role of an honest broker? Did the Camp David Accords bring

any substantial results/gain for Egypt or for the Arab World? What were the economic gains and loss of Egypt? And finally, will the Camp David Accord be able to break the impasse in the Middle East or has it complicated the whole political atmosphere in the region?

These questions are very vital to analyse the whole situation in the Middle East.

In her book Mrs. Mira Rahman has tried to answer some of these questions. The authoress has made a very detailed and comprehensive study of the Middle East problem. She did not concentrate her attention on the Camp David Accords only, dealt with the problem from its multidimensional aspects but raised many issues not related to it.

There are seven chapters in the book. In the first two chapters the authoress has given a resume on the geopolitical situation of the Middle East, its importance in world politics, a short description of some Arab states, super-power involvement upto the end of the sixties and their stance on detente against bipolarity.

In Chapter III the authoress has described how Nasser's death resulted in Anwar Sadat's coming to power and how technically he implemented his political manoeuvres. In this chapter development of Egypt's relations with both China and the United State is also shown.

In Chapter IV the authoress has returned to the Super Power rivalry in the region. It seems that she has overemphasised the topic and made it too detailed. She has given an overall view of the superpowers' policy

in the world in the seventies and did not confine to the Middle East only. The contents of Chapters I, II and IV could have been abridged to keep the reader's concentration on the relevant issue of the book.

Chapters V and VI, directly related to the title of the book, deal with the peace process initiated by Sadat, various reactions to the Camp David Accords and the subsequent developments. Here the authoress has identified the various aspects and shortcomings of both the framework for peace in the Middle East and the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel.

The adverse effects of Camp David on both Israel and Egypt needed further elaboration whereas the same have been barely touched upon. The economic gain accruing from the Camp David should have been dealt with in more detail.

In Chapter VI Mrs. Rahman has attempted to present reactions of different states to the Camp David Agreements. But in her treatment on Arab failure to react against Egypt unitedly she brings events like Iran-Iraq war, the attempt of seizure of Mecca by rebellious Muslims both of which occurred at much later dates than Camp David Accords were signed. Besides these there were many unmentioned factors which badly affected the Arab unity such as the superpower race in the region, American total support to Israel, Lebanese crisis, independent peace initiative of Saudi Arabia etc. A chronology of major internal events in Egypt given at the end of this Chapter without any comments and analysis is of little use.

In conclusion the authoress wanted to say many things at the same time but in the process failed to make the desired impact on the readers. Again we observe recapitulation of previous discussions, and the repetition of conclusions reached in other Chapters. In all its of verbosity and irrelevancy the authoress failed to concentrate on the main question, Why there is an impasse in the Middle East? Is Camp David an indirect output of that impasse or vice uersa? Another shortcoming of the book is that the Palestanian issue which is the root of all problems has remained obscured.

Some other flaws of the book are :-

- (a) Imprecise or incorrect indentification of doctrine or concept, such as "Rapid Development Force".
- (b) Inordinate and unwarranted reliance on a very few books, journals and newspapers as source materials.;
- (c) Unorthodox and improper reference and footnote work ; and lastly.
- (d) the entire work is very poorly edited requiring a lot of improvement.

The book is packed with various information and is written from a journalistic point of view. The various documents attached to the last chapter of the book are very essential and will help the readers to study the problem seriously. The cover designed by Quayyum Chowdhury is excellent and meaningful.

Golam Mostafa

Pakistan and America: Dependency Relations by Ataur Rahman, Young Asia Publications, New Delhi, 1982, 160 pages, Rs. 64/-.

Study of the relations between small and big powers always possesses a broad scientific and practical interest. It becomes more significant when question arises on Pakistan U.S. relations, because the character of Pak-U.S. relations, the nature of U.S. influence on Pakistan's policy choices and political options and specially the consequences of Pak-US alliance on Pakistan's past, present and future are the questions profusely discussed and are still being discussed in the academic and diplomatic circles. The recently published monograph *Pakistan and America: Dependency Relations* by Ataur Rahman, devoted to these questions, is a worthy contribution to foreign policy analysis.

In the introductory chapter of the book, the author, on the basis of critical analysis of some existing theories on the character of relations between small and big powers, commits a successful attempt to formulate a conceptual framework for his research. He analyses the "modernizations" theories, which argue, that economic and political debilities of developing countries result from their internal characteristics. Then he points out on "dependency theory" which

explains the distortions and deformities of the mentioned countries in terms of the various "constraints" arising from their dependent relations with the developed countries. Author criticizes it as an extremely "broad-gauged," 'economistic', and "simplistic" theory (P-5). Arguing that, the ways external forces operate are a complex process, which requires an analysis of "linkages" at various levels and phases of policy making of a developing country, "linkages" between domestic and international policies, between internal and external actors etc., author formulates his theory of "linkage politics". Stating the significance of "linkage politics", the author writes, that it will help to "stimulate more systematic enquiries into processes of policy making and include more explicitly for the flows and linkages through which external actors and organizations can enter and become integrated into national policy making process of a country" (pp 6-7). This theory has been implemented in a concrete case study i.e. Pakistan-U.S. relations.

In Chapter II of the book under review, author defines the goals and interests of both countries, which they follow in their mutual relations.

After world war II, the main objective of U.S. foreign policy was, to protect free world "from the threats" and "aggressions" of communism, whether it be of Russian or Chinese variety (pp 12-13). J.F. Dulles formulates the strategic U.S. task of the "Containment" of communism through a "ring of steel" to be built up around communist countries. Strategic

location of Pakistan on the door step of the Soviet Union and China was really attractive to U.S. military strategists, who have taken it as a "centrally positioned landing and launching site for aircraft and missiles aimed at either Russia or China" (p.13).

On the other hand, the perceived threat of India has been the main factor in Pakistan's relations with the United States. That is why, Pakistan set up following clear Indocentric goals in her allaince relationships with U.S.A. : "(a) guarantee against Indian aggesion; (b) military aid to establish parity with India and (c) pressure on India to resolve the Kashmir dispute" (p.14). From above analysis author finds out two divergent security goals of the two countries.

Explaining the fact that, in spite of two divergent security goals, Pak-US relations developed very rapidly, the author writes, "United States policy makers perceived that by establishing friendly relationships through military aid to Pakistan's military elite they could turn them in a pro-western direction" (p.16). This perception was partly (if not completely) correct. On the other side, there was an increasing pressure for the early consumption of relationships from Pakistan's civil and military bureaucratic elites, who began to assert their power after the death of it's two national leaders (Mr. M.A. Jinnah and Mr. L.A. Khan). For these reasons events in Pak-US relations were develop-very rapidly. In February 1954 President Eisenhower issued a statement announeing the Mutual Defence Assistance Agreement with Pakistan. Later, in September

Pakistan joined the Us-sponsored SEATO Pact and in 1955 CENTO. Thus in 1954-55 alliance between the two countries come to an existence, which opens Pakistan a way to major U.S. military and economic aid.

It may be noted, that the author does not grapple squarely with some of the important questions on this issue. Pakistan's military and bureaucratic elits were perceived as M.A Khan writes that "it was natural for the United States to be deeply interested in the welfare and safety of smaller powers in Asia"¹. But the facts were quite different. United States wanted to see India as an ally in their struggle against world communism. On the other side India wanted to free herself from the coils of Big Power diplomacy. Nehru clearly declared in 1952, "if there is a Cold war today, certainly we are neutral. . . . We will not join in this exhibition of mutual abuse"². Then US had no alternative but to develop alliance relationships with Pakistan. That is why Z.A. Bhutto later recognises that, "when displeasure with India brought United States closer to Pakistan we came to the hasty conclusion that it was our permanent, natural friend"³. If these points were discussed properly, author's attempt to examine interests, perception and attitude of both countries would be more fruitful.

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1. Khan, Mohammad Ayub, *Friends, Not Master*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1967) p—129.
 2. Quoted from *Ved Vati Chatursherni*, Indo—US Relations (New Delhi National Publishing House, 1980) p—68.
 3. Bhutto, Zulfikar Ali, *The Myth of Independence*; (London: Oxford University Press, 1969) p—159.

In his book, the researcher attempts to examine the nature and pattern of Pakistan's reliance on US trade, aid and investment and Pakistan's bargaining power.

After formation of Pak-US alliance, from 1955 to 1965 Pakistan received \$672 millions in direct transfer of defence materials and services and almost \$700 millions security supporting assistance. Through the fiscal year 1969 US economic aid to Pakistan achieved an amount of \$3.7 billions, which was fourth largest amount of American economic assistance to developing countries and 67% of all foreign aid committed to Pakistan during the period. United States had been Pakistan's most important trade partner. These facts and figures provided by the author characterize Pakistan's continuous dependence on US aid and trade.

Then the author draws attention on the establishment and development of aid and trade relations with the communist countries, specially with China and argues that these relations helped Pakistan to lessen its dependence on American trade. But this and other arguments of the author were not sufficiently convincing to prove that Pakistan's dependence on US aid and trade was just a "limited dependence".

Next (chapter IV) A. Rahman endeavours to examine Pakistan's strategy of socio-economic development in connection with US aid, its implication and consequences. From 1958 Pakistan experienced a rapid economic growth. The growth in real GNP averaged 3.9% per year over the period of 1950-68, it was 5.15% for 1960-68. Foreign aid was the major driving force

in Pakistan's aggregate success of the economy, with the industrial sector in forefront. The growth process resulted in wide regional economic disparities. Per capita real income in West Pakistan exceeded that of East Pakistan by 16.7% in 1948-49. However, the differences became 31.7% in 1960 and 60% in 1969-70. As the most important reason for East Pakistan's unequal share was, according to author, "its disproportionate underrepresentation in the central civil and military bureaucracies" (p-42). This was also a period of rigid social discrimination. From preceding discussion the researcher draws a perfect conclusion that inequity among groups, classes and regions leads to "polarization of regions and social groups" (p-57).

In this book, the author has given a deep analysis of the nature of US influence vis-a-vis Pakistan's internal policy making structure. From the very beginning of US aid some conditions effecting Pakistan's economic and security policies were accepted by her as part of overall aid relationships. Most of them were implemented for "effective and sensible" utilization of aid and were characterized as "strings" and "self help" measures. Explaining the causes of US influence the author writes, "the congruence of objectives of effective utilization of aid, the large size of the aid program formed the basis of U.S. influence on Pakistan's development policies" (p-61). But because of ambiguities and uncertainties of goals and interests Pak-US military relationships were the exceptional case, where Pakistan was on alert. Major decisions about her force levels, capabil-

ity and requirements were more in the hand of Pakistani policy makers.

Examining the characteristics of the internal structure of Pakistan's policy making process on the basis of a brief study of the policy making instruments (organs) of the state and the patterns of group interaction and influence during Ayub regime, the author indicates that the choice and formulation of major policies "were determined by a few key groups of whom the bureaucratic group enjoyed the decisional autonomy" (p-76). Then he gives the details of linkages with the public policy making and channels of communications of U.S. government actors and tries to convince that "intimate and mutual interactions between the bureaucratic actors and organizations of the two countries created a world into itself for the policy making process" (p-79).

Since the creation of Pakistan in 1947, the ineluctable dilemma facing the nation has been how to create a viable national identity out of diverse regional and linguistic loyalties. With the disintegration of Pakistan in 1971 and the emergence of Bangladesh as an independent state, this question become even more important, specially after the spurt of debilitating centrifugal forces in the mid-1970s. A comprehensive study of this vital question of Pakistan's historical development has been given in the last (Vi) chapter of the book. Here the author explains Pakistan's present crisis of unity, it's causes, most potent desintegrative forces and the role of external actors. A. Rahman analyses ethnic cleaveges and problems of regionalism in Pakistan in the process of

it's historical development, draws a special attention on post-1971 developments of events in Baluchistan and NWFP, where situation remains explosive.

Disparity in economic, political and socio-cultural spheres of life become the main reason of the current situation. In dealings with past regimes, the author provides factual informations to prove, that neither Ayub's "decade of development" nor Bhutto's era of so-called socialism could normalize it. Moreover situation from bad come to worse. A. Rahman sympathizes to present regime's minority policy, as it "seems to have realized the importance of a dialogue with leaders of the aggrieved regions. . . ." (p-109). But he is conscious about the limitations of this policy and suspicious about it's success. That is why he warns that "unless the ruling elites come to grips with the requirements of a genuine federation, they will not be able to check the drift towards "Balkanization" of Pakistan and to prevent it's further division". (p-109).

In the conclusion of the book, the author mainly summed up all conclusions already drawn by him at the end of each chapter. Successfully defending his won developed conceptual frame work, A. Rahman in conclusion convinces that, "national policy making in a developing country is a complex and mutually intercutting process of both internal and external forcesAny framework that ignores either of these internal and external variables is one-dimensional with a corresponding distortion of reality" (p-112).

A Rahman's book, as a whole is a valuable contribution to the study of Pakistan-US relations. It is of interest to those, concerned with the theoretical aspects of international relations and those, involved in the practical sphere of foreign policy.

A. K. M. Abdus Sabur