

# Moscow closes in on Zia's Pakistan

by Linda de Hoyos

In their largest military operation yet against Pakistan, Soviet-Afghan jets crossed the border from Afghanistan on Sept. 26 and bombed the market bazaar of the village of Tri, killing 80 people.

From a tactical standpoint, the raid was aimed at the Afghan refugees and dissidents heavily inhabiting that region of Pakistan, and was an attempt to cut off supply lines to Afghan rebels. Strategically, the raid was aimed at Pakistan itself.

Since the end of August, the Soviet Union has steadily increased its pressure on the regime of Zia ul-Haq. The Soviets not only want Zia to cease his resistance to the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan and the Karmal puppet-government. Moscow wants to bring Pakistan back under its own thumb. This is necessary if Moscow is to fulfill its designs for a rim of hegemony over Asia stretching from Iran into Bangladesh.

The most efficient way for Moscow to attain this goal is by inciting a war between Pakistan and India, given that it is widely believed that if India attacked Pakistan, the United States would not come to Pakistan's aid. The Indian government of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, however, is not willing to play the role of Soviet proxy in the region.

That is not stopping the Soviets from busily heightening Pakistani fears of an Indian military strike against Pakistan's nuclear complex, by putting out the demand, especially in the Moscow-linked press in India, that such action be taken. Even so, the Soviets lambasted Pakistan in the military daily *Red Star* on Oct. 2 for spreading rumors that "any day now" the Indian Armed Forces will launch a preemptive strike against Pakistan's nuclear capability. This is a "smokescreen," asserted *Red Star*, to cover up "dangerous U.S.-Pakistan military preparations. . . . The territory of Pakistan has for years served as an outpost for subversive actions carried out by U.S. special forces against India and Afghanistan."

Two weeks ago, at the Fifth Congress of Solidarity with Afro-Asian Nations, held in Tbilisi, the Soviets further condemned Pakistan for plotting with the United States to destroy India. The charge in turn sparked an outpouring in the Pakistani press against the "Soviet-India" axis against Pakistan. Then, on Sept. 28, the Soviet government daily *Izvestia*, citing an article in the Indian *Daily Express*, charged that

Pakistan might postpone its national elections, due to be held in March, in order to "aggravate a border situation" and "provoke a mini-war with India."

## Stoking the fires

The Soviets are also letting Zia know that if he is not prepared to accede to their demands, they have plenty of cards to play inside the country. The Soviets have assiduously courted Pakistan's ethnic leaders and encouraged their separatism. Last week, the leaders of three provinces—Sind, Northwest Frontier Province, and Baluchistan—met and declared that if Zia did not grant them autonomy, then they would launch an independence movement in Pakistan against the central government.

From Baluchistan, tribal leader Abdul Mengal declared at the same time that the Soviet presence in the area poses no problems for Pakistan and that Zia only talks of the Soviet threat in order to stay in power. On previous occasions, Mengal has stated that he would not hesitate to call in the Soviets in an armed struggle for Baluch independence.

In the Northwest Frontier Province, Pushtoon tribal leader Wali Khan, who also has some strings tied to London, last month traveled to Kabul for talks with the Karmal regime and the Soviets. The Soviet plan, according to some sources, is to join the southern half of Afghanistan and the Northwest Frontier Province into a new state to be called "Pushtoonistan."

In the Sind, the stronghold for the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy, anti-Zia leaders, especially those known to be closest to Moscow, are now outspoken in their demand for an independent Sind.

Other plots are being hatched. In London two weeks ago, a secret meeting was held at the Muslim Institute for Research and Planning attended by Muslims from Egypt, Algeria, Iran, and Sudan. Topic: The necessity for an "Iran-style revolution in Pakistan." The Islamicization of Pakistan carried out by Zia, they charged, is but a hoax to divert the masses' attention from the hated regime. The problem with Pakistan, stated one Islamic fundamentalist present, is that it has not rejected Western values. Pakistan continues to ignore the "universal character" of the Islamic Revolution; it continues to adhere to the concept of the nation-state.

The Muslim Institute for Research and Planning is a nest of up to 75 Islamic fundamentalist-terrorists with networks throughout the Islamic world. Its leader, Kalim Siddiqi, likes to view Islam through the prism of Soviet systems analysis. His articles are published regularly in the British Communist Party magazine and he frequently travels to the U.S.S.R. The Islamic Revolution he and his friends want to export to Pakistan bears the markings "Made in Moscow."

An Islamic revolution in Pakistan would have devastating effects on India, including the anti-nationalist radicalization of India's own large minority Muslim community. For New Delhi, it is precisely such Moscow games that call into question the Soviets' protests of friendship toward India.