

crisis' as stretching from Pakistan to Turkey, the US has focused on drawing Pakistan into its plans for extending its own military presence in the Gulf and Indian Ocean region. The Pakistani regime has innumerable attributes which qualify it as a main promoter of the US imperialist plans: «Pakistan's military missions in 22 countries in the Middle East and Africa make it the largest exporter of military manpower in the Third World (and especially to the Gulf states' armed forces). Its role in the Gulf has a direct bearing on Washington's strategy in the region, on the future security role of the Gulf Cooperation Council and on Pakistan's own internal dynamic. Pakistan has consistently placed among the top five recipients of US military and economic aid over the past three decades.»

Pakistan is also pivotal in the Reagan Administration's anti-communist crusade. With the fall of the Shah, the US lost direct access to the Soviet borders, but now depends on Pakistan for access to Afghanistan's borders, in order to arm the counterrevolutionaries fighting the progressive government in Kabul. «Washington would like to enhance the agreement it has with Islamabad for full access to all new Soviet weapons captured by the rebels in Afghanistan.» Pakistan also provides the US with access to Iran's borders. «Reliable sources claim that at present Quetta, the capital of Baluchistan province (Pakistan), and Erzerum in eastern Turkey have become the major listening posts and operational bases for intelligence on Iran. Washington is trying to rebuild its intelligence gathering network in Iran before Ayatollah Khomeini dies.»

No less important, the US wants Pakistan as a staging base for the Rapid Deployment Force, called the Central Command. Incentive for this has escalated in line with the escalation of Reagan's war on 'terrorism', used as a cover for the US's extending its own

global military network. After the early September highjacking in Karachi, the media revealed that the US had made an early decision to mobilize the Delta force (the so-called anti-terrorist unit stationed in North Carolina), but that it was unable to arrive on time. The US administration released these stories partly to chide its western European allies for not yet accepting Delta being based on their territory, but also to remind Pakistan that it could 'benefit' from more US military presence.

Crucial to all the imperialist plans are Baluchistan and the North-West Frontier Province, both bordering on Afghanistan. Zia's government is cooperating with US projects for equipping these remote areas with a military infrastructure in the name of 'development'. For Zia, this serves the purpose of getting financial aid to lessen the country's economic woes, and enacting a passification program against the Baluchi people, whose recurrent uprisings have threatened the central government's control. Baluchistan's ports on the Arabian Sea are ideal «for the pre-positioning of Central Command's roll-on/roll-off ships,» according to US experts. (All the above quotes are from Jamal Rashid, «Pakistan and the Central Command,» *MERIP — Middle East Report*, no. 141, July-August 1986.)

These plans show what is at stake if Zia's dictatorship were to be toppled. While Benazir Bhutto has yet to articulate clear opposition to the US military plans for her country, the Reagan administration is unlikely to trust her to collaborate so eagerly as does Zia's regime. Moreover, the US has good reason to fear that continuation of mass revolt against the dictatorship will bring more radical forces to the fore. If the mass struggle intensifies and the leadership is radicalized, the US might well be on the market for alternatives to Zia, as it was forced to seek in other places.

CHILE

General Pinochet's pretense at liberalization is just as transparent as Zia ul Haq's. On September 8th, the Chilean dictator reimposed the state of siege (which had been lifted for a bit over a year), arrested opposition leaders and closed a number of newspapers; five citizens were abducted and later found dead in the same number of days.

Again the regime can legally tap phones, open mail, hold prisoners in secret locations, ban public gatherings and censor the press, without any possibility of judicial review of its arrest and banishment orders.. All this occurred after an attempt on Pinochet's life, but the real reason for reimposing the state of siege is that the regime has simply been unable to halt the opposition which has been steadily and visibly mounting over the last three years, to the point of raising concern in Washington D.C.

The latest state of siege is simply a reinstitutionalization of ongoing procedures. A recent Amnesty International report noted that in the last few years the regime has increasingly reverted to the use of death squads and mass arrests - its original hallmarks which cost 30,000 Chilean lives. In early May, security forces besieged thirty different poor neighborhoods, cutting off water, electricity, telephones and gas, and detaining 15,000 people. Such raids have been weekly fare ever since. Also since the spring, soldiers are daily patrolling the streets, their faces blackened to avoid identification as they commit crimes against Chilean citizens.

Despite this, protests have been constant since March, uniting broader and broader sectors of the population. This was clearly seen on July 2nd and 3rd, in the first nation-wide general strike since 1973, demanding Pinochet's immediate resignation and the restoration of human and democratic rights. Added to this is the increasing efficiency of attacks on the regime's forces carried out by the Manuel Rodriguez Patriotic Front (FPMR), formed in late 1983 by members of the left parties, most significantly the Communist Party of Chile and MIR, as well as independents and Christian patriots.

It is these factors which prompted the Reagan Administration to discover the human rights problem in Chile, gallantly forgetting the CIA's role in fomenting Pinochet's coup and teaching his henchmen the 'fine points' of torture. The US administration's 'concern' is part of a double-dealing tactic to keep the Chilean masses from attaining freedom from imperialist exploitation. The initial idea is to get Pinochet to liberalize his rule just enough to split, confuse and absorb the opposition. Failing in that, the US aims to court a bourgeois alternative - or a new general? - to ensure imperialist control in a milder form if Pinochet is toppled.

Police vs. the people in Pakistan

