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In peacetime, the duty of the covering troops, assisted by frontier levies of various kinds, was to prevent the independent tribes on the Indian side of the Afghan frontier raiding peaceful inhabitants of the plains below. Behind and beyond this belt of unorganised territory lay the direction from which, throughout the ages, the dangers to India's territorial integrity had come. None of the states behind India (especially Russia) were members of the League of Nations. Hence, a strong though expensive military presence for the defence of the British Raj was necessary. Indian political leaders raised the question of the enormous cost of the British Army in India ('one British soldier was estimated to cost between three and four times as much as an Indian soldier'). They argued that the replacement of the British by Indians would not only save costs but also involve the indigenous people in the defence of their land, making them more loyal to their land and people. Indigenous recruitment would result in an increase in the British Indian Army along the North-Western borders but at much less cost.<sup>83</sup>

The perceived Russian threat to India was one of the major reasons for indigenous recruitment from the Punjab and NWFP. Keeping a very cautious country-Afghanistan- in view, Russia was the prime fear of the British Empire from the North West. The Russo-Afghan cordiality was not only threatening to India but also to the entire empire.<sup>84</sup> The Simon Commission of 1930 observed: '*The North West frontier is not only the frontier of India; it is an international frontier of the first importance from the military point of view for the whole empire*'.<sup>85</sup> Therefore, the Russians were kept at bay by the British by their defensive arrangements on the border and by maintaining Afghanistan as a buffer zone. In 1886, the Punjab Frontier Force which was looking after this part of the international border of India was transferred from the Punjab government to the C-in-C.<sup>86</sup> A border demarcation agreement was also signed with the Afghan government in November 1893; the Durand Line,<sup>87</sup> to stabilise

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<sup>82</sup> RCIO, p.94.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Interview with Wali Ghaznavi. (Edinburgh, 12-10-08).

<sup>85</sup> *Report of the Indian Statutory Commission*, 1930, Vol. 2, p.173.

<sup>86</sup> Accounts and Papers: 63 Volumes. East India, *Proposed Changes in the Indian Army System*. Dispatch No. 172, 2<sup>nd</sup> November, 1892. Session 31, January 1893-5March 1894. Vol. LXIII, p.254, NLS.

<sup>87</sup> O'Dwyer, *India As I Knew It*, p.104.

bilateral relations. Various developments showed the weakness of Russian empire: the Russo-Japanese War 1905<sup>88</sup>, the Bolshevik Revolution<sup>89</sup> and the early withdrawal of Russia from the First World War,<sup>90</sup> which reduced British fears from the North. However, they continued indigenous recruitment from the region. Later on, one fear was replaced by another, Marxist ideology, and hence they maintained a strong profile on the North Western frontier<sup>91</sup> (two detailed security plans were designed by the British government to contain the ‘Russian military menace’ in 1927 and 1931. The first was called the Blue Plan (1927) asking for an army advance towards Afghanistan from the NWFP and Baluchistan to Kabul.<sup>92</sup> The second plan was called the Pink Plan (1931) giving a limited military action in the bordering areas of Afghanistan<sup>93</sup>).

Besides fears from Russia and Afghanistan, the British were facing a series of skirmishes with *Pakhtoon* tribes in tribal areas of NWFP bordering Afghanistan. The purpose of the division of NWFP into tribal and settled areas was to break the backbone of such armed resistance. Lord Curzon created a separate province NWFP in 1901, which was divided into settled – Peshawar, Kohat, Hazara, Bannu, Dera Ismail Khan – and tribal areas along the Durand line. Owing to its geo-strategic location, its proximity with an international border (Durand Line) and the fighting nature of tribesmen, the tribal areas were placed under direct control of the government of India with very little administrative interference.<sup>94</sup> Situated between the two countries, keeping tribal areas peaceful was a difficult task. Tribal areas are/were composed of numerous tribes- *Afridis, Shenwaris, Mahsuds, Wazirs, Burkis, Mohmands* etc each headed by its own chieftain. In Pashto language, a dictum defines the tribal *Pakhtoons* propensity for fighting. It says: *when you see an unhappy Pakhtoon; it means he is not fighting.*<sup>95</sup> According to one interviewee, ‘the British government used different tools to pacify them like official bribery to the tribal chieftains, the golden and experienced principle of Divide(ing the tribes) and Rule,

<sup>88</sup> WO 32/7560, National Archives London (NAL).

<sup>89</sup> FO 538/2, Documents illustrating the more political aspects of the Bolshevik Revolution, NAL.

<sup>90</sup> GFM 33/2334, World War I: General HQ: Treaties of Brest-Litovsk and Bucharest, June 1917 - Sept 1918. NAL. Also see *Administration of the Punjab*, p.28.

<sup>91</sup> N.C. Sinha and P.N. Khera, *India's War Economy – Supply, Industry, and Finance* (Official History of the Indian Armed Forces in the Second World War, 1939-45, general editor, Bisheshwar Parasad) (New Delhi: Orient Longmans, 1962), pp.15-16.

<sup>92</sup> War Staff 'WS' Series Files: File WS 3048: IOR/L/WS/1/281, 1920-1934, BL.

<sup>93</sup> WO 33/1266, Plan of Operations in the event of War with Afghanistan, 1927, NAL.

<sup>94</sup> Ijaz Hussain Peshori, *Humaray Kaba'ili Hurria-tpassand* [Our Tribal Freedom-Fighters], (Peshawar: Khyber Press, 1949), Vol. 1, Section 7.5, p.34, National Archives Peshawar (NAP). The volume is mostly based on recorded interviews.

<sup>95</sup> Interview with Wali Ghaznavi.

arresting one in place of another from the family, and blatant use of force'.<sup>96</sup> A local militia or '*khasadar* force was setup, contributed by the tribesmen loyal to the *Raj*. Each Chieftain had a quota of his tribe to contribute to the militia. The bigger the quota, the more awe of the Chieftain in the society and hence more loyalty to the British.

Soon the *Khasadar* force became a kind of police of the area.<sup>97</sup> The regular troops were limited to key strategic army fortifications for reinforcing the militia (in local language, the militia was/is called *Khasadars*).<sup>98</sup> It was reported that there were 72 expeditions against these tribes from 1850 to 1922, an average of one expedition per year.<sup>99</sup> The major army operations included 'Chitral 1896, Malakand 1897, the Waziri tribe 1901-2, 1919 and 1937, the Mahsuds 1925, and the Mohmands 1933'.<sup>100</sup>

Army expeditions in the tribal areas demonstrate that the military in general and the indigenously recruited military in particular provided not only external security but also internal order to prolong and firm the establishment of the British *Raj*. Indeed, it was a difficult task for the civilian administration to keep order and stability without employing the British Army against the challengers. Hence, to keep order, the civilian administration had to use militarised civilian powers. An average of one expedition per year showed that it was not a novel practice for the civilian administration to control internal disturbance by the use of British military might. In the past, 'the Company's dominance in North India was based on its superior military power'.<sup>101</sup> The force that kept the British in India was the army.

## **1.6 Social and Psychological Influences on Indigenous Soldiers**

An army recruited, trained and disciplined in military ethos was a strong support for the British military campaigns – at home as well as abroad. Influenced and impressed by the British traditions, norms and values, the recruits looked up to their foreign military leaders. Their mental calibre and approach to life was also influenced

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<sup>96</sup> Interview with Malik Nadir Khan of Derra Adam Khail. Mr. Khan, former MNA, remained chief of his tribe during 1950-90. The interview was conducted in Pashto, the local language of tribal area. (Kohat, 16-03-07)

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> James W. Spain, 'Political Problems of a Borderland', in Ainslie T. Embree (ed.), *Pakistan's Western Borderlands* (Durham: Carolina Academic Press, 1977), pp.1-23. He also mentions this militia in another paper, 'The Pathan Borderland', *The Middle Eastern Journal* (Vol. 15, No.2, Spring 1961), pp. 165-177

<sup>99</sup> RCIO, p.94

<sup>100</sup> Ijaz Hussain Peshori, *Humaray Kaba'ili Hurriyat-passand*, p.34.

<sup>101</sup> Seema Alvi, *The Sepoys and the Company*, p. 3.

by foreign expeditions. Punjabis fought in nearly all arenas of the [first] Great War: France and Belgium, Gallipoli and Salonika, Aden and the Persian Gulf, Mesopotamia, Egypt, East Africa, North China.<sup>102</sup> They were exposed to a new and different world beyond their cloistered village. They saw lands and technological advances that they had never envisioned. Their perspective was enlarged. This opened them to a new world, one greater than and different from the peasantry class under the *Zamindar* (landholder) of their villages. They saw Western civilisation more closely during their service in Europe. The colonial master also showed himself more splendidly in London. Peasant-soldiers were impressed by the magnificent civic life of London and Paris. Their interaction with the educated class, especially women,<sup>103</sup> led them to reflect on the comparisons between the life of a woman in Europe and in their respective villages in the Punjab. High levels of cleanliness and sanitation;<sup>104</sup> wax statues at Madame Tussaud's<sup>105</sup> museum and their amazement at the London underground<sup>106</sup> train network all left an impression on the Indian soldiers, as collections of their letters reveal. They were immersed in new thoughts and concepts when they returned to their bullock-cart, plough, and indebtedness after the War was over. They had many stories to tell. The soldiers on leave home or after retirement provided useful propaganda for the '*Gora Sahib*' [Mr. Whiteman], giving a good impression to the civil society for the British.<sup>107</sup> One Punjabi Muslim wrote from Boulogne in his mail: 'When one considers this country and these people in comparison with our own country and our own people one cannot but be distressed. Our country is poor and feeble and its lot is very depressed... In fact they [the British] have a real moral superiority'.<sup>108</sup> Their exposure to the outside world also brought with it prosperity and a positive change in soldiers' lives. In a time-and-land-locked social capsule, this much traveled "cosmopolitan" rose to a new social status and acquired a new influence in society. Folk songs of the time reflected their growing

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<sup>102</sup> *Memorandum on India's Contribution to the War in Men, Material, and Money. August 1914-November 1918*, p.03, Asia and Africa Collection, BL.

<sup>103</sup> *Censor of Indian Mails, 1917-18*, [henceforth called *CoIMs*], part 6, p. 757, no.1, 30 December 1917, Asia and Africa Collection, British Library (Censored correspondence of Indian troops in World War I. Not all letters in the censor's reports gave details of the names of correspondents, the places they were in, or the date, nor was every letter numbered. All were English translations.)

<sup>104</sup> *CoIMs, 1914-15*, part 1, p. 26, 18 January 1915.

<sup>105</sup> *CoIMs, 1914-18*, part 2, p. 338, no.12, 18 April 1916.

<sup>106</sup> *CoIMs, 1915-16*, part 7, p. 1198, no.32, October 1915.

<sup>107</sup> Interview with Malik Nadir Khan.

<sup>108</sup> A Punjabi Muslim serving as a packer in the Indian Base Post Office in Boulogne to a friend in Rawalpindi, *CoIMs, 1914-15*, part 1, p. 49, no.1, 02 February 1915.

social status and importance: “*Vasna fauji de naal, paanway boot sanay lat maaray*” (I will live with a soldier even if he kicks me with his boot on).<sup>109</sup> Therefore, given that two-thirds of the Indian Army was recruited from within [Punjab’s] borders the Punjabi soldier was the chief recipient of societal awe.<sup>110</sup>

Salary, living conditions, facilities for the soldiers’-families, post-retirement benefits and rewards were offered with distinction (*Jagirs*-grants of land- were sanctioned annually)<sup>111</sup> so that the military service would remain attractive to forthcoming generations. The British Empire in return, gained the security and control of the ‘Golden Sparrow’ – India. By now the primary focus of the Raj was to keep firm control over India, so that very little attention was given to the social and developmental civilian sector. As stated earlier, colonial control of India was via the Army. Hence, more and more funds and resources were available for the single largest item in India’s annual budget- Defence Expenditure.

**Table 6.**

<b>The expenditures on Military Services 1914-1947 in India(in Rupees)<sup>112</sup></b>		
1914-15	306.5 million	
1918-19	640.7 million	Rise
1920-21	873.8 million	Rise
1931-32	517.6 million	Fall
1936-37	454.5 million	Fall
1933-34	£1,500,000	British government began to contribute to India’s military expenditure every year
April 1939	£2,000,000	British contribution per year increased.
September 1939- 1944-45	4583.2 million	Steep rise due to World War 2 (excluding British Contribution)
1945-46	3953.2 million	End of the war eased the financial Burdon
1946-47	2096.1 million	Still higher than the pre-war expenditure

The British controlled and defended the entire subcontinent by focusing and working on only one section of the society - the Army. The Army provided a security umbrella against any kind of threat to internal peace or external aggression. Hence,

<sup>109</sup> Ahsan, Desai, *Divided by Democracy*, p.92.

<sup>110</sup> Rajit K. Mazumder, *The Indian Army and the Making of Punjab*, (New Delhi: Pauls Press, 2003), p.30; Also Malcolm Lyall Darling, *Wisdom and Waste in the Punjab Village* (London: Oxford University Press, 1934), p. 331. Darling made two tours across the whole Punjab province in 1928-9 and 1930-1. His first book describes his reflections during his first tour to the Punjab province titled: *The Old Light and the New in the Punjab Village* (London: OUP, 1930).

<sup>111</sup> Field Marshal Roberts, *Forty-one years in India*, II, p.443.

<sup>112</sup> The figure is prepared after taking data from N.C. Sinha and P.N. Khera, *India’s War Economy – Supply, Industry, and Finance*, pp. 293-302, 320-339.

heavy spending on the Army was an investment for long-term goals. The significant sums expended for the defence budget became a tradition that continued even after partition of 1947 by the successor states. India and Pakistan's defence budgets continued to grow.

### 1.7 'Indianisation' of the British Army

No Indian was allowed to become a direct commissioned officer until the end of the First World War. They could become Viceroy's Commissioned Officers (VCOs) or junior commissioned officers. The highest rank an Indian could achieve was that of Subedar-Major.

**Table 7: VCOs equivalent to KCOs**

VCOs	KCOs
Jemadar	Second- Lieutenant
Subedar	Lieutenant
Subedar- Major	Major

The VCO was a promoted cadre from the lower ranks and served as a middle rank between the ordinary soldiers and the Commissioned officers, called King's Commissioned Officers (KCOs), at the Company level, but the holder of a 'Viceroy's Commission', whatever his experience and length of service, was lower in rank and command than the most newly joined of British subalterns.<sup>113</sup> Below the KCOs and VCOs, the Indian Army had a series of non-commissioned officer positions like: Rifleman (private), *Lance-naik* (Corporal), *Havildar* (Sergeant), *Havildar Major* and quarter master *Havildars* of various levels. As the British were keen to keep an Indian aristocratic class on their side, Lord Curzon introduced the ICC (Imperial Cadet Corps) or ISC (Imperial Service Corps<sup>114</sup>) in 1901, in which the sons of Princes and the wealthy classes more generally could assume officer ranks. It was designated '*His Majesty's Native Indian Land Forces*'.<sup>115</sup> Their training was wholly conducted in India. However, they were not at *par* with the KCOs, which were still the domain of the British. By 1911, 78 Indians had joined the ICC.<sup>116</sup> The role of the ICC was

<sup>113</sup> RCIO, p.129.

<sup>114</sup> Percival Spear, *A History of India*, Vol. 2, (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd, 1968), p.175.

<sup>115</sup> S.L.Menezes, *Fidelity and Honour*, p.224.

<sup>116</sup> Correspondence regarding the Imperial Cadet Corps &c. India Office Mil Dept, 1911. IOR/L/MIL/17/5/1749 1911; also IOR/L/MIL/17/5/1750. BL.

essentially ceremonial. These officers did not have any power of command over British personnel. In the Indian Army, they could not rise above the level of squadron or company officer. It was not surprising that the total number was dropped gradually to 11 by 1914. But it was, as Byron Farewell says, the first small step towards the ‘Indianisation’ of the Indian Army officer corps.<sup>117</sup>

There was no concept of an indigenous army in British India until the late nineteenth century. The First World War proved the worth of the Indian soldier. The Indianite ranks in the British Army were also a demand by political parties of India. The blunt demand in this respect was found in the ‘Report of the Committee appointed by the All-Parties Conference, 1928, to determine the principles of the constitution for India,’ which was commonly called the ‘Nehru Report’. Though no passage is found in the Report itself, or in the sketch of recommendations in Chapter 7 of the document, the Army matter was touched upon in the introduction. It states that the authors recommend the transfer of control over the Indian Army to Ministers. The author of the report quoted Professor Keith’s pungent observation, ‘Self-Government without an effective Indian Army is [an] impossibility, and no amount of protests or demonstrations or denunciations of the Imperial Government can avail to alter that fact’. Criticising the statement, they added: ‘This is true but we do not accept the constitutional position that without an Indian or Dominion army, India cannot obtain Dominion status. In the first place the Indian Army has not to be created; it exists there already. In the next place historically the position taken by our critics is not correct’.<sup>118</sup>

The First World War compelled the British to take drastic steps in regard to the colonies. One such change was in August 1917 when the Secretary of State for India Edwin Montagu, in his famous statement on ‘increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration’, announced admission to the commissioned cadres for Indians.<sup>119</sup> The Montagu-Chelmsford Report was written during the Great

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<sup>117</sup> Byron Farewell, *Armies of the Raj*, p. 217.

<sup>118</sup> *All Parties Conference (Nehru) Committee 1928: Report. Allahabad; All India Congress Committee, 1928* IOR/V/26/261/14 1928. Asia, Pacific and Africa Collections, British Library. Also *The Nehru Report: An anti-separatist Manifesto/the committee appointed by the All Parties Conference 1928*, (New Delhi: Michiko & Panjathan, under the auspices of the Indian Institute of Applied Political Research, 1975); First ed. published on 12 August, 1928 by the All India Congress Committee, Allahabad, under title: *Report of the Committee appointed by the Conference to determine the principles of the Constitution for India*.

<sup>119</sup> Anirudh Deshpande, *British Military Policy in India, 1900-1945: Colonial Constraints and Declining Power*, (New Delhi: Manohar, 2005), pp.90-91.



War. In the three paragraphs (328-330) which it devoted to the subject of the Army, the way in which the services of the Indian Army in various theatres of war had been and would be recognised was discussed. The authors mentioned the announcement of His Majesty's Government that the bar which had hitherto prevented the admission of Indians into the commissioned ranks of His Majesty's Army should be removed. It further declared that this decision had established the principle that an Indian soldier could earn the King's Commission by his military conduct. This apparently referred to promotion from the ranks. The Report went on to say that other methods of appointment had not yet been decided upon, and emphasised 'the necessity of grappling with the problem'. As discussed in the earlier paragraph about the demand of Indian leadership for the commissioned ranks for Indians, the Report stated "it is impossible to deal with this large question in connection with our present proposals. The war is yet not over... The requirements of the future will very largely depend upon the form of peace which is attained. We, therefore, leave this question for consideration hereafter, but with the note that it must be faced and settled"<sup>120</sup>.

The authors of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report admired the services rendered to the common cause by Indian arms. They contented themselves with noting the urgency and importance of the Army question that would emerge after peace had been restored. However, no concrete steps were taken for the general commissioning of Indians. Therefore, the start of the *Indianisation* of commissioned ranks was rather slow. Under the pressure of the Montagu-Chelmsford proposed reforms, 'in 1918 a change was made [according to which] the Indians became eligible for the first time to hold the King's Commission. Ten vacancies were annually reserved for Indian cadets for competition amongst themselves at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst'.<sup>121</sup> Completion of the course here was a must to get the King's Commission for an Indian. Keeping in view the colonial legacy and loyalty to the Raj, the Indian government selected the candidates preferring favourites of the Raj- sons of loyal and politically influential families. The debut Commissioned Indian batch that passed out from Sandhurst was posted in Infantry and Cavalry in 1920.<sup>122</sup> A cadet

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<sup>120</sup> Montagu-Chelmsford Report Para. 328, Mss Eur F170/36, April 1918, Asia, Pacific and Africa Collections, BL.

<sup>121</sup> RCIO, p.129

<sup>122</sup> Major General Iskander Mirza, Governor General (1955-56) and President (1956-58) of Pakistan belonged to the first batch of Sandhurst.

college was also opened in *Indore* in 1918, which granted permanent commission to its 32 graduates in 1919.<sup>123</sup>

Many factors contributed to Indians' lack of interest in getting their sons admitted to or commissioned from Sandhurst. Very tough *modus operandi* of selection, huge expenses, travel to England, and a weak academic record as compared to the British students discouraged Indian cadets. It further contributed to their high rate of failure (30%) in the early years as compared to their British counterparts (3%).<sup>124</sup> As there was some criticism in British circles regarding the Indianisation of Commissioned ranks, 'an Eight Unit Scheme was introduced by the then C-in-C Lord Rawlinson in 1923'.<sup>125</sup> According to the scheme, it was obligatory for every Indian KCO to spend his first year with the British regiment in India before he was posted on a permanent basis in one of eight units selected in 1923 for complete Indianisation.<sup>126</sup> Indian officers holding commissions in the Indian Army were to be transferred and posted to these eight units. In this way they could fill up the appointments for which they were qualified by their rank and by their length of service. The purpose of such a scheme was four fold: to limit Indian KCOs to these Units; in due course such units would be entirely officered by Indians; to keep the British Officers in to command Indian Officers over and above; and to accelerate the pace of *Indianisation*. As the senior officers retired and junior officers acquired seniority and were promoted, the time could have come when each of these Indian Units would be commanded and completely officered by Indians. However, it was a very lethargic process based on slow progression. The process could not be completed 'until the year 1946 at the earliest, since in the Indian Army promotion was regulated by a time scale'.<sup>127</sup>

International relations between the two world wars brought about further changes in the British approach towards its colonies. It had to introduce positive measures to keep the empire from disintegration. Hence, during the inter-war period, not only were reforms introduced but various recommendations were put forth for the

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<sup>123</sup> General K. M. Cariappa, first Indian Army Chief of the Indian Army (1949-53) got the King's Commission in 1919 after graduating from the Indore College.

<sup>124</sup> Collection 430/49 Part 1 Reports on examination of Indian candidates for Sandhurst, May, September 1923, May 1924, September 1925. IOR/L/MIL/7/19058 1923-1926. Also see Collection 430/49 Part 2, 1927-1928. IOR/L/MIL/7/19059 1927-1930, BL.

<sup>125</sup> RCIO, p.129.

<sup>126</sup> Indianisation of the Indian Army. CAB 24/190, 20 December 1927. BL. The eight Unit Scheme was comprised of following Units that were selected for induction of Indian Officers: 7<sup>th</sup> Light Cavalry, 16<sup>th</sup> Light Cavalry, 21 Madras Pioneers, 4-19<sup>th</sup> Hyderabad Regiment, 5<sup>th</sup> Maratha Light Infantry, 1-7<sup>th</sup> Rajput Regiment, 1-14<sup>th</sup> Punjab Regiment, and 2-1<sup>st</sup> Punjab Regiment.

<sup>127</sup> RCIO, p.102.

increase of Indians in the British Army. General Henry Rawlinson the British C-in-C in 1921 recommended an increase in Indian Officers.<sup>128</sup> In March 1922, a pre-cadet college – the Prince of Wales Royal Indian Military College – was established in *Dehra Dun* to prepare young men for Sandhurst.<sup>129</sup> A committee was appointed in June 1925 under Major General Sir Andrew Skeen (at that time, it was popularly known as ‘Indian Sandhurst Committee’ but later on called ‘Skeen Committee’) to establish a military college along the lines of Sandhurst in India and to discuss prospects to increase the number of Indian candidates for the King’s Commission.<sup>130</sup> The committee visited different military institutions which included: England, France, Canada and the US and were given briefings from the officers and trainers alike.<sup>131</sup> At the end of the study tour and following long deliberations, the committee submitted a report in 1926. It recommended an increase in the pace of Indianisation; induction of Indians to the commissioned ranks in the technical branches of the Army as well as the Air Force; abandonment of the Eight Units Scheme, and the establishment of a military college in India.<sup>132</sup> The first two recommendations were accepted by the British government. Instead of the last two recommendations, the government increased the Indian quota at Sandhurst to twenty-five. It also created six vacancies per year at the Royal Air Force College, Cranwell, to train Indians as pilots, and six places at the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, to train Indian officers for the artillery.<sup>133</sup> Regarding the establishment of a military college in India, Indians were not yet filling all the 10 vacancies annually at Sandhurst. The following figure shows the annual number of Indian Cadets admitted to the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, since 1918, and their disposal. The result was disappointing. Therefore, the recommendation for the establishment of a military college in India was declined by the British Government.

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<sup>128</sup> 430/35 Part 2 Formation of Royal Indian Military College, *Dehra Dun* for preparing Indians for commissions: terms of service of masters, matron, commandant, etc. IOR/L/MIL/7/19043, 1926-1940, Asia, Pacific and Africa Collection, BL.

<sup>128</sup> 430/36 Part 1 Indianisation of Indian Army: report and recommendations of committee appointed to examine question in India. IOR/L/MIL/7/19044 1921-1943.

<sup>129</sup> 430/35, IOR/L/MIL/7/19043, 1926-1940, BL

<sup>130</sup> RCIO, p.102.

<sup>131</sup> Riaz Ahmed, Quaid-i-Azam and Indianisation of Officer Ranks of Army, *Pakistan Army Journal*, (Vol. 35, No.3, Autumn 1994), pp.3-21.

<sup>132</sup> 430/62 Indianisation: Government of India proposals on Indian "Sandhurst" committee's report. IOR/L/MIL/7/19092, 1927-1928.

<sup>133</sup> 430/55 Appendix 1 Indian "Sandhurst" committee's report: Legislative Assembly debates. IOR/L/MIL/7/19084 1927.

**Table 8: Annual Numbers of Indians to (Royal Military College) Sandhurst.<sup>134</sup>**

YEAR	Number of vacancies for Indians at Sandhurst	Number of Indians admitted to Sandhurst to fill such vacancies	Number of Indians ultimately commissioned
1918 (first half)	5	5	1
1919 (first half)	5	5	4
1919 (second half)	5	5	2
1920 (first half)	5	5	3
1920 (second half)	5	5	2
1921 (first half)	5	5	4
1921 (second half)	5	4	3
1922 (first half)	6	4	4
1922 (second half)	6	6	3
1923 (first half)	6	6	5
1923 (second half)	7	6	6
1924 (first half)	6	6	4
1924 (second half)	6	5	4
1925 (first half)	7	5	4
1925 (second half)	8	2	1
1926 (first half)	12	8	7
1926 (second half)	8	8	8
1927 (first half)	7	7	7
1927 (second half)	5	3	3
1928 (first half)	7	3	2
1928 (second half)	10	7	-
1929 (first half)	11	11	-
1929 (second half)	10	10	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>77</b>

Up to and including the first half of 1928, vacancies were filled by nomination, after that date by examination.

**Table 9: Summary of vacancies for Indians at Sandhurst (till 1929).<sup>135</sup>**

	Number
Total number of vacancies	157
Total number of admissions (including 3 VCs nominated in 1928 & 1929 but not shown in the figure above)	134
Total number commissioned	77
Died or resigned from illness	03
Failed to receive commissions (prior to 1927)	22
Presently, the number of cadets at Sandhurst (1929)	22

It was first decided to admit Indians and Anglo-Indians to Woolwich in 1928, and, by 1929, nine vacancies were offered. But there were only two successful

<sup>134</sup> RCIO, p.104

<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

candidates. Similarly, the first examination for Cranwell was held in November 1928 and, by the end of 1929, twelve vacancies had been offered but only six filled.<sup>136</sup> Ayub Khan was also chosen for training as a commissioned officer at Sandhurst. He did remarkably well, securing the top position among the Indian cadets. Among his colleagues was General J. N. Choudhry who later became C-in-C of the Indian Army.<sup>137</sup>

The demand for the Indianisation of the forces did not end with the submission of the Skeen report. The issue was taken up once again during the Round Table conference when its sub-committee on military affairs made a demand on similar lines, including setting up a military college in India on the Sandhurst model.<sup>138</sup> Finally, the struggle was accomplished in the shape of the establishment of an Indian Military Academy at *Dehra Dun* in October 1932.<sup>139</sup> Its first batch, commissioned in 1935, were called Indian Commissioned Officers (ICOs).<sup>140</sup>

After the Second World War, the Eight Unit Scheme was brought to an end, and all the branches of the army were opened to Indian officers. Training facilities at *Dehra Dun* were expanded. A large number of officers were recruited on short and long courses (short and emergency commissions). By early 1947, out of 9500 Commissioned Officers, about 500 were pre-war KCOs and ICOs.<sup>141</sup>

Only nine Indians (five non-Muslims, four Muslims) reached the senior rank of Lt. Colonel during World War II. Out of four Muslim Lt. Colonels, one was appointed temporary Colonel and one acting Brigadier. A few days before independence, the acting Brigadier Muhammad Akbar Khan was promoted to the rank of Major General. Promotions were given on similar lines to others in the substantive ranks below that of Lt. Colonel. The officers recruited during the war period were in junior positions.<sup>142</sup> Ayub Khan was then a Brigadier in the Indian Army and was attached to the Boundary Force, under Major General Rees. In January 1948, five

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<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

<sup>137</sup> Altaf Gauhar, *Ayub Khan: Pakistan's First Military Ruler*, (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. xxxiv.

<sup>138</sup> Memorandum, CP 179 (31), *Indianization of Indian Army*, Wedgwood Benn, Records of the Cabinet Office, Papers Nos. 151(31) - 204(31), 29 / 0029, CAB 24/222, 17 July 1931.

<sup>139</sup> Expansion of Prince of Wales Royal Indian Military College, Dehra Dun, IOR/L/MIL/7/19133, 1923-1933.

<sup>140</sup> 430/106 Report on quality of cadets at Indian Military Academy; reports on final passing out examinations. IOR/L/MIL/7/19145 1934-1941.

<sup>141</sup> Hassan Askari Rizvi, *Military, State and Society in Pakistan*, p.49.

<sup>142</sup> Hassan Askari Rizvi, *The Military and Politics in Pakistan*, pp.31-32.

months after Independence, he was posted as General Officer Commanding (GOC) of 14 Division in East Bengal.<sup>143</sup>

The army was always a very special and private concern of the British in India. They kept it away from any kind of politics. Rather, in case of any clash between the country's politics and security, they favoured the latter. Even as late as 1946, the Viceroy's civilian Executive council had no powers over defence and the defence budget. The British Indian Army was kept free from a strong influence on Indian politics as there was no synthesis between the two. Defence had nothing to do with the politics of the country. Thus the British-Indian Army proved an autonomous entity. Their training (discipline and professionalism) and separation from the society strengthened their organisational ties and loyalty to the British authority. The army's administrative and professional powers were concentrated in the hands of the Army chief, who after the Curzon-Kitchener dispute emerged autonomous in military affairs. This was the beginning of the exclusion of army matters from civilian control. The contest between the *Mulki Lat Sahib* [Curzon] and the *Jungi Lat Sahib* [Kitchener] weakened forever the once great influence of the Viceroy of India.<sup>144</sup>

It is interesting to note here that most of the Governor Generals and Viceroys of India were formerly military officers. One Governor – Robert Clive<sup>145</sup> (Dec. 1756-Feb. 1760, April 1765-Jan. 1767) – and three Governor Generals – Lord Cornwallis<sup>146</sup> (Sept. 1786-Oct. 1793 and July 1805-Oct. 1805), the Marquis of Hastings, Lord Francis Moria (Oct.1813- Jan. 1823), and Lord William Bentinck<sup>147</sup> (1828-35) – functioned as C-in-Cs. Field Marshal Sir Archibald Wavell, C-in-C, 1941-42, 1942-3<sup>148</sup> was promoted to the post of Viceroy in 1943,<sup>149</sup> a position he held until March 1947. At this time, few could have imagined that this trajectory would later be used by junior officers as a short path to become military rulers of the future state in the North-West of the subcontinent.

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<sup>143</sup> Altaf Gauhar, *Ayub Khan: Pakistan's First Military Ruler*, pp. xxxiv, xxxv.

<sup>144</sup> Walter Roper Lawrence, *The India We Served*, (London: Cassell & Company, Ltd, 1928), pp.246-47. NLS.

<sup>145</sup> PRO 30/53/8/126, GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE, 1681-1772. NAL.

<sup>146</sup> PRO 30/11/270; 30/11/269, 'Letters to Lord Cornwallis from many important people'. NAL.

<sup>147</sup> PRO 30/9/4/12. NAL.

<sup>148</sup> CAB 64/44/31. NAL.

<sup>149</sup> PREM 5/532. NAL.

Indian politicians made several demands for legislative control over defence forces, the defence budget and foreign policy during the 1920s and 30s.<sup>150</sup> Any such control by the politicians would have been a British nightmare. Politicising the British Indian Army was the last thing the British could ever imagine.<sup>151</sup> The Esher Committee (1919-20) maintained that the Indian Army was a unit in the security system of the British Empire and that its administration could not be dissociated from the total armed forces of the empire.<sup>152</sup> There were many political activities that provided acid tests for the army, but the Army personnel held on to their professional ethos and stood by the British administration. The Punjab, with its hardy and martial rural population of peasant proprietors, had, since its inclusion in the Empire, been rightly regarded as the “Shield”, the “Spearhead” and the “Sword-hand” of India. ‘It earned such proud titles due to its association with the British Army and help in every Eastern campaign from the Mutiny down to the present day’.<sup>153</sup> A colonial army had to serve colonial masters. The autonomous nature of the colonial army chief and military affairs remained unchanged even after the independence of Pakistan.

### **Conclusion:**

This essay has provided a historical overview of currents and trends of the British Indian Army. These developments transformed a segment of the British Indian Army into the Pakistan Army. The impact of the 1857 Uprising on regional recruitment to the British military played a large part in the *de-Bengalisation* and consequent *Punjabisation* of the Colonial Indian Army; a punishment for Bengal as a region that had rebelled and a reward to the Punjab that aid in the suppression of the Uprising. As a result, it is argued that this shift gave civil and military leadership to the Punjab after the partition, which contributed to Punjabi dominance over other provinces following independence.

The post-partition Indian security threat to the newly carved out Pakistan, as well as the first Kashmir war of 1948, resulted in an increase in the Pakistan Army’s strategic importance within the country. Security against India became the *raison*

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<sup>150</sup> *The Nehru Report: An anti-separatist Manifesto/the committee appointed by the All Parties Conference 1928*, (New Delhi: Michiko & Panjathan, under the auspices of the Indian Institute of Applied Political Research, 1975).

<sup>151</sup> Interview with General (Rtd.) Kamal Matinuddin (Islamabad, 23-03-07).

<sup>152</sup> *India in 1920*, (Official publication of the Government of India), pp. 16-17. NLS.

<sup>153</sup> Michael O’Dwyer, *India As I Knew It*, p.213.

*d'etre* of the Army. The military leadership and political administration considered it necessary to strengthen the army against any potential security threat. The political forces of the country, due to the fear of India, also accommodated the Army in the national and international decisions of the government. This encouraged it to increase its political influence. Historically, 65 to 75% of the Pakistan army was drawn during the 1950s and 60s from the same areas of the Punjab where the British formerly used to recruit.<sup>154</sup> This was the culmination of the *Punjabisation* of the Army initiated by the British during and after the Mutiny war of 1857. However, even after independence, the Pakistan Army was still following the trend set in colonial times - recruiting more Punjabis and discouraging Bengalis. That is one of the main reasons why despite constituting 56% of the total population of Pakistan, Bengalis made up less than 7% in the Pakistan Army during the 1960s.<sup>155</sup> The Pakistan Army always demonstrated a lack of trust towards Bengalis, as had the British, and doubted their loyalty to the state. This further alienated them from the ranks of governmental administration.

The Pakistan Army borrowed numerous other autonomous features from the British Army. Intensive training with an emphasis on discipline and efficiency and their separation from the fragmented Pakistani society turned the Pakistani soldiers into a professional, united and autonomous fighting force. However, they formed a force parallel with the government of Pakistan. As the country was a security-oriented entity, any important decision taken by the initial governments of Pakistan needed a nod from the Army's General Headquarters (GHQ). The meeting of the Corps Commanders turned into a kind of a domestic and foreign policy reviewing committee. Sought in the name of Islam and democracy, Pakistan was moving closer towards the form of a military dictatorship.

During colonial rule, the swelling defence budget was a prerequisite for keeping a strong British Army against internal and external threats. However, this practice was continued by the Pakistan Army at the cost of the development of civilian sectors. The defence budget grew in the name of a perceived Indian threat. If the nation could not provide enough for development of the Army, military alliances were signed with the US to muster more resources. Whatever the plight of the nation,

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<sup>154</sup> Interview with Brigadier (Rtd.) Inam-ul-Haq Afridi, (Peshawar, 20-06-07)

<sup>155</sup> Air Chief Marshall @ Muhammad Asghar Khan, '*Tareekh say kuch nahin sikha- Siyyasat aur Afwaj-e-Pakistan*' (We learnt nothing from history, Politics and Pakistan Army) An autobiography, (Karachi: OUP, 2005), p.21.



the Army remained a well-developed, well-nourished, well-trained, well-equipped, well-organised, united and well-off autonomous institution within Pakistan.

The manner in which the British Indian Army was groomed within the province of Punjab ultimately enormously affected Pakistan. At the time of partition, relatively but significantly speaking, Pakistan had neither a bourgeoisie, nor a strong middle class. It lacked a business class. The Punjab was the power centre of the country, but it lacked an industrial establishment. Aitzaz Ahsan contends that the British intentionally kept the Punjab industrially backwards as it might have affected recruitment if other means of livelihood, except agriculture, were available to the Punjabis.<sup>156</sup> The absence of a Bourgeoisie increased the influence of feudal elites. The landowning aristocracy were in favour of the British due to the benefits they received from them in exchange for contributing *Jawans* and *Sawars* to the Army.<sup>157</sup> Thus, the tradition of British military recruitment in the North West of the subcontinent (Punjab and NWFP), was a major factor in the emergence of Pakistan as a quasi-militarised country. It was a country with a weak political structure, feeble political parties and politicians, but a strong feudal class and civil and military bureaucracy. This naturally ‘consolidated the linkages between the military service, agricultural land and political power’.<sup>158</sup> Hence the Muslim League, due to its weak control within the newly created country, had to abdicate in favour of a stronger giant, the Pakistan Army. With the firm support of the feudal class, more agricultural land under its domain, and with its organisational and professional culture, the Pakistan Army began to assert its political role in the hub of the country’s politics. The irony of fate is that it lacked political training. Hence, the Army ran the country like a defence establishment by increasing the defence budget, having defence pacts, and appointing defence services people in the policy making bodies of the country, with effects that ultimately were to be deleterious in the future development of the county.

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<sup>156</sup> Ahsan, Desai, *Divided by Democracy*, p.94.

<sup>157</sup> Ian Talbot, *Pakistan: A Modern History*, (London: Hurst & Co, 1998) pp.43-44.

<sup>158</sup> Imran Anwar Ali, ‘Business and Power in Pakistan’ article in *Power and Civil Society in Pakistan* p.104.

