

The Mujahid Revolt in Arakan

Background

1. The Akyab district of Arakan, the northern parts of which are now the scene of a Muslim rebellion, is even less well provided with communications than are most parts of Burma, and its inaccessibility and its remoteness from the centre of government are principal factors in making the rising possible. The district is separated from Burma proper by the hills of the Arakan Yoma, and west of this range a series of rivers, running roughly from north to south and divided from one another by parallel ranges of higher ground, split the district into several parts between which, as between the district as a whole and the rest of Burma, communication is difficult. On the west, the Naf river flows south to the sea, and in its lower reaches forms the frontier between Burma and East Pakistan.

2. The northern part of the Akyab district comprises two administrative areas, known as townships, namely, the Buthidaung township consisting of the upper part of the Mayu river valley and the adjacent hills, and the Maungdaw township consisting of the lower Naf valley with the coastal strip running south from its estuary. The two townships, now the scene of so much disorder, are separated by hills known as the Mayu range. Though most of the Buthidaung township consists of hills, the Maungdaw townships contains the flat, intensively cultivated land along the lower Naf, and this is one of the most fertile and densely populated parts of Burma. In both townships, the people depend on agriculture for their livelihood, and apart from minor village handicrafts, there is no industry.

3. Owing to the nature of the country, the easiest means of communication both within it and between it and other parts of Arakan is water-transport, either by coastal craft plying to the Naf estuary or by inland-water transport along the Naf and Mayu rivers. Roads are few and poor; railways do not exist. Formerly a light railway ran from the town of Maungdaw on the Naf to the town of Buthidaung on the Mayu, passing through two tunnels on the way; it was constructed by the Arakan Flotilla Company to link their services on the Naf with those on the Mayu and to provide an inland route by which the rice of Maungdaw might reach the rice-mills at Akyab, but it was later abandoned and developed into a metalled roadway. In general, land movement in Buthidaung and Maungdaw townships must be effected by bullock-cart track or by jungle-path. Thus the north of the Akyab district is essentially isolated.

4. The area necessarily has an intimate connexion with East Pakistan. The Naf river, which forms the boundary, serves like other river-frontiers rather to bring the inhabitants of the two parts together than to separate them, for it provides a means of transport common to both while the general conditions on the one side of the river closely resemble those on the other. The Naf has, indeed, no great antiquity as a frontier: the old Kingdom of Arakan which the Burmese suppressed in 1785 at one time extended over all the Chittagong district of East Pakistan. Ethnically and linguistically, Akyab and Chittagong districts present much the same mixture of peoples. Traffic across the frontier is considerable and long has been; and the troubles which today prevail on the border have had their parallel in the past. For years after the Burmese annexation in 1785, refugees from Arakan sought safety in Chittagong and used Chittagong as a base for trans-frontier raids against the Burmese; these troubles persisted almost up to the date of the first Anglo-Burmese War (1824-26) of which they were a major cause, for the remote and wild nature of the country made it impossible for the authorities on either side to exercise effective control. The transfer of Arakan to the East India Company in 1826, however, ended this prolonged state of undeclared war, and for well over a hundred years the frontier enjoyed peace, till the breakdown of British authority in 1942 and its final eclipse in 1947-48 reproduced the conditions of an earlier epoch.

5. The indigenous inhabitants of the Maungdaw-Buthidaung area are Arakanese, an offshoot of the main Burmese stock, and by religion they are Buddhists: Buddhists of the same racial origin are also found in not inconsiderable numbers in the Chittagong district, where in 1941 they numbered 80,105, or 4 per cent of the district's population. Intermingled with them are people of other stock, largely Muslims by religion and, to use an outmoded terminology, "Indian" in origin. The great pressure of population¹ in Bengal has led over the years to a steady movement southwards, with the result that the Chittagong district has become predominantly Indian-Muslim in character and has also become over-populated in relation to its resources; and there has naturally been an overspill into Northern Akyab. Particularly in the nineteenth century, when not only had the frontier been eliminated but also the extension of the Pax Britannica over India as a whole led to a rapid growth of population, this movement southwards developed and accelerated. In normal times, every year saw a large seasonal influx from Chittagong into Akyab district of coolies coming to work in the rice-fields: some went by sea direct to the port of Akyab, but many crossed the Naf river to Maungdaw and spread thence on foot. Naturally, some of them finally settled in the country, especially in the parts nearest their former homes, so that in 1917 the Settlement Officer

¹ The Bengali name for Chittagonian Buddhists is *Magh* (perhaps ultimately from *Magadha*, the name of an ancient kingdom in Behar from whose royal house the Kings of Arakan may have been descended). The term *Magh* is, however, sometimes applied in Bengal to Arakanese, and sometimes applied in Burma to all Chittagonians and not only to Chittagonian Buddhists.

reported that “Maungdaw township has been overrun by Chittagong immigrants. Buthidaung township is not far behind”. The opportunity which the area provided for immigration is shown by the circumstance that whereas in 1931 the Chittagong district had an average population of 699 to the square mile, the comparative figures were only 264 in Maungdaw and 115 in Buthidaung. As a result, by 1931, the last year for which details of population are available, Indian Muslims, nearly all originating in Chittagong, formed 57 per cent of the population of the Maungdaw township and 56 per cent of the population of Buthidaung.

6. There was intermarriage between the immigrants and Arakanese women, and as a rule the offspring of such marriages adopted the religion and ways of life of their Chittagong fathers, though usually regarding themselves at the same time as nationals of Burma. The Census reports describe these products of mixed marriage as “Arakanese Mohamedans”, but in Burmese they are referred to as *Yakhaing Kala* (Arakanese Indians); they prefer to call themselves *Rwangya*, a word of uncertain derivation². The 1931 Census report shows 48,320 of this community in Akyab district.

7. Thus the two townships came to be inhabited more by Muslims whose origins and to a great extent sympathies lay across the frontier than by Arakanese; and it is not surprising that the Arakanese should feel that they were being driven out of their own homeland. The fact that the yearly influx of Chittagonian labour undercut indigenous labour was an added source of grievance. Communal tension was unavoidable, and was intensified when the development of self-government in Burma from 1923 onwards, with its accompaniment of communal representation in the legislature, tended to emphasise the dissimilarities between communities. The tension found its expression in 1938, when Maungdaw and Buthidaung were involved in the anti-Muslim rioting which spread over Burma in that year.

8. The collapse of authority in 1942 at the time of the Japanese invasion gave an opportunity for this friction to express itself once more, and in April 1942 Akyab district was the scene of civil war, in which unknown numbers were slaughtered and many perished of starvation and exposure in attempting to find refuge elsewhere. The devastation caused by the military operations of the next three years caused a continued flight of population: where possible, Arakanese from the north fled southwards, and Muslims fled to Chittagong where refugee camps had to be provided for their accommodation. The general position was that the Japanese held the southern, mainly Buddhist, part of Akyab district, while the British managed to re-establish a hold on the northern part which was predominantly Muslim; and,

² Possibly from *rwam*, meaning “midway between”, and *kya*, meaning “in between”, so implying the occupant of an intermediate position, i.e. a half-caste.

perform, the Buddhist Arakanese in the south paid lip-service to the Japanese, while the Muslims of the north gave their services to the British.

9. The aid lent by the Muslims to the British cause is partly the explanation of the current disorders. In 1942, during the interim between the collapse of British administration and the re-establishment of control in the northern parts, local bodies of armed Muslims were formed for the protection of the community, such as the “police” organised by a “Central Peace Committee” in Maungdaw. In the autumn of 1942, members of these bodies were organised as part of a para-military formation known as “V Force”, and were trained, clothed, armed and paid by the British. The Muslim V Force was active for the remainder of the war in Arakan, and became a large and powerful – though ill-disciplined – intelligence and intruder agency, which, incidentally, used its intelligence duties as a means of smuggling textiles into Japanese-occupied territory, much to its own profit. The Muslims who constituted this Force had but lately been engaged in civil war with the Arakanese Buddhists; the Arakanese Buddhists now bore the complexion of being collaborators with the Japanese; and so to the communal bitterness which had been so strong in the mid-months of 1942 was added the conviction amongst the Muslims that whereas they themselves were standing loyally by the British, the traitorous Arakanese had deserted to the enemy. This attitude of mind intensified and made permanent the communal hostility which had lain below the surface for years and had erupted so violently in 1938 and 1942. The regular Indian troops, and particularly the Muslims among them, naturally became infected with the same point of view, and their behaviour when in 1945 the British finally advanced southwards added to their troubles. The formation of V Force also had the effect of providing the Muslims with a considerable store of arms which was by no means all given up when the war ended.

10. By the end of the war, non-Muslims had to a very great extent vanished from northern Akyab, and so behind the advancing forces the Muslims moved back into the empty spaces. The year 1945 thus saw the Muslims in effective occupation of the Maungdaw and Buthidaung areas, though many of them were in occupancy of houses and land which were the lawful property of Arakanese absentees. This conflict of interest over property added further fuel to the flames of communal discord.

11. Arakan as a whole failed to settle down after the termination of hostilities, and when the Nationalist agitation in Burma grew in intensity during 1946 and 1947 the situation in Arakan became increasingly uneasy. The prospect that Burma would become completely independent caused concern in the minds of non-Burmans everywhere, and in the case of Maungdaw and Buthidaung communal feeling was deepened by the memory of recent conflicts and by present disputes about property. The idea of incorporating the townships

into Pakistan appeared, and some of the local leaders interviewed Mr. Jinnah in 1947 with this in view, but they received no encouragement. Disorder grew, and as early as August 1947 a Burmese newspaper stated that there were widespread disturbances in the Maungdaw area where "Indian enemies" were trying to assassinate the local Burmese officials. In 1948 the troubles increased.

12. When Burma became independent in January 1948, the new Government had their hands full with troubles elsewhere: before the country could adjust itself to its new situation the Communist rebellion began, followed before long by the Karen rebellion. The Government had little time to spare for the troubles of so outlying and remote an area as north Arakan, and in any case lacked the resources in men to enforce authority there. It was stated in the press in June 1948 that the area was in reality unadministered: smuggling was carried on at will across the Naf, and foreigners entered and left freely; bands of "Indians", it was said, were setting up a parallel government, and as civil officers and police dared not enter the area, local Burmese or Arakanese morale was low and many were taking to flight. In their place, more foreigners were coming in.

Rebel Objectives

13. The rebels called themselves *mujahids*, or "soldiers of the holy war", but they are occasionally referred to as "Muslim *pyaukkyas*", i.e. Muslim guerrillas. Their avowed aim is the formation of a Muslim State in the two townships, and though it has not at all times been clear whether this State was to be associated with Burma or with Pakistan, it is obvious that, if formed, it must gravitate towards the latter.

14. Besides the politico-religious inspiration, however, the movement from an early date had a less honourable motive also. Like the Muslims of V Force, with whom, indeed, many of them are probably to be identified, the Muslim rebels have been consistent smugglers. The principal commodity in which they have dealt has been rice, which they carry across the Naf river from the fertile fields of Maungdaw to the deficit area of Chittagong. Boat-owners have been encouraged to transport rice also, and a regular customs-tariff has been levied: according to one account, Rs.15 had to be paid on each boat-load, on pain of confiscation. To a large extent, the rebellion seems to have degenerated into little more than a smuggling racket plus a fair amount of dacoity, from which the insurgent leaders made a very good profit.

15. Possibly owing to differences arising from these devious financial interests, the movement soon broke up into rival gangs. Some of the original leaders, whose names are given as Sultan Ahmed and Jaffar Hussein, seem to have taken up residence in Chittagong,

nominally to organise supplies with the aid of sympathisers in that district, but perhaps because they wish to enjoy their ill-gotten gains in comfort; other leaders thus came to the fore, and during 1951 "Major-General" Abdul Kassim and one Raschid were prominent as rivals for supremacy. By the end of 1951, however, agreement seems to have been reached between the leaders on both sides of the frontier, and some measure of co-operation was achieved in the field between the supporters of Kassim and of Raschid. Also sometimes mentioned as a leader of the rising is one Omar Meah, a former school-teacher who was active in the Maungdaw Peace Committee in 1942 and later did good service as a temporary civil servant in that area under the British military administration; but there is some doubt whether, though doubtless an ardent supporter of the principle of a Muslim State in northern Akyab, he has in fact approved violent measures.

16. Despite their more material interest, however, the various *mujahid* leaders have at all times maintained the claim that they sought to secure Muslim interests, and adherence to Pakistan has certainly been avowed by some of them as their aim. Thus in 1951 they gave orders that the Pakistan flag must be flown in all villages under their control, and in the course of collecting money and recruits Kassim informed the people that their support was needed on account of the Kashmir crisis: the area of northern Akyab must, he said, become a Muslim State so that its people could fight alongside Pakistan against India.

Military Operations

17. During 1948 the *mujahid* gangs, some clad in an attempt at uniform comprising black shorts, green berets, and a badge on the shirt showing the star and crescent, gained complete control over the northern part of the two townships, and by November they were ambushing traffic on the Maungdaw-Buthidaung road. They were also in strength in the Mayu valley, where they shot up rivercraft. Training received during the war in V Force no doubt stood them in good stead in these operations. In November, however, the Government were able to send troops and levies to the area: they found the rebels strong near Buthidaung, where they were well dug in and where they had thrown a boom across the Mayu. The troops failed to achieve anything in this sector, but were more successful around Maungdaw: there they cleared the Maungdaw-Buthidaung road and repelled rebel attacks on the hamlets of Keinchakata and Kanyindan, close to Maungdaw town; they also burnt 13 villages, including six mosques, and reported the deaths of 49 rebels. By the end of the month the Maungdaw-Buthidaung road was again cut, while the rebels ambushed one formation of troops which was wiped out with the loss of 75 rifles, 2 sub-machine guns and 70 boxes of ammunition; they also ambushed a naval launch on the Mayu, though it managed to escape. The troops reopened the road in January 1949, but traffic could move

only under escort; and though they claimed to have driven a number of rebel bands over the frontier, they had failed to take many prisoners or inflict many casualties, and the bands remained intact. Then in February 1949 the outbreak of the Karen revolt elsewhere led to the withdrawal of the 5th Burma Rifles, and the situation again deteriorated.

18. The raids of the insurgents were now carried further south: in July 1949 they attacked the village of Godusara, 10 miles south-east of Maungdaw, and in August held for a time the village of Alethangyaw, on the coast south of the Naf estuary. Again early in 1950 the rebel bands were astride the Maungdaw-Buthidaung road, and were once more raiding as far as Godusara; in April they drove the Government's forces from Bawli Bazaar, the principal village north of Maungdaw.

19. It does not appear that the numbers of the insurgents were over large. It is improbable that those in the field ever totalled more than a thousand; but, in the absence of effective security forces, they were able to deprive the administration of all control outside one or two main centres, and in 1951 the authorities seem to have abandoned all hope of regaining the country north of the Maungdaw-Buthidaung road and to have contented themselves with trying to prevent the rebels from raiding southwards. In July of that year the 3rd Burma Rifles, composed largely of Arakanese who were formerly enlisted as levies, were redeployed so as to provide additional posts south of Maungdaw and Buthidaung towns; and these measures seem to have prevented raiding southwards, though the rebels were still able to impede the Maungdaw-Buthidaung road, where on one occasion they tried to blow up the tunnel at the 8th mile. As against the efforts of the Government's forces to provide a line of defence, the rebels seem to have had a similar notion, for towards the end of 1951 villagers were being forced to construct military works at the Ngakyedauk Pass, controlling the war-time route from the Mayu to the Naf valley north of the Maungdaw-Buthidaung road. It was reported at this period that they had established a workshop in the Maungdaw township where four Pathans were repairing and even manufacturing .303 rifles.

20. During 1952 the general improvement in Burma showed its effect. The Burma Navy became active on the Naf and Mayu, and towards the end of the year land operations also developed. Hard-pressed, the rebel leaders quarrelled; Rashid surrendered, while Kassim, with only 150 men left, was driven into the far north of Akyab district and even, according to Burmese reports, across the border. For the moment at least the rebellion has collapsed.

Conduct of Government Forces

21. The chaotic conditions produced by the rebellion caused great hardship to the people of the district, most of whom desired nothing more than to be allowed to carry on their

cultivation in peace. Non-Muslims suffered severely at the hands of the rebels, and many had to flee to the towns of Maungdaw and Buthidaung, where in May 1950 the number of destitute was 2,624 and 1,604 respectively. The levies of men and money by the rebels and their ill-treatment of anyone so ill-advised as to refuse caused great hardship to the Muslims also; but unfortunately even more ill-feeling was caused amongst the Muslims by the conduct of the Government's forces. The 5th Burma Rifles, operating in the area at the end of 1948 and the beginning of 1949, were accused of grievously maltreating the people, many of whom fled to Chittagong where the Pakistan authorities established refugee camps for them. So strong was the feeling, that even Muslim leaders who supported the Government made a protest to the Prime Minister in March 1949. When the 5th Burma Rifles were withdrawn, the situation became worse, for they were replaced by "levies" recruited from the Buddhist Arakanese, many of whom probably had personal scores to settle, and such was their misbehaviour that in August 1949 the Commissioner, Arakan Division, demanded their withdrawal as they were only inflaming communal ill-feeling. The attitude of those irregulars was illustrated at Taung Bazaar in May 1950: the Township Officer of Buthidaung, the Inspector of Police, and the president of the local branch of the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (the Government's political organisation) accompanied the local levy commander to the village as a "peace mission", but when the Muslim elders complained of the misbehaviour of the levies, the commander drew his revolver and fired three rounds at the crowd, which dispersed in haste. Again, when at about the same time the local branches of the AFPFL elected some Muslim office-bearers in place of the former all-Buddhist committee the levies at Maungdaw stoned the house of the new president.

22. Exactions by the forces of free labour and free food were added irritation.

Political Moves

23. When in 1948 the Government appointed a Regional Autonomy Commission to consider claims for local self-government, Arakan was included in its terms of reference; the Commission visited Arakan and took evidence, but there the matter rested. Again in 1949 a new Commission was appointed to enquire into the causes of the insurrection and to consider the case for a partition of the Akyab district: but this Commission also seems never to have reported. Thus no serious attempt was made to solve the problem by peaceful means.

24. Not all the Muslims of the area supported the rebellion, and probably its measure of support tended to decrease rather than increase as time went on, owing to general disgust with the chaotic situation. Many of the *Rwangyas*, as distinct from the "Indian Muslims", remained loyal to the Burmese Government, and an Arakanese-Muslim Peace Mission was

formed in 1949 in the hope of persuading the rebels to lay down their arms, but it had little success. It was handicapped by the suspicion with which the Burmese authorities eyed it and which was illustrated by the arrest of six of its members when they visited Akyab town in October 1949. Despite this, the leading *Rwangyas* continued to protest their loyalty to the Government while still complaining of the misconduct of the forces.

25. The problem of ownership of property remained, however, as a cause of friction. A Land Distribution Committee formed with official sanction in Maungdaw and Buthidaung was composed exclusively of Buddhists, despite the largely Muslim character of the population, and this Committee tried to reinstate the original, Buddhist, owners of land and to oust the *de facto* occupants who were usually Muslims.

26. The ill-feeling between the communities was emphasised in March 1952 when the members of the Arakanese Independent Parliamentary Group, consisting of non-Muslims, held a press conference in Rangoon at which they spoke strongly about the need for firm action, both to repress the rising and to stop the unauthorised inflow of Pakistani nationals which, they said, was still going on. They affirmed that the *mujahid* rising was even more dangerous to the unity of Burma than was the Kuomintang trouble in the Shan States: unless the situation were cleared up, the Maungdaw and Buthidaung area would be finally lost to Burma. They suggested, too, that the rising had the general support of Muslims in Arakan. These statements brought a sharp retort from the Members of Parliament for Maungdaw and Buthidaung, who were *Rwangyas*. These stated that the Arakanese Independent Parliamentary Group had magnified the affair out of all proportion by comparing it with the Kuomintang incursion and, by misleading the people of Burma about the peaceful, law-abiding and loyal Muslims of north Akyab, most of whom were opposed to the *mujahids*, were trying to increase communal discord. The Muslims of north Akyab were, they insisted, the real sufferers; hundreds had been killed by the *mujahids* and thousands rendered homeless; the *Rwangyas*, they said, were as strongly opposed to infiltration from Pakistan as were the Arakanese, nor did such infiltration now occur. The Arakanese Independent Parliamentary Group also suggested that the Jamiyat-ul-Ulema in Arakan was chiefly responsible for the rising but this body, largely composed of *Rwangyas*, denies all sympathy with the rebels. The political counterpart of the militant *mujahids* appears rather to be an organisation calling itself the "Arakanese Muslim Conference", whose President is one Saleh Ahmad and its Secretary one Zahiruddin Ahmad, who in 1951 published an appeal to the Burmese Government under the title, "Stop Genocide of the Muslims who alone stand between Communism and Democracy in Arakan"; this appeal ascribed the troubles not to the insurgents but to the Arakanese, especially those enlisted in the Burmese Government's forces.

Relations with Pakistan

27. The situation necessarily reacted unfavourably on Burma's relations with Pakistan. The mass of Chittagonians had much sympathy for their fellow-Muslims across the border, with whom in many cases they had family connexions; and, in addition, an important economic factor was involved, for Chittagong urgently needed rice which, owing to the high price imposed by the Burma State Agricultural Marketing Board on exports, could be obtained cheaply only in defiance of the Burmese authorities, and which, owing to the low price paid by the Board to the actual producer, the cultivators were eager to sell illicitly.

28. There was much wrath in Chittagong about the misbehaviour of the Burmese Government's forces. By the end of March 1949 there were over 8,000 refugees in camps in Chittagong, and many more, to the total of perhaps 20,000, scattered about the district in a state of acute poverty; and their accounts of their sufferings at the hands of the Burmese no doubt lost nothing in the telling. Such was local sympathy for the Muslims of Akyab, that the rebel leaders had no difficulty in obtaining a good deal of encouragement and aid. The influx of refugees was an embarrassment for the Pakistani authorities, for not only had they to be accommodated and fed but also there was the danger of complications from their using Chittagong as a base for trans-frontier raids. In February 1949, therefore, orders were issued for the closing of the frontier against any further entry of refugees; but in practice the border could not be sealed, and it may be doubted whether the local officials made any serious effort to enforce the order.

29. The attitude of the Central and Provincial Governments of Pakistan in regard to the *mujahid* problem has at all times been strictly correct, but the district officials in Chittagong have evidently shared the feelings of the mass of people in their area, and in consequence many Arakanese have come to suspect the hand of the East Pakistan Government in the rising. During 1949 it was firmly believed in Arakan that the civil officers at Cox's Bazaar were supplying arms and ammunition to the rebels; and there is no doubt that rebel wounded both then and later received treatment at the Government hospitals at Cox's Bazaar, Ramu and Teknaf. An unconfirmed report stated in 1949 that the Superintendent of Police and the Additional District Magistrate of Chittagong district had suggested that their Government should provide the rebels with arms and money, or better still, undertake military intervention. This proposal, if ever it was made, received no encouragement; but feeling in Pakistan was such that in April 1949 it was reported that the Pakistan Government had protested to Burma against the persecution of Muslims in Arakan. In this period it was rumoured in Burma also that uniformed guerrillas carrying the Pakistan flag had invaded the two townships and that Pakistan naval craft were standing by off the mouth of the Naf.

These reports, denied by the East Bengal Government, were doubtless false, but they indicate the danger to good relations which the situation produced. At later periods too rumours have circulated, for example in the early months of 1951, that Pakistan proposed to annex the disturbed area.

30. However correct the attitude of superior authority in Pakistan might be, the rebels could feel assured of the active support of many Chittagonians and of the tacit sympathy of the local officials, and they were given added confidence by the knowledge that they could at any time withdraw across the border. Indeed, logistically the unofficial aid given in Chittagong placed the rebels in a stronger position than were the Burmese Government forces, for, with Pakistan as their base, they were nearer their source of supplies than were the Burmese troops and police who had to operate at the end of long and difficult lines of communication.

31. The need for rice was clearly a dominating factor in the attitude of the district officials in Chittagong, and they seem to have gone to extremes to protect the smugglers. Thus in May 1950 a Burmese river-police launch in pursuit of two paddy-boats smuggling rice across the Naf was obstructed by a Pakistan police-launch whose personnel, according to the Burmese story, opened fire: a Burman constable was wounded and taken prisoner. This incident, again according to Burmese sources, took place in Burmese waters. Similarly, though early in 1952 an increase in the strength of Burmese naval forces and Customs launches on the Naf was said to have reduced smuggling very considerably, it was also reported by Burmese sources that a Pakistan police-launch was regularly patrolling the river and that not only did it refrain from co-operating against the smugglers but was quite likely to protect them from the Burmese forces and officials.

32. Communal tension in Akyab district was, moreover, reflected in communal tension in Chittagong, and higher authority in Pakistan was gravely concerned lest resentment against the ill-treatment of Muslims in Arakan should lead to reprisals against the many thousands of Buddhists in Chittagong; and this, if it should occur, might in turn endanger the many more thousands of Muslims in other parts of Burma.

33. The authorities in Pakistan appear further to have feared that the *mujahids* might ally themselves with the Burmese Communist rebels; the establishment of a Communist enclave in the immediate neighbourhood of East Bengal, already liable to be infected by the powerful Communist elements of West Bengal, would be far from welcome. There is, however, no evidence that the *mujahids* have had any inclination towards such a course of action, and they profess, indeed, to be preserving the area from Communism (see paragraph 26 above),

though their opponents in Burma are not averse to accusing them of Communist sympathies, and the Burma Communists would certainly like to capture the movement.

34. The effect of the *mujahid* rising has thus been to prejudice good feeling between Burma and Pakistan; the Pakistan Government and people resent the sufferings inflicted on their fellow Muslims, whether of Pakistani origin or whether *Rwangyas*: the Burmese Buddhists resent a Muslim rising against the authority of their Government and the suffering which has certainly been inflicted on Arakanese Buddhists. Fortunately the very physical remoteness which enables the troubles to go on also renders the troubles mentally remote: the Arakanese and Chittagonians may have strong feelings on the subject, but most Burmans and most Pakistanis have far graver and more pressing problems to solve. If, however, the situation in Burma as a whole and in the Indian sub-continent generally should settle down, a peaceful solution in the Maungdaw and Buthidaung townships will be very necessary unless relations between Pakistan and Burma are to become strained.

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Research Department,
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