

INTERACTION WITH SOME POLITICIANS

INTERACTION WITH SOME POLITICIANS

THE STORY OF THE THREE PHOTOGRAPHS

When I was studying at Aitchison in 1941, I wrote letters to Mr. Jinnah, Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru asking for their signed photographs.

All three replied:

Mr. Jinnah's secretary said that I could get his photograph from Saroni Studio in New Delhi.

Mr. Gandhi's secretary suggested that I should send Mr. Gandhi's photograph along with Rs.5 for the Harijan Fund and Mr. Gandhi would be happy to put his signature on the photograph.

By the time, my letter reached Pandit Nehru, he was already in prison in Dehra Dun after the start in July 1942 of Congress's Quit India Movement. Pandit Nehru wrote that he did not have a photograph in jail and that I should remind him when he was a free man again. I did this and he was gracious enough to send me a signed photograph.

The photographs and the replies I received from the three leading statesmen of the sub-continent are shown here.

THE QUAID-E-AZAM

If there was any legal issue with our contracts, my father would, in important cases, seek Mr. Jinnah's advice as a lawyer. He introduced my brother, Bhai Wajid, to Mr. Jinnah when Bhai Wajid was based in Bombay looking after the business there, and he got to know Mr. Jinnah very well. During my holidays, I used to go to Bombay, where I was very well looked after by Bhai Wajid. He offered to introduce me to Mr. Jinnah and asked his P.A. if he could bring me over. The next day, Mr. and Miss Jinnah invited us for lunch and I remember a very embarrassing incident. We were served grapefruit, fish, and roast chicken with the skin on. When I tried to carve the chicken, a piece fell on to my lap! I picked it up with my hand and put it on the plate. I looked at Mr. Jinnah who pretended that he had not noticed. I can never forget that. He was a generous host.

My mother had a ladies party for Miss Jinnah – about 30-40 ladies attended including my sisters and nieces. My sister Fakhra and her daughters were very fond of singing and sang a number of songs for Miss Jinnah. One of the songs was based on the contemporary political situation in Punjab. At that time, there was a tussle going on between the Unionist Party and the Muslim League. Mr. Jinnah wanted Khizer Hayat to have a Muslim League flag in Punjab and not a Unionist flag and the British were urging Khizer not to become a Muslim Leaguer but to remain a Unionist. Khizer remained loyal to the British. Glancy was the Governor of Punjab at that time and he encouraged Khizer to oppose Mr. Jinnah, until the Governor retired and went away. Chhotu Ram was one of Khizer Hayat's ministers. He was a very fine gentleman, a Jat from Rohtak, who died in 1945. The song was based on a contemporary Indian song and went like this:

Jub tum he challe England bajja kur band
Glancy payara, Consull main kaun hamara
Ab jainay ki koi aas nahin
Ab Chhotu Ram bhi pass nahin

INTERACTION WITH SOME POLITICIANS



Guest House Hyderabad Dn
8th August 1941

MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD
MALABAR HILL
BOMBAY - INDIA

Dear Sir,

I beg to inform you that you can obtain the
photograph of Mr. Jinnah from "Sarony Studio",
Cannought Place, New Delhi.

Mr. Jinnah regrets that at present he has
no copy of his photograph to spare.

Yours faithfully

Sarony

Syed Babar Ali Esq

Letter from Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah's secretary

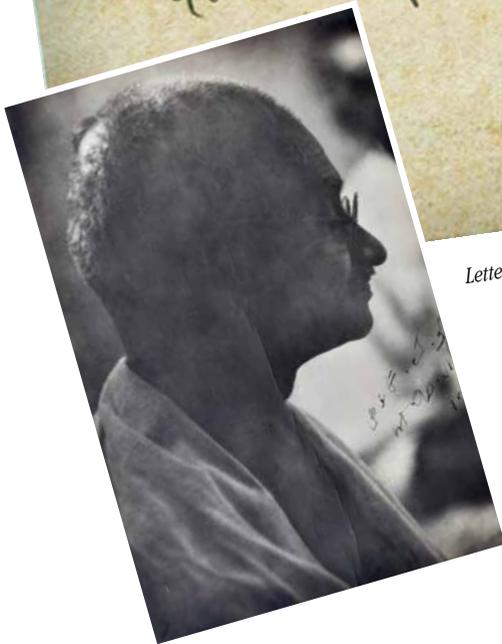
INTERACTION WITH SOME POLITICIANS

NEVAGRAM
Via WARDHA. (G. P.)

सेवाग्राम
बर्धा होकर (अन्ध प्रांत)

سیدو اگرام
براد واردها (سی-پی)
1-8-41

Dear friend, if you send a photograph
such as you like, and a donation of
at least Rs. 5/- for the Harijan fund,
with postage for returning the photo,
you can get Gandhi's autograph.
Yours truly
K. S. Mashruwala
Secy. Secy.



Letter from Mahatma Gandhi's Secretariat

INTERACTION WITH SOME POLITICIANS



Mr Jankhalal Nehru
Dishetgaol, Dehra Dun 198 M

2-52 Babar Ali
Dallhaus
NishalBach Rungar

Dear friend,
Your letter has reached me. I am afraid I
cannot send a photograph of mine from prison. I do not
keep that in prison, nor can I get things here for this purpose.
Later on, when I am in a position to send it to you, you
might remind me of it.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely
Jankhalal Nehru

Pandit Nehru's Letter

INTERACTION WITH SOME POLITICIANS

The next morning the servant of Nawab Mamdot came early and said that Miss Jinnah had asked for the Bibi (Manno, my niece) who sang the song last night. My sister lived in the house next to ours so I went and said, 'Manno, Miss Jinnah is calling you.' I had her readied quickly and we walked across the road to Mamdot House and were shown into the drawing room. After five minutes, Mr. Jinnah came in and Miss Jinnah said, 'Sing what you sang to me yesterday' and Manno took off immediately. With his monocle on, Mr. Jinnah said to me, 'Let her sing and you translate it for me.' Thus I saw the lighter side of Mr. Jinnah.

Mr. Jinnah was also most gracious. I remember that, on the day that we visited him at his home in Mount Pleasant, as we were leaving in the car, he came down to see us off and he said to my brother, 'Give my affectionate regards to your father.' I have not heard anybody claim that the Quaid would say this to anybody. He was renowned for being formal even with those he was closest to. In those days, the story went around that he wrote to his sister as 'Dear Miss Jinnah'!

Around 1945, Mr. Jinnah was a Member of the Parliament (Central Assembly) in Delhi and my father called for an appointment. Mr. Jinnah invited him to lunch and my father told him that I was with him so I had the honour to be invited to the lunch too. Another guest was Sheikh Ali Ahmed from Bombay, where he ran a carpet shop in the Fort area. Ali Ahmed had just been to England and met with Mr. Kendell, a Member of the British Parliament, who had invented a car similar to the Volkswagon that had been introduced in Germany as the people's car. Ali Ahmed was telling Mr. Jinnah about the merits of the car and that he was in negotiations with Kendell regarding the manufacture of the car in India. Mr. Jinnah suggested that Ali Ahmed should have the factory in Karachi and not Bombay; he was looking to the future, when Karachi would be in Pakistan. After lunch, my father and I accompanied Mr. Ahmed Ali to the Imperial Hotel where he showed us the details of the car. My father called up my brother, Bhai Wajid, and mentioned this meeting. My brother, who had the ability to judge people well, knew of Ahmed Ali's reputation and told my father straightaway not to take him seriously.

In 1946, the British were still talking of dominion status but some people in the Congress wanted complete independence. Gandhi was compromising on dominion status. I personally witnessed a very historical event. The Second Cabinet Mission plan, accepted by the Congress and the Muslim League, would have created three blocks, A, B, and C – A was Hindu majority, B was Muslim majority, and C was the Princely States. It was agreed that if after ten years these States did not get on well, they could part. We were all hoping that this plan would go forward. Nehru said that the constitution of India should be sovereign and they could just undo this agreement. Within a week of signing, the Congress went back on it. Mr. Jinnah called a meeting in Bombay of the Muslim League Council, the body that advised the Working Committee on the direction the League should take. At that time, I was in Bombay and I attended most of the sessions of this two-day meeting. The mood was one of defiance. People came to the rostrum and renounced their titles including my brother, Syed Amjad Ali, who was a CIE. My father was a Knight and he had gone to Mr. Jinnah to seek his advice. Mr. Jinnah asked him, 'Will renouncing the title hurt your business?' My father told him, 'My business is 100% with the British.' Mr. Jinnah said, 'I don't advise you to renounce the title because you are an asset to us.'

INTERACTION WITH SOME POLITICIANS

I remember Mr. Jinnah was sitting beside the dais and everybody else was sitting at ground level. Maulana Hasrat Mohani was sitting in the first row. He was one of the greatest political leaders of his era and a very fine poet. He used to have a blanket in which his clothes were bundled along with a 'jai namaz' and that used to be under his arm. He used to wear a Turkish cap and an *achkan*. This was all that he possessed and this is how he travelled. He was the one who defied Gandhi. He stood up and said, 'What you are doing is not enough, you have to go ten steps forward.' He suggested boycotting the British and direct action. That is the only time I saw Mr. Jinnah shout: 'Sit down.' Hasrat Mohani refused to sit down. At that meeting, Mr. Jinnah spoke with a lot of fervour. He said, 'We have been let down by the British. We have always been saying that Congress is not to be trusted.' Just before he sat down, he took a paper out of his *achkan* pocket and like a good lawyer read out in a very oratorical way the translation of a Firdausi couplet, which meant, 'if you want peace, we do not seek war but if you want war, you will have it unhesitatingly.' I remember reading the headline the next morning in the Times of India, which said 'Mr. Jinnah spoke with fire in his eyes'.

SIR SIKANDER HAYAT

Sir Sikander's two sons, Shaukat and Azmat, and his daughter, Tahira, were married on the same day in December 1942 but that very night Sir Sikander died of heart failure, which was a big loss to Punjab and the Muslims of India.

Sir Sikander Hayat was an outstanding politician and the Prime Minister of Punjab after the 1937 elections, heading the Unionist Party, which consisted of leading landlords among the Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs of the Punjab. He became the Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India when it was created. Prior to that, he was the first Muslim Governor of the Punjab. When, in summer, the Governor went on leave, Sir Sikander was the Acting Governor.

Sir Sikander was a man of complete integrity. I remember, at his eldest daughter Mahmooda's wedding, my father went and left a present. Sir Sikander himself came over to our house to give it back and said, 'I have very close relations with you but I just cannot take it because of my position.'

Sir Sikander Hayat had no property at all, not even his own house. Bhai Amjad at that time was the Parliamentary Secretary to the Unionist government and was very close to his family. He suggested to them that, in recompense for his work, the government should be asked to grant the family 2,000 acres of land. Mir Maqbool, from Amritsar and the brother of Sir Sikander's first wife, thought that the family should instead work towards getting Shaukat Hayat, his son-in-law, made a Minister in the Punjab Cabinet. The British conceded to this request as Sir Sikander Hayat was very well liked by them. Shaukat resigned his commission from the Army and was appointed Minister for Public Works in the Unionist government, under Malik Khizer Hayat as Prime Minister.

MALIK GHULAM MOHAMMAD – GOVERNOR GENERAL 1951-1955

Living in Bombay, Malik Ghulam Mohammad was a friend of my brothers, Syed Amjad Ali and Syed Wajid Ali. Towards the end of the War he was briefly a founding partner in 'Mohammad & Mahindra', an engineering manufacturing company, and he then worked in a top position in the Railways. After the War, he became Finance Minister to the Nizam of Hyderabad and then served in the Ministry of Finance of undivided India. After

INTERACTION WITH SOME POLITICIANS

Partition, the Quaid-e-Azam appointed him Pakistan's Finance Minister in the first Cabinet and he resigned from his company, which became 'Mahindra & Mahindra', today one of the leading automobile companies in India.

While serving as Pakistan's first Finance Minister, Malik Ghulam Mohammad was a regular visitor to our house in Karachi. He once came over to my brothers in an agitated state saying, 'If this country is to be saved, do some lobbying and make sure that the Objectives Resolution is not passed.' This was the Resolution that named Pakistan as the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and added all the Islamic clauses - it was passed in 1951. It was rumoured that it was Chaudhry Mohammad Ali's initiative; the Quaid had passed away by then. The then Prime Minister, Nawabzada Liaquat Ali, had been advised that this Resolution would make him popular! He was from Karnal in UP and was elected from East Pakistan to the National Assembly, so he had no real political base in West Pakistan.

On another occasion, I remember Malik Sahib came over to the house and borrowed our car to drive to the airport. Later, we discovered that he had dropped our driver at the airport and driven the car to Karachi Cantonment to meet Mir Laiq Ali. Mir Sahib was the Prime Minister of Hyderabad Deccan and after the "Police Action" in September 1948, he had been held as a prisoner in his house in Hyderabad. One day, the Indian Authorities discovered that Mir Sahib was missing and later on he appeared in Karachi. For many days, the news of Mir Laiq Ali's escape to Pakistan was kept confidential by the Government of Pakistan. Later, it was disclosed that he had travelled by train incognito from Hyderabad to Bombay and flew from Bombay to Karachi – all undiscovered – under a pseudo name! Malik Ghulam Mohammad was among the first government officials to meet Mir Laiq Ali after his arrival in Pakistan.

When Malik Sahib, as Governor General, decided to go on Hajj, he invited my brother, Wajid Ali, to accompany him. Because of his other commitments, Bhai Wajid had to decline. My brother's valet, Fazal, was also in the room and Malik Sahib offered to include him in his entourage. This was without anybody's asking. Malik Sahib was a very generous and egalitarian individual, who never stood on rank. Fazal later told us that he was treated with utmost generosity throughout the pilgrimage and even had the rare honour of being admitted to the enclosure of the tomb of the Holy Prophet, a very unique honour reserved only for very important guests of the Saudi government.

After the death of Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan, Khawaja Nazimuddin was persuaded to step down as Governor General to become the Prime Minister of Pakistan and Malik Ghulam Mohammad was sworn in as the Governor General. Malik Ghulam Mohammad's son, Inam Mohammad, meanwhile worked for National Bank of Pakistan at a salary of Rs. 500 per month! Such were standards of integrity where the Governor General's son worked for a meagre salary.

Malik Ghulam Mohammad continued to be the Head of State till his resignation due to ill health; he suffered a stroke and his speech was impaired. I remember, one day in his retirement, I received a telephone call in my Karachi office that he wanted to talk to me. I knew that I would not be able to understand what he would say on the telephone so I rushed from my office to his daughter's house in Clifton where he was living. He asked me to go to the Collector of Customs to have a box cleared for him that he was expecting from abroad. I was happy to carry out this task for him. This was the last time I met him; shortly thereafter he passed away.

INTERACTION WITH SOME POLITICIANS

PANDIT NEHRU

Enayat Habibullah, called Bubbles by us, became a General in the Indian army. His wife, a political worker, was also from Lucknow and became a member of the U.P. Assembly. Their son, Wajahat, and Rajiv Gandhi were classmates at Doon School. When Wajahat was passing out of Doon School, the parents wanted to send him to England because his father and uncles had all studied there. Enayat's wife suggested that they should seek advice from Panditji as to whether they should send Wajahat to England for his further studies or whether he should continue his education in India. Panditji advised that they should let Wajahat continue his education in India because otherwise adjustment would become an issue when he came back. Enayat's wife said, 'But Panditji, you went to Harrow, then to Cambridge.' Panditji replied, 'Who told you I am adjusted?'

Mian Iftikharuddin family was the most senior family of Baghbanpura and had the right to the mangoes of Shalimar Gardens because they had been the gardeners of the Mughals. Mian Iftikharuddin was very close to the Nehru family. Panditji, when he came to Lahore, used to stay with him. When Indira Gandhi got married, Mian Sahib was invited to Allahabad and, of course, Mian Sahib went. The entire Nehru clan from all over India was there. Mian Sahib told me that the last night that Indira spent in her father's house was in a room that was shared by Panditji, Indira and Mian Sahib. He told me that there were no other rooms available and Panditji asked him to stay with them in their room. In those days, it was considered an insult to send someone to a hotel. To manage the overflow, tents were erected. There used to be a standard line on the wedding card next to the RSVP, "Bring your bedding". Invariably, the weddings were during the winters and tents were erected in the compound where the guests used their own beddings to sleep.

Some connections with the Nehru family

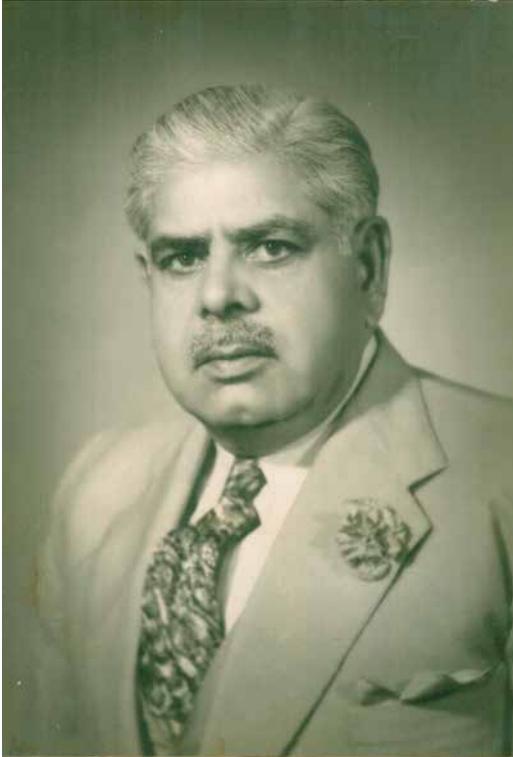
Mr. S.P. Singha was a prominent member of the Christian community in Lahore and Registrar of the Punjab University. His elder daughter, Champa, married Mr. Mangat Rai, an ICS officer and they migrated to India, where they separated. Mangat Rai then married Mrs. Vijay Lakshmi Pandit's daughter, Tara.

I used to meet Mrs. Pandit's younger sister, Krishna Hutheesing at my brother's house in Bombay. Her pet name was Betty and she had been at school with Amtul, the widow of Sir Ross Masood (the grandson of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, founder of Aligarh University), who married Rahat, son of Nawab Ahmad Saeed Chatari, another prominent person from Aligarh. Rahat was a Recruiting Officer during World War II and shared an office in Delhi with my cousin, Faqir Syed Waheeduddin. Like most Nawabzadas, Rahat was a very romantic person. When Rahat married Amtul, they were guests of Bhai Wajid in his flat in Bombay, where I was staying. Betty often visited, to see Amtul. The usual conversation between them was about their school days, no politics at all. Raja Hutheesing was quite a well-read man.

NAWAB MUSHTAQ AHMAD GURMANI

Gurmani Sahib was from an influential family of Muzaffargarh and was elected to the Punjab Legislative Council. He had originally been introduced to our family by my cousin, Faqir Syed Waheeduddin, who was a classmate of his at Aligarh School, next to Aligarh University. He was such a likeable person that he was adopted by my family and became a regular resident of our house. Whenever he travelled between Aligarh and Muzaffargarh, he stayed with us in Lahore. From my childhood, therefore, I saw Gurmani Sahib regularly in our house. His father had

INTERACTION WITH SOME POLITICIANS



Nawab Mushtaq Ahmad Gurmani 1905-1981

died but his mother also used to visit our family. She was a very learned lady, also from Muzaffargarh.

One of the very close friends of my paternal grandfather, Syed Wazir Ali, was Col. Z. Ahmed from Assam, who was in the medical service in Ferozepur. Syed Wazir Ali died in 1900 and my father inherited him as a friend and an elder. My father was diagnosed with T.B. in 1908. He was in Lahore and Col. Z. Ahmed took leave from his job in Ferozepur and stayed in Lahore for three months to treat my father! Therefore, when Gurmani Sahib came on to the scene, Col. Z. Ahmed's family was very close to my father. Col. Z. Ahmed was looking for a match for one of his daughters. My father suggested Mushtaq Gurmani, and said, 'Mushtaq is the eldest in the family and has a good background.' Thus my father had Gurmani Sahib married into this cultured family. Gurmani Sahib was very articulate, not well read, but very well tutored. He interacted with people like M.D. Taseer. During the War, he was in the Labour Department and he had Taseer posted there. He also knew Mr. S.M. Sharif, Secretary of Education, Punjab. He was all the time talking to them, absorbing and learning.

Gurmani Sahib had three daughters and no son. He treated me like his own son with a lot of affection and looked to me as somebody who would take care of his affairs after his death. He made me the Chairman of his Gurmani Foundation, in which position I still serve. I said, 'The Gurmani Foundation belongs to your children and grandchildren. They should manage it. Why should I be involved in it?' but he said, 'I will not have the Trust without you.' I invested Rs. 1 million from his Trust into Milkpak Limited and a similar amount into Packages shares. In 2012, the two investments were worth Rs. 4.3 billion. The annual income of the Foundation in 2012 was Rs. 50 million. I have been wanting to leave the position of Chairman but the family does not let me do so.

INTERACTION WITH SOME POLITICIANS

Gurmani Sahib found out that General Zia-ul-Haq had offered me the ambassadorship to Washington but that I had excused myself. He called me up and said, 'Bubbooji [my childhood name was Bubboo], I have found out and I am very happy. This is what I expected of you.'

CHAUDHRY MUHAMMAD ZAFRULLA KHAN

Despite the disparity in our ages, Chaudhry Sahib was the kind of person whom one could talk to freely and he treated me as a young friend. When I was a student, I was on a very tight budget so when, in New York, he asked me what I could donate for his community, I said I could only give \$100, which he accepted. He gave away all his wealth to his community three times in his lifetime - and each time started from zero again. He was always neatly attired but wore the same suit, with a fresh shirt, and his shoes were always well polished.

Chaudhry Sahib was a deeply religious person, very austere, and yet very open-minded. He started his life as a lawyer in the Punjab. He attended the Round Table Conferences in London in the early 1930s and represented India at the League of Nations in 1939. He became a member of the Punjab Legislative Council, then a member of the Viceroy's Council in Delhi, holding many ministerial positions. His last position in undivided India was as a Judge of the Supreme Court.

When Chaudhry Sahib was a member of the Cabinet, he was very concerned about the future politics of Pakistan and impressed on my brother, Wajid Ali, the need to use his influence with the Quaid, to ensure that the Constitution of Pakistan was framed during the Quaid's lifetime. He was the Head of the first Delegation from Pakistan to the United Nations. I joined this delegation and witnessed some of the proceedings, described earlier. He served as Pakistan's second Foreign Minister, and from there he was elected a member of the International Court of Justice in The Hague. He was Pakistan's permanent representative at the United Nations from 1961 to 1964 and became its President before returning to the International Court of Justice.

I have some treasured memories of him at the United Nations: as soon as we arrived, the secretariat published a provisional list of delegates. It began with Sir Zafrulla Khan as the leader and Ambassador Ispahani. Then there was Mir Laiq Ali, the Prime Minister of Hyderabad; I do not know why the Quaid sent him, but probably to provoke the Indians, as Hyderabad was still independent at that time. Among the youngsters, there was Abdul Sattar Pirzada (Hafeez Pirzada's father), and Begum Salma Tassaduq Hussain. Also there was the Secretary General Mohammad Ayub, a very fine table tennis player, at one time rated as the number one in India. When the final delegates book came out a month later, as a matter of courtesy because she was a lady, they had put Salma Tassaduq Hussain's name above Abdul Sattar Pirzada. Pirzada Sahib said to me, 'They have demoted me.' I said 'Pirzada Sahib, it does not matter. The book has been published, what can be done now?' He persisted and went to Ayub Sahib who told him that 'it is not a degradation for you in any way. It is only a list'. Pirzada Sahib was still un-consolable; he went to Chaudhry Sahib. He said, 'Chaudhry Sahib, they have put me under Salma Tassaduq Hussain!' Chaudhry Sahib replied, 'I entirely agree with you, the position is most unnatural!' Pirzada never spoke on the issue after that.

On one occasion, the women delegates to the U.N. had been invited by Ms. Eleanor Roosevelt to Hyde Park, the Roosevelt Estate in upstate New York. Chaudhry Sahib said, 'It is a beautiful time of the year (it was Fall), and the

INTERACTION WITH SOME POLITICIANS

car has to go there any way. I can take you along on one condition: I will sit in the front and you will have to sit at the back with Salma Tassaduq Hussain. Going and coming back, you have to make sure that she does not talk to me.' It was an hour's drive each way and I kept her engaged all the time. For years on end, Chaudhry Sahib said to me, 'You did a first class job. You did not let her speak to me even once.'

I got to know him extremely well during that period. My wife knew him independently before our marriage. When she was in America, staying with my brother, Pakistan's Ambassador to the US, Chaudhry Sahib used to go to Washington frequently and he got to know her very well and they started an independent friendship. When Perwin and I got married, both of us were made very welcome at his home and he would come to our house.

Later, Chaudhry Sahib married a young Lebanese, to help her escape the oppressive regime there at the time. My wife was in regular correspondence with him and wrote that she had heard the news of the marriage, and wanted to verify it. Chaudhry Sahib wrote back to say that it was correct but the facts were very much twisted: 'They say she is 18. She is not 18, she is 22! They say, I am 75. I am not 75, I am 72!'

Chaudhry Sahib lived abroad for the last 25 years of his life. Whenever he visited Lahore, we had the privilege of spending time with him. He was a gracious host and always received my wife and me with the utmost kindness and love. Over a year before he passed away, he permanently moved to Lahore where we saw him frequently.

ZULFIQAR ALI BHUTTO

Sometime in November 1964, I received a telephone call at Packages that the Minister of Industries, Mr. Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, wanted to talk to me. Bhutto said, 'Mr. Babar Ali, I believe you have black roses in your garden'. I said, 'Not really black roses, but we have some dark colours'. He told me that he wanted black roses for his house in Larkana, and I said, 'They are in bloom at the moment so if you are coming to Lahore in the next few days, why don't you come and have a look? You can tell me which ones you like and we will make arrangements to send them to Larkana.' A few days later, he telephoned again, and said: 'I am coming to Lahore, I will be staying at Falletti's [there was no Pearl Continental or Avari at that time] and I will be ready at 10 a.m.'

Three or four months prior to that I had gone to Mysore in India to see a paper mill based on bagasse. We were at that time toying with the idea of putting up a paper mill ourselves and we were looking at raw materials other than wood, because there was no wood in Pakistan and bagasse was available. In Mysore, I was walking through an under-construction mill and met a young Sikh, Mohinder Bedi, who happened to be an Aitchisonian. We embraced each other and he said I should join him for dinner that evening. There he asked me, 'How is my friend Zulfi?' I thought he was referring to my nephew, Zulfiqar Bokhari, because he was also an Aitchisonian. I asked, 'Were you and my nephew, Zulfiqar, in the same class?' and he said, 'No, I am talking of my friend, Zulfi Bhutto.' I said, 'How do you know him?' and he said, 'We were together in Berkeley; there was myself, Zulfi Bhutto, Mohammad Faruque, and Omar Kureshi, and we shared the same "chumri" in Berkeley.'

This story was still at the back of my mind. So when he sat in my car at Faletti's as we were driving to Packages, I was wondering what I should talk to him about because I was determined not to talk business. I did not want

INTERACTION WITH SOME POLITICIANS

him to feel that as Minister of Industries, we were under a licencing regime and that I was trying to get something out of him. I said, 'I was recently in India and met a friend of yours.' He asked who it was and I told him. He looked through me without any comment. I then talked to him about the weather and this and that. When we got to Packages, I showed him our roses. I then took him to my office, gave him a cup of coffee, and drove all the way back. The flowers he had selected we sent to Larkana, for which I later got a thank-you letter. Irshad Hussain saw me with Bhutto at Packages, and said, 'You were with the Minister of Industries; I hope all was okay.' My spontaneous remark to Irhsad was: 'He may be the Minister of Industries but I have no respect for him because he was not prepared to acknowledge to me that he had a friend in India!'

My next meeting with Mr. Bhutto was set up by the late Mian Mahmood Ali Kasuri, who called me up one day, prior to the 1970 elections, and invited me to breakfast with Mr. Bhutto at his house. There was no one else on this occasion except Mian Mahmood, Mr. Bhutto, and myself. Mr. Bhutto talked optimistically about the forthcoming elections. I asked him how strong his party was in East Pakistan. He said that he was concentrating on the West Wing where he thought he would get a majority. I was all the time wondering and thought that he would either ask me to join his party or ask for money for the election campaign. To my surprise and relief, he asked for neither. I stayed with him for about an hour and the only indirect hint that he dropped was when he mentioned that although he had sanctioned an oil refinery to Mr. Jalil, he had contributed no money to his election fund.

My next meeting with Mr. Bhutto was long after he had taken over as the President of Pakistan and when he asked his government to draft me into public service as Chairman of the National Fertilizer Corporation about which I have written earlier.

He was a person of many sides. Among his positives, he was very efficient. Any file that went up to him came back within twenty-four hours. He was very hard working. When he was travelling, he had almost Chengez Khan like arrow riders who would get him the files whether he was in Quetta or wherever; he left nothing pending. He had a very quick disposal system.

GENERAL MOHAMMAD ZIA-UL-HAQ

Soon after taking office as the Chief Martial Law Administrator in July 1977, General Zia-ul-Haq invited me to join his cabinet, which I declined. Some months later he again sent for me and asked me to take over as the head of Pakistan International Airlines. I declined again saying this was an industry for which I had very little feeling. At my next meeting with him, he invited me to go to Washington as Pakistan's Ambassador. I thanked him for his confidence in me and apologised that I could not accept as I was busy with the setting up of a milk processing industry based on new technology. I said to him that if I dropped this industry, it would be a long time before anybody else would attempt it. 'On the other hand', I said, 'You can find a much better person than me to go to the US'. He was gracious enough to accept my submissions.

Later, I received a letter from the Foreign Office saying that the President of Pakistan would be visiting America in the coming months. As I visited the US quite often, they asked me to go and create the right environment

INTERACTION WITH SOME POLITICIANS

in Washington to make his visit more agreeable and successful. They asked me to use my own contacts in this effort. I went to Washington and met my friends who had been American Ambassadors and diplomats. I asked them what the issues were that they were concerned about. They said, 'the bomb'. In those days, it was not clear whether we had a bomb or not. They said this was something the US would want to discuss with our President. I sought a meeting with General Ejaz Azim, our Ambassador in Washington. The Foreign Office had already sent him a copy of the letter they had written to me. General Ejaz, therefore, knew that I was snooping around Washington, preparing the ground for the President's visit outside diplomatic circles. I told him about my findings. Military man that he was, he responded, 'Babar Ali Sahib, don't worry about Washington; it is fully covered. I want you to go and concentrate on New York and get us investments.' I said, 'General Sahib, nobody is going to invest simply on my asking them to do so. They will only invest after checking with those who have already invested in Pakistan. You have to go and talk to the people who have invested in Pakistan and are making money; they will be your best advocates.' I said thank you to General Sahib and came back.

During my tenure as Chairman of the National Fertilizer Corporation, we had embarked on a Pak-China fertilizer project in Haripur, near Islamabad. After I left, it was to be inaugurated by the President. Riyaz Bokhari was the Chairman of National Fertilizer Corporation at that time. I went to the ceremony to show my face to the people with whom I had worked and to make them feel that I was still interested in their progress and development. They put me in the front row, fifty yards from the dais and the President noticed me. Once the speeches were over, the President went to a small *shamiana* for tea and to meet important people, and I went to the car park for my vehicle to return to Islamabad and then Lahore. While I was looking for my car, a man in military uniform rushed up and said, 'The President is looking for you.' I quickly went and met the President. He said, 'Till when are you here?' I said, 'I was leaving but I can stay on.' He said, 'Can you stay till 1 o'clock? I am going to fly back to Islamabad in my helicopter, so please come to the helipad at 1 p.m.'

I got to the helipad at 12.30 p.m. Army and CID people asked me who I was. General Saeed Qadir was also there. I knew him quite well and he was, of course, very close to the President so I told him the President had asked me to join him. In the meantime, the President arrived and asked me to sit with him. This was my first time in a helicopter. I noticed that there were three or four toughies also with the President, like bouncers in a nightclub. I think they were there in case something went wrong, to help the President with a parachute. Because of the noise in the helicopter, we could not have any conversation, so when we landed at the helipad in Islamabad he asked me to accompany him in his car. He said, 'You went to the US; what is the message?' I told him exactly what I had learnt. He did not say a word.

General Zia introduced the Majlis-e-Shoora in 1980 and I got a call from the Punjab Governor, General Jillani, who told me he had put my name forward as a member. I said, 'Let me come and see you. I am not a politician; what will I do in the Shoora?' He said, 'Your name is now on the list. If you say no, you will stand out. Become a part of it. If you don't like it, you can always leave.' I did not want to go against the wishes of the Government during Martial Law and I agreed. I served on the Majlis-e-Shoora and had the opportunity to meet the President from time to time in social gatherings. He showed the utmost courtesy to me, which encouraged me to seek his support and patronage in setting up the Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS) and I asked him to

INTERACTION WITH SOME POLITICIANS

come and see it, at that time in rented premises in Liberty Market area, Gulberg. Within the next few weeks, he was in Lahore and he graced us with a visit.

A couple of years after the setting up of LUMS, I met General Zia-ul-Haq at a function of the Pakistan Agricultural Research Council in Islamabad. At that time, my right hand was bandaged as I had undergone surgery to straighten my fingers, which were affected by 'Dupitran tendon'. He saw me from the rostrum and he was kind enough to remark, 'I see Syed Babar Ali with a bandaged hand. Even with one hand, he works more than many others with both!'

General Zia was very generous with me despite my declining three times the various positions he had offered me. If it was somebody else, he would have wondered what I thought of myself! I was never invited to his house for a dinner or anything. If it was a big function, yes I attended, but no small parties. In fact, the last function that I attended at the President's House was just before he died. At that time, he had announced elections to democratize Pakistan. Wasim Sajjad was his Chairman of the Senate and when I met him I said, 'Congratulations, things are opening up.' He said, 'I don't know whether he will hold the elections or not!' This was one of his closest colleagues!

What I have heard and read since his death is totally opposite to what I saw in him. He was very gracious. For instance, whenever I went to his house (which, incidentally, was always the quite modest Army Chief's house in Rawalpindi) for a meeting, he always came to see me off to my car. I never invited him to my house; it was something I have always shied away because I did not want to be at the same level as him.

General Zia-ul-Haq was educated at St. Stephen's College, Delhi. I was flying from Lahore to Karachi and Mr. Natwar Singh, the Indian High Commissioner to Pakistan, was on the same flight. He told me that he was part of a delegation from St. Stephen's. General Zia had told the Pakistan High Commissioner in Delhi that he was from St. Stephen's and asked if he could contact a senior professor there to invite some of General Zia's class fellows if they were still around, as guests of the Government of Pakistan. They had gone through the archives of St. Stephen's and found a group photograph in which Zia-ul-Haq featured as a student. When the guests were invited to the President's House, General Zia was presented with this group photograph. General Zia recognized himself in the picture and said that he did not have it because the photograph had cost Rs. 2.50 and he could not afford it at the time, so he was very pleased. Natwar told me that he could not imagine any other President in the world telling him that he could not afford a photograph worth Rs. 2.50 when he was a student!

General Zia was also very anti-shia. During my Shoora days, on the 10th of Moharrum, Ashura day, I got a call from Bhati Gate that as soon as the Majlis was over, I should leave for home. The next day, I found out that there had been a mob attack on our Imam Bargah and they had tried to burn it. Our neighbours, who were not shias, came and fought to protect it. A few weeks later, one of the senior bureaucrats of Lahore, who was not a shia, called to say that the next morning he had received a telephone call from General Zia-ul-Haq to ask what had happened in Lahore. He had told General Zia that nine people had died in the unfortunate incidents. General Zia said, 'Only nine!' In those days General Zia had put together a force employed by the government to drag people to the mosques.

INTERACTION WITH SOME POLITICIANS

If General Zia had been an honest person, he could have undone all the damage that Bhutto had done to the economy and to the social fabric of the country but he had his own agenda.

BENAZIR BHUTTO

I met her for the first time when I put in an application for an investment bank in partnership with American Express. She was the Prime Minister whose approval was necessary. I found out that the Government had approached American Express and suggested that they should take me out and put their own man in as their partner but this was not acceptable to American Express. They told the Government that they would either go with me as their partner or they would have no joint venture investment bank at all.

Prior to my meeting with the Prime Minister, I first had to meet the Finance Minister, Ehsanul Haq Piracha. Muzaffar Ahmad, the Additional Secretary Finance, whom I had known for many years, was sitting with him. Piracha said, 'We will give you approval for the Bank on one condition, which is that American Express does not repatriate any dividends.' I said, 'You will make a mockery of foreign investment. Why would anyone invest money in Pakistan on those terms?' Muzaffar looked at me in consternation at such a severe answer but there was no other way to put it. Piracha insisted, 'Why don't you ask them?' I said, 'I don't want to ask such a question, the answer is no.' My meeting with Benazir was arranged after that.

The Government had no option, they invited me, and I was ushered into her presence. She was very graceful. She got up as soon as I entered the room to greet me. She knew about my association with WWF and asked whether she could wear her mink coat. I said, 'As long as it is not from wild mink; if it is from reared mink that is alright.' Her husband and Qaim Ali Shah were also there, and two or three other people whom I didn't recognize. I had simply been called to receive the blessing. She said, 'Fine, we will give you the license.' The meeting took no more than 10-15 minutes.

I met her again at a breakfast meeting at the Prime Minister's house when Moeen Qureshi, as Prime Minister, had invited her. I was there as Minister of Finance. I cannot think of anything significant at that meeting; we just exchanged pleasantries.

GENERAL PERVEZ MUSHARRAF

I met General Musharraf long before he came into prominence. He came to my office while he was serving as the Corps Commander Mangla. His cousin, Adnan Asad, whose father, Asad Hameed was a friend of mine, brought him for some advice. His son was studying in America and wanted to pursue actuarial science. What did I think? I said, 'General Sahib, actuarial science is a very tough subject and few want to study it. If he likes the subject, you are very lucky. Let him do it because once he is qualified he will be much sought after as there is a big demand for actuaries.'

There was no further meeting with him till he took over as the Chief Executive of Pakistan. I was in Delhi on the night of October 12, 1999 and I saw on CNN that there had been a coup in Pakistan. I went on to Bangalore for a meeting for a couple of days and from there I had to go to Washington for another meeting. At 2 am in the morning

INTERACTION WITH SOME POLITICIANS

in Washington, I got a telephone call, which later on I discovered was from General Khalid Maqbool, not General Aziz from GHQ, which was the way he introduced himself. He said, 'Being a military man, I will come directly to the point. We want you to take over as the Governor of Punjab.' I had some common sense even at 2 am, and said, 'General Sahib, I am 74 years old [although I was 73] and I am too old for that kind of a job. In any case, you should not have someone from within a province as Governor of that province.' He asked, 'What is your suggestion?' I said, 'You caught me cold. Perhaps I can tell you tomorrow morning. How do I get hold of you?' He said, 'Don't worry, I will contact you.' The next morning, I received a telephone call from the Military Attache in Washington, who said, 'You have spoken to General Sahib; he wants some names from you.' I talked to some of my friends and sent him the names that I thought were the most appropriate. For Punjab, I suggested Omar Afridi from the NWFP, who had served as Chief Secretary in the Punjab, and came from very good stock. For NWFP, I suggested Mr. Isani, a Sindhi civil servant, who had served as Chief Secretary in that province. For Sindh, I suggested Saeed Qureshi, a Punjabi bureaucrat, who had served as Chief Secretary Sindh. For Balochistan, I suggested someone from Sindh. None of these outstanding civil servants were appointed.

Then I got a message from Adnan Asad that General Musharraf wanted to see me when I returned to Pakistan. So I went directly from Karachi to Islamabad on 29th October, 1999. Adnan was there to take me to the Army House in Rawalpindi. General Musharraf kept on 'sirring' me and he met me with a lot of kindness. I was with him for an hour and did all the talking. I told him I could not come in but I suggested that the priority for his Government should be to see how the army could return to barracks with honour and dignity. I suggested reforms of the police and judiciary, the need to strengthen the civil service, and I stressed the necessity of preparations for clean elections. He kept on saying 'yes', asked Adnan to take notes and then give him the paper, but I could see that he was too new and it was beyond him to comprehend what he had taken over. As I came out, I told Adnan, 'Everything I suggested seemed to go over his head.'

I met General Musharraf a further three times, when he was more and more confident of himself. Once I asked to meet him in relation to Aitchison College and its constitution, which had been altered to give excessive power to the Governor of Punjab, and which he was reluctant to relinquish.

As the President, he was the Chancellor of LUMS and he came and presided over our Convocation once during his tenure. At that time, we were launching the School of Science & Engineering. He was very supportive and in response to any request, he never said 'no' but he could not, in fact, deliver.

