

End of Dialogue Politics-Beginning of Militancy in Balochistan

Prof. Dr. Naudir Bakht

Abstract

The Dialogue politics begins and ends with conflict. The failure of productive conflict becomes the beginning point of Diplomacy or the Dialogue politics. The war is, if, in the blood of human beings then diplomacy is in the brain of social humanity. Where there is democracy, there is no war, and war is only where there is no democracy. The case of conflict or insurgency in Balochistan is the case of the same hypothetical statement. There could never have been insurgencies or conflicts in Balochistan, if the voices of the people were heard or the device of diplomacy nor the barrels of guns were operated. Mir Bezanjo believed and stressed upon the politics of Dialogue but his voice was not heard in the power corridors and the net result was the re-growth of the seeds of insurgencies. The solution is still the Dialogue Politics.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The focus of this paper remains on the changing trends of politics in Balochistan. The Dialogue Politics was practiced by Mir Ghous Bakhsh Bezanjo as he believed in the parliamentary politics; he used to oppose the secessionist movements in Balochistan. He was of the opinion that the political problems should be resolved politically by remaining within the parameters of the constitutional framework of Pakistan. He opposed the militancy at all levels and advocated the political tools like Dialogue and negotiations. Practically speaking, his death was the death of a moderate and federalist politician and the beginning of a new chapter of militancy in Balochistan

- 1.2. He used to advocate that the solution of all the political problems could be possible through DIALOGUE. The government and the political parties should use “Dialogue” as the only device of resolution. Some of the politicians of Balochistan did not agree with him and believed that, since, the federal government was paying no heed to them, thus they should move to the politics of agitation and aggression. He never accepted it and remained very firm on his viewpoint. The result was that the tribal stalwarts went against him. The political mood of Balochistan was changed from dialogue to violence.
- 1.3. A very interesting dimension of the politics of Balochistan is that Z.A. Bhutto was a democratic politician, but the people of Balochistan observed that his attitude toward the people and their representatives was not very friendly. They experienced the use of power and military operation during his days. The people of Baluchistan suffered a lot by this operation. The mass reaction supported the forces who were against the parliamentary politics.
- 1.4. The government of Z.A. Bhutto was overthrown by Gen. Zia, but he gave very friendly signals to Balochistan and the Baloch leaders. This move reduced the anti-federation sentiments. But it was not enough to begin the new phase of parliamentary politics’ rather a lot of more work was needed to grow the seeds of friendly province-federation relations.

2. Balochistan Today

- 2.1. Today Baluchistan is passing through a very difficult time. The politics has almost swung from Parliamentary to what is called as the politics of protest and struggle. The nationalists are going even beyond the demand

of provincial autonomy. The most popular slogan is “Local Resources for the local People”.

- 2.2. The target killing of the settlers has become a regular feature of present Balochistan.
- 2.3. The nationalists are not accepting the Balochistan Package.
- 2.4. The Baloch youth raises voice for the Missing People.
- 2.5. This present situation got the swing after the killing of Nawab Mohammad Akbar Khan Bugti, the President of Jamhuri Watan Party and Ex Governor/Chief Minister of Balochistan.
- 2.6. It is the result of a continuous denial of the “Rights of the People of Baluchistan”, even a common Baloch says. Hence, we will have to go in the past, at least the near past to go through the political developments in Balochistan.

3. Limitations

The study in hand is limited to the final phase of the political life of the Baloch Leader, Mir Bezanjo” commonly known as the “Father of Dialogue” in the political circles of Balochistan. His love for “Dialogue” and federation was not very much acceptable for the nationalists and they used to pass the comic remarks about his Politics of Dialogue. His politics revolves around Balochs and Balochistan and much is not found about other social and political segments of Balochistan.

4. Zia Takes Over

Gen. Zia overshadowed the national political scenario after the movement of Pakistan National Alliance (PNA) against the alleged rigging in the General Elections of 1977. He put Bhutto behind the bars and took over as Chief Martial Law Administrator/President of Pakistan. The replacement of Bhutto Government

by Zia's Martial Law brought many changes in the administrative and political system of Pakistan. The most significant included the following.

1. Zia gave a positive gesture to the Balochs and Mir Bezanjo was released on bail from Hyderabad Conspiracy Case (this case was fabricated by Bhutto govt. to put the nationalist leaders of Balochistan and NWFP and some other political opponents under Pressure.) This development took place when he applied for bail on 6th December 1977.
2. There was another breakthrough in the Baloch-Federal Govt. relations regarding Hyderabad Conspiracy Case (HCC) when he on 1st January 1978 abandoned the Hyderabad Tribunal. It was remarked as false and malafide.
3. He ordered to release all the accused.
4. He also declared an amnesty for all those who had left their homes during the disturbances in Balochistan.

5. 5. General Amnesty

5.1. These developments were warmly appreciated in Balochistan. Bezanjo and his old colleagues Khair Bakhsh Marri were also released on 4th January, 1978 from Hyderabad Jail. He stayed for quite a little time in Quetta, Balochistan and then on 11th November 1978 left for England. Sardar Atta Ullah Mengal also flew to England in the middle of 1979. Thus the political scene of Balochistan was changed, from the fire to the breeze of peace. A considerable change could be seen in the politics of Balochistan.

5.2. These changes had shown a ray of hope to the common people and during this period once again the Young Balochs started thinking that perhaps

their problems could be resolved within the parliamentary politics and the resources of their land could be utilized for their development. But these expectations could not be materialized as per their satisfaction, and with the passage of time the frustration started developing. This frustration was transformed into aggression after the killing of Nawab Bugti.

6. Bezanjo on Afghan Revolution

6.1. In the late seventies Pakistan, Iran and Afghanistan Passed through many changes. In Pakistan the democratic government of Bhutto was replaced by the Martial law of General Zia, in Iran the Shah was deposed by the revolution of Khomeni and in Afghanistan on 27th April, 1978, the Russian backed revolution against Daud changed the political title of Afghanistan by declaring it, “The People’s Republic of Afghanistan”. In this revolution Daud was killed and Russians recognized the new Government. The Government of Pakistan was not happy with these developments and:-

- 6.1.1. Opposed the Russian interventions in Afghanistan
- 6.1.2. Demanded the complete withdrawal of Russian Forces
- 6.1.3. And the restoration of non-aligned sovereign status of Afghanistan.

US and the free world of Western Europe supported the demand of Pakistan and stressed upon USSR to withdraw its forces from Afghanistan. In Pakistan there was a mixed reaction on Afghan Revolution. The leftist parties and the leaders supported the Afghan Revolution (In Quetta it was celebrated in a very colorful manner) and took it as their internal issue whereas the others opposed and declared it as the Russian intervention and illegal occupation. Mir Bezanjo had very rational approach and he vividly expressed that the diplomatic negotiations be started to settle this

international issue.¹ In an interview he suggested the government of Pakistan to remain careful and should see all the pros and cones of Afghan issue (since Pakistan was the front line state therefore, it could be directly affected by this revolution) before taking the political measures.²

6.2 He showed his sensitivity and concern over the influx of Afghan Refugees. He was very much conscious over their social and economic mobility in Pakistani civic and economic structure and infrastructure. He asked the Government to take care of the national interest (not the interest of US or Allied forces) and should form all the policies in the pursuance of the national interests only. He did not support the policy of government to open all Pakistan for Afghan refugees. He believed that they should be restricted to the Refugee Camps and that the Government should evolve national consensus on this sensitive issue. He wanted this issue to be resolved peacefully and through negotiations. For his socialist background, he had the old ideological relations with Russia; therefore during the Afghan crises he was very cautious, he never opposed it and always pleaded for the peaceful settlement of the issue.

7. Post HCC Era

7.1. Mir Bezanjo in the post HCC (Hyderabad Conspiracy Case) period reaffirmed his commitment to the cause of his Baloch Land and people and resumed his political struggle. He raised the voice that the nationalities (main focus on Balochs) may be guaranteed their

¹The statement of Mir Bezanjo was published in the national and international newspapers repeatedly wherein he touched the fragile and sensitive points of this issue which the others might be ignoring.

² Mujahid B. (1987). *Jamhoriyat Ka Safar (Urdu)*, Karachi, PK Pakistani Adab Publications, p.33.

fundamental rights and autonomy, “this view pitted him against Abdul Wali Khan”.³ The differences in the leaders of N.A.P (National Awami Party) were widened particularly when they were establishing NDP (National Democratic Party). Here, “Wali Khan disagreed with Bezanjo on the proposed use of the Word “nationalities” to describe the Provinces of Pakistan.... The two delegations also differed on “how hard to push their autonomy demands”.

7.2. Further that Bezanjo was openly critical of Zia regime’s support for the anti communist rebels in Afghanistan while Wali Khan was more equivocal. Amid angry recriminations, the Baloch (Bezanjo) abruptly walked out and called a separate convention, he went further ahead and formed the Pakistan National Party (P.N.P).⁴ amid this boiling situation, Sher Baz Khan Mazari Joined hands with Wali Khan in the National Democratic Party.

8. PNP Six Points Politics

8.1. After the establishment of the PNP the party leaders worked to determine the new dimensions and direction of their politics. After long discussions on the mass sentiments, they agreed upon a six points manifesto for the realization of the objectives of this newly born political party. They wanted to provide a nationalist forum to all the people of Balochistan without any discrimination and giving a sufficient margin of entry to other non Baloch communities. Rahat Malikv (a Punjabi Settler) had been among his close associates and inner party cabinet) He showed very soft

³ Harrison S. S. (1981). In Afghanistan’s Shadow, New York, US. *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, p.89.

⁴ Ibid, p. 89.

attitude to the settlers and plainly called them “our Settler Brothers”.
The significant points were:

1. Constitutional and Practical guaranties of equal internal autonomy to all the federating units.
 2. A positive and non-aligned foreign policy was demanded.
 3. A national democratic resolution to establish economic independence.
 4. An end of the remnants of the feudalism and monopoly capitalism.⁵
- 8.2. These Points very clearly reflect that Mir Bezanjo is still raising the voice for the rights of the land and the people but in the changed circumstances he has changed the strategy. Zia banned all the Political activities; hence, the Party and Mir Bezanjo were silenced. But as his old colleagues Sardar Atta Ullah Mengal explains his personality by saying, “that man cannot live without politics. I can do without it, but he has to have it all the time or he will perish.”⁶
- 8.3. For his political efforts, continuous struggle and commitment to the Baloch Cause, he is Known as Baba-e-Balochistan. Harison while paying tribute to Mir Bezanjo, very aptly and rightly says, “In my view, he is one of the ablest politicians in Pakistan and could have played a major role in IsIamabad but for his Baloch identity and his commitment to the Baloch cause”.⁷

⁵ View point, “What P.N.P stands for” 19th August Lahore 1979, P.7, more details are also given in view point, “A National Party is Born”, 10th June, Lahore, 1979 P.10.

⁶ Harrison, S. S., Opcit. p.52

⁷ Ibid. p.52.

- 8.4. Mir Bezanjo stressed Provincial Autonomy and emphasized the adoption of a new constitution giving each national unit much wider Powers than those accorded in any of the constitutions that existed before Zia's Martial Law regime.⁸ He was not satisfied with the status and condition of general rights of the people.
- 8.5. He is a strong advocate of provincial autonomy and the loose federation. He, in Lahore addressing the intellectuals said, "Pakistan, actually" is a country of four nationalities but the Constitution, the rules framed do not match the needs of the society and the communities; the phenomena require a federation based upon the loose federations principles, where all the four nationalities i.e. the Punjabis, the Pathans, the Balochs and the Sindhis should be knitted so beautifully that the Pakistani nation may come into existence".⁹
- 8.6. Nevertheless, he differentiated loose federation from Confederation and he opposed Confederation as demanded by some extremists. He believed in a "Reasonable Centre" not a weak Centre.¹⁰ Discussing the distribution of powers in the federal government and the federating units, he explained it by saying, "A type of federation not a confederation in which the Central Government of Pakistan would continue to control defense, foreign affairs (including foreign trade), currency and communications and would have the power to tax the constituent units to the extent

⁸ Bazanjo believed in the Quranic Version that the Almighty God recognized tribes clans and nationalities and a universal brotherhood of all the believers. See imroze, Lahore, 29th August, 1978, P.I. Please see also Pakistan Times, Bezanjo and Nationalities", 28th August, 1978, Lahore, P.I.

⁹ Brailvay M. Opcit., p.83.

¹⁰ Ibid. pp. 90-91.

necessary to fulfill these responsibilities....the federation would be loose one because only those rights which are necessary for the common interests and for actual survival, would be surrendered voluntarily to the centre and in all remaining matters the federating units would retain full powers in their own hands.... The four national units would have full control and sovereignty over their own natural resources and preference would be given to local residents in jobs, contracts and other aspects of economic development.¹¹

- 8.7. Despite all the difficulties, he continued his political struggle by supporting Movement for the Restoration of Democracy in 1983. He did not support the Presidential Referendum and the Non Party based General Elections of 1985.
- 8.8. With the Passage of time, the gulf of differences was widening between Bezanjo and his old colleagues. Mir Bezanjo was stressing diplomacy and negotiations while others were going on the track of agitation. They were not very happy with him. Here, in this situation Pakistan National Party became closer to the Federal Government of Pakistan, hence, when General Zia replaced jonejo Government on 29th May 1988 by a caretaker government, P.N.P also got some representation.
- 8.9. His old colleagues were now standing against him and worked out Balochistan National Alliance for the elections of 1988. In these elections Baba-e-Balochistan took part but could not succeed against Manzoor Gichki a candidate nominated by Balochistan National Alliance

¹¹ Harrison, Selig S., *Opcit.*, P.P.55-56.

(B.N.A).¹² On this election results Dr. Masuma Hassan remarked in Dawn, “Principled and proud, humane and affectionate, he had a big heart and a big vision. Those who defeated him in this (his last) election, deprived the country, of his wisdom and counsel. Bezanjo, had remained a democratic warrior throughout his life”.¹³ His defeat was in fact the defeat of “Dialogue Politics” and the beginning of militancy and use of force.

- 8.10. Although it (his defeat in election) was astonishing and amazing yet there had always been much ups and downs in his life and this upset was one of such events. He took it as a part of democratic system. He could understand that the wind of power had gone against him. He as a political activist recollected his energies and once again geared up the political struggle by re-organizing Pakistan National Party.
- 8.11. He knew that his roots were deep in the masses and his sole object, (to protect the cause of the land and the people) could best be realized through democratic process. This was his belief and faith in the justice and democracy that in 1985 after a meeting of M.R.D., he said, that it was by an historical compulsion that he sat down at the same table with General Tikka Khan to talk.¹⁴ The people of Balochistan could never forget that General Tikka Khan commanded the troops against Mir Nauroz Khan and he (Tikk Khan) also had been Bhutto’s Commander in Chief during the initial years of Balochistan insurgency (1973 – 77).

¹² Election Results, 1988.

¹³ (August 21, 1989). Dawn

¹⁴ Mashriq Quetta , 8th July, 1985 .

- 8.12. Mir Bezango's health had started deteriorating. He was getting weaker and weaker His health was not permitting him to move to the people to continue the democratic process and awareness in the youth. Politics was in his blood and breath. Politics was his life and soul. The direction of his politics was the service of the people, even, without the caste, creed and religion. His struggle was not confined only to the Locals of Balochistan rather much margin was given to the marginalized and the settlers. It was all of his life as he could not live without politics.

9. Last Days of Mir Bezanjo

- 9.1. Mir Bezanjo, a well determined, politician of strong determination and commitment never laid down arms before any power but now before "Health". During April and May 1989 he felt some unusual developments and pain in his body. On check up in Agha Khan Hospital Karachi there were some indications of liver cancer. Royal Institute of Cancer, London and Royal Medicine Adembra were also consulted but it was the unanimous advice to him that the disease was incurable, hence, he might stay at Pakistan so he remained under medical care at Mid-East Hospital Karachi for about two months.
- 9.2. He came back from London after medical consultations on 15th July 1989 at about 11.00 A.M. at Karachi and was received by his friends and followers very warmly. He stayed at Masti Lodge, where he usually used to stay. Although the doctors at London had shown their disappointment, yet he was well determined and showed no weakness against disease. On 16th July he was interviewed by couple of newspapers; where he reaffirmed his determination for the attainment and realization of the rights of the people. He also expressed his satisfaction on the direction and service of his

people. On 17th July, he was shifted to Agha Khan Hospital for medical aid. The veteran politician G.M. Syed and Raees Ghulam Mustafa Bargari visited Mir Bezanjo. On 18th July Nawab Akbar Bugti and Sher Baz Khan Mazari visited Mir Bezanjo and showed their concern over his health. At about 3.00 P.M. Mir Bezanjo was shifted from Agha Khan Hospital to Masti Lodge back. He in an interview to a newspaper expressed his dissatisfaction over national and international policies of the government. On 19th July addressing a group of Baloch Youth, he emphasized that they should continue his mission of the furtherance of their national interests.

- 9.3. On 20th July talking to his visitors, he very strongly remarked that the Geneva Accord should be practised in true letter and spirit. On 22nd July Mir Bezanjo was shifted from Masti Lodge to an apartment at Clifton beach, here at about 7.00 P.M. he walked along the sea-shore. On 23rd July he was interviewed by Jan Mohammad Dashti. On 24th July he was again shifted to Agha Khan Hospital for Chemotherapy. He, talking to his visitors, stressed the government for the normalization of relations with the neighboring States and also the adoption of neutral and non-aligned foreign policy. On 25th July Mehmood Khan Achakzai visited him. On 26th July 1989, he was again shifted to the Clifton apartment, here while addressing his visitors and Baloch Youth, he opposed the extremism and adventurism and emphasized the positive democratic struggle. Jam Mohammad Dashti has been a very close associate of the politics of Balochistan and has given description of the life and politics of Mir Bezanjo
- 9.4. On 27th July along with other colleagues Razaq Baloch Ex-Chairman of B.S.O visited him. Mir Bezanjo stressed the responsibilities of the youth in the furtherance of Baloch national interest and that Pakistan National Party

should remain active in this process. On 28th July Mir Bezanjo while addressing a large number of visitors said that his Politics had been for the deprived people and everybody should push it ahead. On 29th July Nawab Akbar Bugti visited him again and on 30th July Mrs. Nusrat Bhutto visited him, showed concern on his health and exchanged views of mutual interest.

9.5. On 31st July Mir Bezanjo's old friend, Malik Mairaj Khalid visited and remained with him quite some time. The old friends refreshed old memories, discussed the political conditions and Mir Bezanjo declared that he could prefer P.P.P's Government over Martial Law though he differed with it on many points. On 1st and 2nd August, Mir Bezanjo was taken to Agha Khan Hospital for necessary medical tests. On 3rd August, he received a telephone call of Sardar Atta Ullah Mengal from London where he expressed his deep concern over his health. At 3.00 P.M. the Chief Minister Sindh visited him while at about 7.00 P.M. he was admitted in Mid East Hospital where Dr. Ghaffar Jatoi received him at the main gate of the Hospital and drove his wheel chairs to V.I.P Room No. 7. He had still very high courage and determination against disease. On 4th and 5th August, he was on Glucose drip and could not take any food orally. At this stage on the advice of the Doctors, the general public was not allowed to visit this great leader.¹⁵

9.6. On 6th August Mir Bezanjo was not happy on the decision of keeping the public away from him and he asked that his people might see him freely. His desire was honored. On 7th August he took a little soup. On 8th August, he commented for paper and pen, which was provided but he could not

¹⁵ Jan M. (1989). *Essays on Baloch National Struggle in Pakistan*. Quetta, PK. Gosha-e-Adab, p.417.

write anything. On 9th August Mir Bezanjo's health went down very fast, his liver, kidneys and other vital organs had failed, hence, the doctors whispered that anything could happen at any time so the family should remain mentally prepared. Mir Bezanjo fainted and on 11th August at 3:25 A.M. he left for heaven.¹⁶

- 9.7. Although this Champion of democracy, the dialogue and negotiation, supporter of parliamentary democracy and opponent of militancy, the voice of the depressed, the loudspeaker of deprivation in general and Balochs in particular, left this mortal world physically but he is still alive, as his teachings and messages are still with his followers.
- 9.8. He was buried at Nal, his native place amongst thousands of his lovers and followers. All the leading politicians and literary persons including his near and dear and his voice Rahat Malik, the Chief Minister Balochistan Nawab Akbar Bugti , Sardar Atta Ullah Mengal, Governor Balochistan General (Rtd.) Mohammad Musa, Khan of Kalat Mir Daud Jan, Nawab Mohammad Aslam Raisani, Prince Mohi-uddin Baloch accompanied their leader and comrade to his eternal Heavenly abode.
- 9.9. The social and tribal bigs and old friends like Sardar Mohammad Arif Jan Mohammad Hassni, Sardar Mohammad Khan Barozai, Sardar Yousaf Khan Sasoli, Sardar Sanaullah Khan Zehri, Sardar Zaman Mohammad Shahi, Sardar Fateh Mohammad, Mohammad Hasni, Mir Gohar Khan

¹⁶ The description of last days of Mir Bezanjo is taken from Tahir Bezanjo, Baba-e-Ustaman Opcit., P.P.40-55. Tahir Bezanjo stayed with him in his last days so he observed him quite closely. His description is not only factual but full of love and sincerity. Rahat Malik had been his very close associate and his memories are a living source of data for the researchers on these projects.

Zarakzai, Sardar Ahmed Khan Surpira, Senator Nawabzada Jehangir Khan Jogezi, Justice Amir-ul-Malik Mengal, Mir Amanullah Gichki, Mir Maqbool Ahmed Lehri, Malik Faiz Mohammad Yousafzai, Mairaj Mohammad Khan, Fateh Yab Ali Khan, Mir Abdul Hamid Jatoi, Aijaz Jatoi, Mir Aijaz Ali Khan Talpur, Syed Imdad Mohammad Shah (son of G.M.Syed), Agha Zafarullah Shaheen, Qamar-uz-Zaman Shah, Mir Yousaf Masti Khan, Shah Mohammad Shah, Gul Mohammad Hoat, tribal elders and notables and thousands of his followers attended the burial ceremonies.¹⁷

- 9.10. Next day almost all the regional and national newspapers paid tribute to him in very high esteem; and the news item was placed at the front Page. Many international leaders sent messages to condole his death and the political parties passed the condolence resolution. May his soul rest in peace in Heaven! Ameen! It was not the end of his life chapter, rather the leaves of life were taking a different turn and the coming time proved it true what he had said.
- 9.11. The closing of his eyes were the beginning of the opening of eyes of both the short sighted and the far sighted bureaucracy and the political elites. He could feel the pulse of the people and could hear their heart beat. He could read the eyes of the people. His departure created a vacuum of Visionary Leadership and the moderate leadership. This Vacuum could ever be filled. The researcher leaves it to all those who are interested in the solution of Balochistan Problem.

¹⁷ (12th August, 1989). Jang

10. Conclusions

- 10.1. Mir Bezanjo the moderate democratic and parliamentary politician of Balochistan was although a nationalist and lover of the land and the people, yet was different from conventional nationalist leaders. He was an opponent of militancy and the use of power, rather he believed in dialogue and peaceful solution of the problems of Balochistan. He was not a sardar but was a sardarkhel. He enjoyed respect in politics as a liberal democratic political leader.
- 10.2. He took the youth as the agent of change. He always emphasized the development of youth by the development of education. His “Vision of Youth” took three decades to reach the politics of Imran Khan and Nawaz Sharif. His Youth was Educated, Active and Nationalist. To him education was the key to success for the Youth.
- 10.3. His life is full of democratic struggle. The struggle for the rights of the marginalized and depressed section of society. Though, as it is generally taken that he spoke for the Baloch of Balochistan yet if seen on the broader and brighter canvas, he was the tongue and a Loudspeaker of the weaker, the deprived and the poor. He supported politically and economically deprived people without any discrimination of caste, creed, color or even of religion. After the departure of the leaders like Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti and Mir Bezanjo, the marginalized and the settlers were shelterless, helpless and of course unprotected. These were the great stalwarts, the federalists and the nationalists in the truest sense. In the “Post Bugti-Bezanjo period” the land and people of Balochistan were put on a different track of politics. The “Judgment of Time” is now written on every wall of Quetta and Balochistan. Let the Wise read it.

- 10.4. His last days have a lot to learn for the youth and for the students of politics and international law as his vision was broad and even beyond the territorial boundaries of Pakistan.
- 10.5. His successors are all those who believe in democracy, justice, fundamental rights, equality of human beings. Above all the struggle for rights in a democratic way. “Dialogue and only Dialogue” is the strategy for the resolution of all issues. Let the Rulers and the Ruled come on the same page and it is the page of “Solution by Dialogue on the Table”