

Editorial

The Cold War positions are back with the latest friction being over Ukraine. This developed from the European Union's decision to induct former Warsaw Pact countries despite British Prime Minister Cameron's warning that such advancement would cause British withdrawal. Now NATO plans the same extension. President Vladimir Putin's 26 December 2021 statement: "We have no- where to retreat. NATO could deploy missiles in Ukraine that could take just four or five minutes to reach Moscow" is a mirror image of the concern voiced by President John F. Kennedy during the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis.

Spheres of influence have been a courtesy in the era of conventional warfare, their retention in the Nuclear age has become imperative. The thaw between the United States and Russia following 9/11 was not taken advantage of. The conflict in Ukraine over two ways of life underscore that the collapse of the U.S.S.R Communist Party has not ended ideological warfare. These find a resonance in our part of the world. Those of us who applaud President Vladimir Putin's statement that sacrilege of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Upon whom, his Progeny and Companions be Peace) is not freedom of speech, shall be inescapably contrasted with the spectacle of the West European summit in Paris in the wake of the Charles Hebdo affair.

Nearer home, Afghanistan's objection to Pakistan's fencing of the 1893 Durand Line is as serious as the Salala incident of 26 November 2011. It is providential that Pakistan has held back from recognizing the Taliban regime this time and aid to Afghanistan including passage of goods through Pakistan should be made contingent on Afghan recognition of the Durand Line. It would be pertinent to note the last interview given by Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan to an Indian journalist and reproduced in *India Today* of 31 January 2014 bears us out. In answer to the question whether "the idea of greater Pakhtoonistan is dead? Or do

you mean that the concept does exist but that is not causing any problems”? He replied:

The idea never helped us. In fact it was never a reality. Successive Afghan governments just exploited it for their own political ends. It was only towards the end of his regime that Daoud Khan had stopped talking about it. And Taraki in the earlier part of his regime also didn't mention it. So when I met him, I thanked him for not raising the issue. But later even he raised this issue because he wanted to continue the problem for Pakistan. Our people suffered greatly because of all this.

This is how the world is poised when we send this year's final issue to the press. The first paper we carry is “Muslim Period Shrines and Mystic Practices in Panjgur District, Balochistan.” This paper illustrates how archaeological remains supplement written records and popular belief. This paper studies in architectural details five medieval Muslim shrines. Balochistan has been regarded as an outpost of South Asia but is the region contiguous to the Caliphal State.

The second paper “Mughul Era Heritage: Zardozi Work in Multan” Zardozi or precious metal threadwork did not originate with the Mughuls, but it were they who most patronized this art founding a factory within the Royal Palace for this purpose. This paper brings us up to date on how a cherished heritage is preserved and continues to flourish

“Miltancy and Pukhtunwali: An Analysis of Militant Trends in Pukhtun Society”. The contributor's efforts to analyze Colonial historiography and the source of 21st century militancy comes at a most opportune time. Finally, we have two papers with basically, Karachi as their theme. “The Early History of Karachi City: An Exploration” is about the medieval and colonial era while “Politics of Sindh and the Federal Cabinet of Pakistan 1947-1955” is about the post –Independence era which begins with centre-province contention about the status of Karachi. The de-classification of Cabinet Proceedings had for long been awaited and it is hoped that more historians with access to them shall enlighten us on the basis of these documents.

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