

Presidential Elections: Ayub's Version*

I

The concept of Basic Democracies had been evolved and the scheme prepared in cut-and-dried form. Towards the end of 1959 the adult population of the country went to the polls to elect their representatives, who came to be known as Basic Democrats. Constituencies were delimited and Martial Law Regulations amended to allow candidates to organize public meetings. The results of this election were announced on 11 January 1960.

A few days before, I was advised by the Cabinet to seek a vote of confidence from the 80,000 members elected to the Basic Democracies Councils. I accepted this advice. I felt that I must have a clear mandate from the people to set up the necessary constitutional machinery in the country. I undertook an extensive tour of both Provinces. The mission was to meet the people and to explain my thinking to them and the lines on which I proposed to initiate the constitutional processes. I met millions of people during this tour and addressed innumerable public meetings. The Basic Democrats gave me an overwhelming vote of confidence. The ballot was held on 14 February and the results were announced on 15 February 1960. As I have mentioned earlier, I received confirmation in 95-6 per cent of the approximately 80,000 votes cast. I was sworn in at Rawalpindi on 17 February 1960, for a four-year term, as the first

* Mohammad Ayub Khan, *Friends Not Masters: A Political Autobiography* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1967), pp.227-241.

elected President and immediately thereafter I announced the setting up of a Commission to draw up a new Constitution for the country.

From February 1960 to March 1962 was the period during which the system of Basic Democracies was nursed and developed. Representatives of the people at various levels were enabled, in an organized manner, to familiarize themselves with the conditions and problems of their areas and a forum was provided for them to solve their problems in collaboration with the official agencies of the government. Schemes and projects were drawn up by the people themselves and implemented through voluntary effort supplementing official initiative and organization.

During these two years, people came to recognize the merit of electing representatives from among themselves and observing their work and watching their conduct at close range, in matters of immediate concern to the people. Simultaneously, institutions were set up to provide training to Basic Democrats in methods of government development work. The official machinery came in for close scrutiny by the people and gradually it began to identify itself with the needs and requirements of the common man. My whole effort was to build up the confidence of the people in their representatives so that they would be able to entrust them with more important political responsibilities in course of time. The mandate which I sought from the Basic Democrats in 1960 was the first step in this direction.

I gave considerable thought to the question whether Basic Democracies should be given political functions or be restricted to economic and social work. The theoreticians advised me that not only should the Basic Democrats be given no political responsibility, but that their association with government agencies should also be terminated. Now, I thought that if I were to agree to this I should be making the whole system ineffective. The association with the officials had produced two wholesome results: in the first instance, it was acting as a check on the working of the government; and secondly, and more important, it was providing the Basic Democrats with an opportunity not only to understand how government functioned but also to supervise and guide its functioning. If the ultimate aim was that all local government activities should become

the direct responsibility of people's representatives, then this association between the Basic Democrats and the officials was unavoidable. I could foresee the time when officials would become the functionaries of the local councils and the representatives of the people would assume their legitimate role of administrators.

The idea that development and politics should be kept apart was equally unrealistic. I did not want the Basic Democrats to be reduced to the position of unwanted social workers without any authority or say in the political affairs of the country. We did not have enough men to provide parallel leadership, one for development activities and the other for political affairs. If the Basic Democrats were denied the right to represent their constituencies in political matters, they would lose all importance and become subservient either to the bureaucracy or to those who exercised influence because of their wealth or other tribal and sectarian considerations.

I was not unconscious of the fact that the Basic Democrats elected by the people in 1959 were not in all cases the best that the community could offer. The old politicians had carried on an insidious propaganda against the system, and all means were employed by them to prevent people of merit from assuming leadership in their areas. In certain cases they had their household servants elected as Basic Democrats. Their purpose was to disrupt the system and expose the 'village folks' to ridicule. In this they had the support of the urban 'elite' who often laughed at the regional costumes and 'native' manners of Basic Democrats. The big turban of one Basic Democrat was enough for the intellectual to distrust the whole system. How could anyone who did not converse in English become a representative of the people? These Basic Democrats, who had never read a Shakespearean play and could not quote a line from T. S. Eliot, appeared to them like some kind of barbarians who had been elevated to positions of leadership.

All this propaganda was aimed at the dignity of the common man and was the intellectuals' response to a system in which all people, regardless of wealth or education, had been provided with new avenues of progress. But inadvertently they helped to prove my point. Leadership was not the exclusive preserve of the few who had

acquired proficiency in western sciences and humanities; leadership belonged to the people. A household servant might make a better leader than the master because he had more sympathy for the people and more time for the problems of the community. It was this attitude of the old politicians and certain sections of urban society that finally convinced me that if Basic Democrats were not given political responsibility they would be destroyed in no time and, along with them, the whole system would crumble.

By the beginning of 1962 people had begun to realize the utility and effectiveness of Basic Democracies and it was becoming obvious that I intended to give them political functions. The new Constitution was announced on 1 March 1962. The Basic Democrats then proceeded to elect the representatives of the people to the National Assembly in April 1962 and to the Provincial Assemblies in May 1962. Prior to these elections I issued an Order authorizing the Election Commission to take all necessary measures to ensure that the elections were conducted honestly, justly, and fairly, and that corrupt practices were eliminated. The old politicians thought that if they did not seek election they would find themselves excluded from political life. It was interesting to see many of those who had publicly criticized and discredited the system eating their words and approaching Basic Democrats for support. The masters were going to household servants and the elite to 'turbaned natives' for votes. It was a fitting nemesis!

The political parties had not yet been revived. I announced on 10 May 1962 that the whole question of political parties would be considered by the National Assembly 'after full and public discussion'.

The new National Assembly met in Rawalpindi on 8 June 1962. I was sworn in under the new Constitution of the Second Republic. Martial Law was lifted on that day and from then on the country was to be governed by the normal law of the land. I appealed to the Assembly and to the people to give a fair trial to the Constitution. As I saw it the main objectives before the National Assembly were:

1. to ensure the integrity of Pakistan against external danger and internal disruption;

2. to make Pakistan as strong as possible and to promote among its people a national outlook, removing all traces of distrust and suspicion between the two wings; and,
3. to adopt measures for the moral and material happiness of the people, paving the way for a social welfare State.

These objectives could be achieved only through a strong and stable government capable of formulating and implementing long-term plans and policies. If the existence of government was subject to dishonest alliances and pressures of political parties, the country would not make any progress.

The next important thing was to bring about complete understanding and unity between East and West Pakistan. Because of the distance separating the two Provinces some differences and misunderstandings were inevitable, but it was of the utmost importance to realize that if these differences were carried too far in certain areas disaster would follow: we had to recognize that the unity, security, and progress of the country were matters of common concern. In my inaugural address to the National Assembly I said:

From today we are entering a new phase of our national life and activity. In a major change of this nature I hope people will act and react with a sense of maturity, wisdom, and discipline. It will give us great satisfaction if the blessings of the restoration of constitutional institutions are appreciated and recognized by people in all spheres in general, and by the members and the intelligentsia in particular. As leaders of public thinking, it devolves on them to give a lead in dignified behaviour and decorum. Confusion in thought and action is the last thing we as a nation can afford.

I would like to remind you that the recommencement of the constitutional process does not mean the re-start of political life from the stage where it stood on 8 October 1958. During the last three and a half years an enormous amount of thinking and planning has taken place at a fast pace. During this period, people have got used to expecting concrete results from the government. They will expect the same from you as well. This means that only constructive efforts and sound statesmanship will reawaken the

discerning consciousness of the people and not mere emotional and fiery outbursts and speeches.

On the measure of success we attain in working the Constitution in the spirit in which it has been evolved depends the well-being of our future generations and also the vindication of the faith and belief of those who, under the leadership of Quaid-e-Azam, Mahomed Ali Jinnah, struggled so hard and suffered so much for the creation of Pakistan.

The great debate on the Constitution did not abate with the inauguration of the National Assembly; indeed, the whole thing continued to be discussed with great passion inside the Assembly. I made it clear that I would be prepared to accept any positive and constructive amendments in the Constitution; that was the whole purpose of providing a procedure within the Constitution itself to propose amendments. But if any attempt was made to tamper with any of the fundamental concepts, the whole constitutional framework would collapse. And I would not be a party to any process which would result in confusion and chaos.

The National Assembly had two important subjects to deal with: one related to the question of the revival of political parties, and the other to the mode of voting under the system of universal franchise provided in the Constitution. The Assembly came to the conclusion that political parties should be allowed to operate and I gave my assent to the Bill which was passed by the Assembly for this purpose. The Report of the Franchise Commission was also submitted to the Assembly and by a large majority the Assembly decided that people should elect the President of the country and their representatives to the National and the Provincial Assemblies through the Basic Democrats functioning as an Electoral College. The Assembly also decided that the Basic Democrats should first complete their functions as members of the Electoral College before they were vested with responsibilities in the sphere of social and development activities. I gave my assent to this also.

I would have thought that the National Assembly, having determined these two vital issues, would then get on with the work of nation-building. But political groups and organizations outside the Assembly maintained their pressure and kept the atmosphere

charged with controversy. The opposition, which consisted of several groups, was severely divided on the question of revival of formal political parties. A section among them advocated that political parties should not be revived and a fight for what they called the 'democratization of the Constitution' should be waged under some kind of a united command. Others were more realistic. They decided to revive their respective political parties to prepare for the forthcoming general elections in 1965, under the Constitution. As far as I could understand, the former group wanted to avoid the general elections. In the days when they were in power they had always managed to retain control by frustrating all programmes of elections: they had rarely faced even a by-election, let alone general elections. About them I was not worried because I knew that the system had gained enough confidence among the people to be able to repel their designs.

The groups which proceeded to set up political parties were welcome to me. I knew that the Constitution would have to be submitted to a political test during the forthcoming general elections and I was determined that the country should have a full-fledged experience of elections on a national level. I would need, I realized, a political party to fight the final battle for the Constitution. The Pakistan Muslim League was revived and I accepted the Presidency of the League. My real anxiety about the opposition parties was that most of them had adopted political programmes which were basically negative in character and depended on emotionalism and agitation; no one among them had any national philosophy. There were some working for a virtual separation between the two Provinces in the name of autonomy. They also wanted to bring about the disintegration of West Pakistan. Others were working against all progress and development and wanted to establish some obscurantist type of dictatorship in the name of religion.

It was suggested to me at that time that I should not identify myself with any political party, and there was some advantage in that. But considering the agitational role to which opposition was committed, I decided to support the only political party which had presented to the people a positive and national programme reflecting the ideology of Pakistan and the people's urge for progress.

As 1964 approached, the opposition stepped up its activities and started looking for a presidential candidate. They knew that no single party was in a position to put up a candidate of its own. Some of them thought that, following their example, I might perhaps postpone the election on some pretext. But the scientific way in which electoral rolls were being prepared by the Election Commission and the whole programme of election was being formulated, convinced them that I was determined to submit myself to the will of the people. It was only thus that I could prove the Constitution was a real and dynamic institution and not a fake document devised to suit my personal ends. It was a people's institution designed to serve the people's ends.

I had a fair idea of the strength of the opposition. A number of elements were unhappy with the reforms I had introduced. Certain religious groups were making a song and dance about the Family Laws Ordinance. Those who had suffered as a result of the land reforms and lost authority were finding it difficult to adjust themselves to the changed conditions. Then there was an element in East Pakistan which wanted a weak and ineffective centre; its aim was to work up hatred against the central government and West Pakistan and thus undermine the solidarity of the country. I also knew that the opposition would lose no opportunity to blame me personally for all acts of omission and commission, major or minor, of the Administration. They would hold me responsible for what a foot-constable might have done in a remote village or a clerk in the court of some magistrate. Since the rule of law was not a part of their life, they would tend to attribute everything to an individual.

In September 1964 the Combined Opposition Parties (COP) agreed to nominate Miss Fatima Jinnah as their candidate for the office of President. Now Miss Jinnah had nothing in common with the various opposition parties yet she did not hesitate to come into the field, having obtained from them a unanimous pledge of support. To me, her acceptance of the Opposition offer did not come as a surprise. Since the entire Opposition campaign was to be based on emotionalism, her choice seemed logical: she was the sister of the Quaid-e-Azam and she was bound to attract considerable attention for sentimental reasons, if for nothing else. The Opposition also knew that after she had served their purpose they

could easily get rid of her. In this they might have been mistaken, but it was their calculation at the time.

I do not know what considerations weighed with Miss Jinnah. She was leading a solitary life and had shown little interest in politics except for issuing periodical statements to the Press on days of national importance. Since the death of the Quaid-e-Azam she had maintained a consistent posture of opposition and criticism towards every government. Even during the days of Liaquat Ali Khan she was running an opposition of her own, never missing an opportunity of creating a sense of depression and distress among the people and undermining their confidence in the government of the day. In her seclusion and under the protection of the memory of the Quaid-e-Azam, she set herself up as an arbiter and a mentor. When Martial Law was promulgated she welcomed the change but soon after reverted to her customary role. On one occasion, I wrote to her that she might acquaint herself with the full facts of government policies before pronouncing judgement on them. I think she never forgave me for offering this advice.

Miss Jinnah might have reckoned that there was a good deal more opposition to me in the country than there really was, and that with the support of the old guard she would get to the position where she longed to be. In one respect I was happy about her nomination. The Opposition had brought into the field the strongest possible rival that they could find. The elections would be well contested and would establish the validity of my thesis based on reason and pragmatism against the Opposition's claim on people's sentiment and emotion.

The nomination of Presidential candidates was announced before the people chose their representatives for the Electoral College. Every adult member of society knew that the Basic Democrat whom he elected would be called upon to choose the future President of Pakistan. Under the Electoral College Act, passed on 17 April 1964, each of the two Provinces was divided into 40,000 territorial units and each one of these units was to elect one Basic Democrat to form the Electoral College for the office of President and for the members of the National and Provincial Legislatures. The Election Commission defined these units, 'having regard to

territorial unity, distribution of population and administrative convenience'. The average population for each unit worked out at 1,073 persons on the basis of nearly 45 million registered voters out of a total population of no million. The work of delimitation and the settlement of objections was completed by 25 July 1964, and details of electoral units were published, along with the unit-wise registration of voters, by the middle of August. A large number of polling officers were required; they were drawn from the ranks of government officials, doctors, and teachers.

These elections to the positions of Basic Democrats generated far greater interest than the previous ones held in 1959. Everyone knew that the results would ultimately determine the pattern of democracy in the country. In East Pakistan more than 100,000 persons contested the elections. In West Pakistan over 128,000 persons filed nomination papers in 44 districts only. By and large, the elections proceeded smoothly though there were incidents of violence at some of the polling stations. A majority of the people elected as Basic Democrats belonged to the 30-40 age group. In East Pakistan more than 54 per cent of the elected members were educated up to the secondary standard; in West Pakistan 21 per cent of the elected members had received secondary education and over 27 per cent had received primary education. These percentages were higher than the provincial average of education.

None of the political parties was organized enough to issue party tickets for elections to 80,000 seats. The Opposition took advantage of this situation and claimed any candidate who had any prospect of winning as their candidate. The effect of this was that a most amusing situation developed after the results of elections were announced during October and November 1964 in the two Provinces: every political party claimed to have won nearly all the seats. To support their claim they all started releasing lists of their candidates. It was not surprising that most of the names were common to all the lists.

II

Miss Jinnah launched her presidential election campaign in the third week of October well before the election of the Basic Democrats. She started from Karachi. In the very first public

meeting she revealed her full hand: there would be no holds barred. Cool reasoning and argument were to have little place; it was going to be emotionalism all the way. She attracted a huge crowd in Karachi and there was a great deal of table-thumping and slogan-mongering.

I had a meeting with some of my political associates to review the results of her first public meeting. They looked depressed and worried. Their main concern was that the kind of attack she had launched would be difficult to meet because she was after all an old lady and widely respected as sister of the Quaid-e-Azam. I told them that she had to be treated as a presidential candidate—a rival—and that we had to fight her all the way, though decency and decorum must be maintained, regardless of the tactics which she and her associates might adopt. I also told them that the size of crowds should not cause any concern; the people were having the first-ever general elections and they must meet and hear both the candidates. The administration was firmly told not to interfere with Miss Jinnah's meetings in any way and to provide her with all facilities. She was given special consideration in the matter of travel and accommodation throughout the country.

There was a suggestion that I should follow her from place to place. I decided against this because I thought if meetings were held in the same town on the same day or on consecutive days it would inevitably lead to some clash among the supporters. She should have the first round in each Province. Let her first complete her tour of West Pakistan, and after she had gone to East Pakistan I should begin my campaign.

So Miss Jinnah travelled the whole of West Pakistan addressing public meetings in Karachi, Peshawar, Rawalpindi, Lahore, and a number of other major towns. Her theme was the same everywhere: the country had gone to the dogs; there had been no development; there was no liberty, no freedom of speech; government had no external or internal policy; I was a dictator who tolerated no opposition; and so on and so forth. She came out strongly in support of the old politicians, forgetting that when they were in office she used to be their bitterest critic. She now claimed that everything that had been done was either completed or initiated by

the politicians. The Revolution was a big hoax and I was responsible for all the misdeeds of the politicians. I was to learn from her that cabinets had been made and unmade at my behest! That every Prime Minister and Governor-General had acted under my orders. The newspapers splashed her speeches on the front pages and soon the whole country was in the grip of the presidential election.

III

I opened my campaign with a public meeting in Peshawar. I talked mainly of the improvements that had taken place since the Revolution. It was an oppressive afternoon and a huge crowd had turned up. The Muslim League volunteer corps was ill-organized and there was constant pushing and pulling in the crowd. Suddenly I saw an old man squatting in the front row with a cage in his hand; inside the cage was a quail. In Peshawar quail-fights are very popular and it is common knowledge that a certain type of quail, however well you might nourish and look after him, deserts the field as soon as he sees his adversary. I pointed towards the cage and said that these COP leaders were no better than 'run-away quails'; in their whole political life none of them had ever stayed the course. This caused much amusement and the label 'run-away quails' stuck to the Opposition for the rest of the campaign. I avoided direct personal references, hoping to keep the campaign at a dignified level.

After Peshawar, I addressed a large public meeting in Rawalpindi. It was here that some of the Opposition speakers had indulged in downright slander and vilification, not only of the government but of myself personally. I think the Combined Opposition Parties wanted the whole campaign to degenerate into a vulgar exercise in mud-slinging. I was determined not to let this happen. I knew I would have to tell some home truths about my rival, but she must be shown the respect to which she was entitled.

From Rawalpindi I travelled by road to Lahore, addressing a number of wayside meetings. I have never pretended to be an orator and it took me a little time to improve the fluency of my Urdu. By the time I reached Lahore I found that I could speak for hours without having to refer to notes. This helped me to establish direct communication with the audience. The Lahore meeting was held in

Mochi Gate—the famous political battleground. It was a tremendous audience full of enthusiasm. We had arranged to have a few poets and some local speakers to initiate the proceedings but the crowd was not prepared to listen to any one of them. They had come to hear me and wanted no poets, nor professional orators. As I came up to the rostrum the whole chaotic scene turned dramatically into a well-organized meeting. I spoke at length and explained the philosophy of the reforms and the Constitution in simple, straightforward language. That evening I felt that the West Pakistan battle had been won.

In the meantime, Miss Jinnah was having the run of East Pakistan. News of her meetings was creating quite an impression. While she scored some gains in East Pakistan, she also brought to the surface serious inner rivalries and tensions in the COP, particularly between the National Awami Party and the Awami League. One of the Awami League leaders had appointed himself Miss Jinnah's impresario, causing disappointment to leaders of other parties. And the rough and summary manner in which Miss Jinnah was inclined to treat her own workers was beginning to make them wonder whether they had been wise in nominating her.

The COP received a blow in the death of Khawaja Nazimuddin in the midst of the campaign. He was a veteran political leader and his presence lent considerable weight to the opposition. Worse still, Miss Jinnah left East Pakistan without waiting to attend Khawaja Nazi-muddin's funeral. I was in Sukkur that evening. We passed a resolution of condolence on Khawaja Nazimuddin's death.

The COP had adopted a g-point programme. Nothing exposed them more than the contents of this programme. With his customary shrewdness Chaudhri Mohammad Ali of the Nizam-e-Islam Party, who had been given the responsibility of drafting the programme, produced an ignoble bundle of compromises, keeping the language deliberately vague to accommodate all possible interpretations. When the programme was announced the National Awami Party, an avowedly leftist organization, found itself supporting a theocratic philosophy. All issues of fundamental importance were avoided. The programme gave no indication of the policy of the Opposition in foreign affairs. Nor did it explain what

pattern of political relationship between East and West Pakistan was envisaged. Did the Opposition support One Unit or did it favour the disintegration of West Pakistan? Was the Opposition behind the system of Basic Democracies or opposed to it? Nothing was clear and people started asking 'What does COP stand for?' In one of my meetings I suggested that the COP stood for the 'Cult of Power'. They had nothing in common with each other except the urge to grab power at all costs, and were like so many wild cats with their tails tied together.

Now from our side we had provided all facilities to the Opposition to hold their meetings in an orderly and peaceful manner. They, on the other hand, were attempting to disturb my meetings. It was announced that some of the Awami League leaders had given a pledge to COP that they would not let me hold any public meeting in East Pakistan. The Awami League, more than any other political party in the opposition, wanted to create a situation of disorder and chaos in which the elections could not be held. Local toughs in some districts had been organized into a volunteer corps and they were going about intimidating the voters. The Awami League was fanning provincialism in East Pakistan and much of their political energy seemed directed towards creating distrust and hatred of West Pakistan.

My own political party, which was working on a national basis for a positive programme, was feeling distressed at the turn of events. We could not adopt agitational tactics, or meet hatred with hatred.

In East Pakistan I opened my campaign with a meeting in Dacca. The venue was Paltan Maidan, which is as famous as Lahore's Mochi Gate. The Opposition had apparently placed a number of people in the audience with the object of disturbing the proceedings, but they found themselves badly outnumbered. The place was overflowing with people and I received a patient hearing. I was convinced that whatever might be the strategy of the Opposition, the people at large were deeply interested in acquainting themselves, at first hand, with the political philosophy and programme of both sides.

I toured the whole of East Pakistan addressing large crowds; the biggest meeting was in Rangpur. All around me was a veritable ocean of humanity. In the countryside, wherever I went, I could point out signs of prosperity for the people to see. Roads had been built where there used to be cart-tracks, jungles infested with wild animals had been cleared and irrigation facilities provided. People had got electricity, better communications, and better marketing facilities. Their health had improved and they had better food and clothing. Innumerable projects of immediate benefit to the people had been completed under the Rural Works Programme. These were solid achievements of the regime which no amount of Opposition propaganda could belittle.

By the end of the first phase of the campaign, I think I had managed to put across to the people my basic thinking. Without unity between the two Provinces the country could not survive; their security and future depended on working together. It was vital for the country to have a strong centre to co-ordinate policies and to provide national guidelines. If the centre was weakened, the Provinces would fall apart and disintegrate. Seven years of stability had resulted in phenomenal progress in all spheres of life. Whatever assistance we had received had been put to good use. Pakistan was regarded in the world as a model of development. The prestige of the country had risen. We had succeeded in normalizing our relations with our big neighbours.

In the meantime, results of the elections of the Basic Democrats had been announced and Miss Jinnah undertook another round of West Pakistan. She was running into difficulties with her associates but her whole approach was now based on arousing provincial and sectarian feelings. Wherever she went she talked in terms of local grievances, ignoring the national perspective. The original curiosity of the people was also beginning to wane. It was pathetic to see her being driven from place to place by the COP leaders. They kept telling her that the whole country was behind her and that the Basic Democrats, who had been elected, all belonged to the Opposition.

I issued my Election Manifesto in which I set out my beliefs and my political programme. The Manifesto covered all aspects of

national life and gave a clear picture of my thinking and my plans. The Opposition termed the Manifesto an election stunt but did not seem to specify any particular faults in it.

The elections were scheduled to be held some time in March 1965. The Opposition demanded that they should be held earlier. They thought that if there was a gap of three or four months between the election of the Basic Democrats and the general elections, the administration might try to influence the voters. I took the Opposition at their word and advanced the date of the elections by nearly three months. This took them completely by surprise and caused considerable disarray in their ranks.

The presidential election campaign now entered its final phase, when the candidates had to meet their electors, the Basic Democrats. These confrontation meetings were organized by the Election Commission and presided over by a Judge of the High Court. It was in these meetings that the voters came in direct contact with the candidates. The procedure was that the candidate would make his opening statement and this would be followed by questions from the voters. It was in these meetings that Miss Jinnah displayed the full range of her ignorance of national affairs: in spite of rigorous coaching and prompting by her associates, she could rarely find a precise answer to any question. The argument had finally reached the plane of reason and knowledge.

From Khyber to Cox's Bazar, people became intensely involved in the process of election. In every household there was only one subject of conversation and that was the presidential elections. The Press was divided into two distinct categories: one for the COP nominee and the other for the nominee of the Pakistan Muslim League. The election issues were discussed and thrashed out and, by and large, people knew what each candidate stood for.

The Awami League made one last bid to disrupt the elections. Their volunteers approached individual Basic Democrats and tried to threaten and frighten them. Miss Jinnah by then was saying in effect that if there was going to be chaos in the country, let there be chaos.

IV

Polling commenced at 8 o'clock in the morning on 2 January 1965, throughout the country. The first results started coming in

towards midday. The Election Commission had arranged for the results to be announced over Radio Pakistan as they were received from each polling station. By about 4 p.m. the trend of public opinion had become evident: Miss Jinnah was losing almost everywhere. The Opposition strongholds in principal towns of the country were falling one by one. Chittagong, Khulna, Rajshahi, Sylhet, Hyderabad, Peshawar, Lahore, all returned a verdict against her. The only towns in which she got a majority were Dacca and Karachi. In West Pakistan I gained a substantial lead in all divisions and districts except Karachi. In East Pakistan I gained a majority in thirteen districts out of seventeen. The number of votes cast represented 99-62 per cent of the total electorate and I ended up with a 63 per cent majority against Miss Jinnah's 36 per cent.

The nation had given a clear and final verdict on the Constitution. Never before in the history of the country had general elections been held. The interest and response of the people was most gratifying. The country had chosen stability against chaos, security against disintegration, progress against stagnation.

Miss Jinnah's election strategy had been well-planned. I think some of the elements in it were provided by her associates who were old hands at the game. She knew that her main appeal was her relationship with the Quaid-e-Azam. She therefore thought that she should fight the entire campaign on the emotional plane. Her effort sometimes seemed to be to malign me personally and to present things out of context. She showed prodigious energy and went through a gruelling campaign, no mean achievement for a septuagenarian, and I give her full marks for that. I think she made a mistake in overestimating her personal appeal. People soon realized that she deserved all respect and consideration as the sister of the Quaid-e-Azam, but that did not necessarily mean that she could serve the people as their President. The final vote was between prejudice and reality and, I think, reality gained the edge.

I thanked the people who had supported me and also those who had differed with me: they too had served the cause of democracy. I wanted the moment of vindication to become a symbol of lasting unity. No trace of malice or of regret should inhibit anyone from rejoicing in the glory of the people. I appealed to the nation to work for the fulfilment of the ideology of Pakistan. 'Together let us build, together let us accomplish; so that Pakistan shall endure and prosper.'

Pakistan Painsdabad