

United Army in Polarized Pakistani Society

In his book *Pakistan A Hard Country*, Anatol Lieven says that the only thing that could damage the chain of command in Pak army is if enough Pakistani soldiers were to face conflicting orders from the above that would contradict with their discipline and honor as Muslim. Author says that if US were to invade parts of Pakistan without any resistance from Pak army then that could scumble the army which might cause rebellion inside the army. The situation would exacerbate to a civil war then to a revolution in Pakistan. Author further adds that 2008 election had showed the regional identity based voters indicate the polarized Pakistani society. The army is the only thing that is united. Anatol Lieven says, Ali Hassan, an ex-in Norwegian company told me that if they were to preach revolution then the people would we could not follow

Q.2. Make a précis of the following passage and suggest a suitable title (15+5)

(Marks 20)

In his book *Pakistan A Hard Country*, Anatol Lieven says that the only thing that can destroy this discipline and unity is if enough Pakistani soldiers are faced with moral and emotional pressures powerful enough to crack their Pakistan discipline, and that would mean very powerful pressures indeed. In fact, they would have to be put in a position where their duty to defend Pakistan and their conscience and honor as Muslims clashed directly with their obedience to their commanders. As far as I can see, the only thing that could bring that about as far as the army as a whole is concerned (rather than just some of its Pathan elements) is if the US were to invade part of Pakistan, and the army command failed to give orders to resist this. Already, the perceived subservience of the Pakistani state to Washington's demands has caused severe problems of morale in the armed forces. I have been told by soldiers of all ranks that faced with open incursions on the ground by US troops, parts of the Pakistani army would mutiny in order to fight the invaders. With the army splintered and radicalized, Islamist upheaval and the collapse of the state would indeed be all too likely – but even then, the result would be rebellion leading to civil war, not, as in Iran, to a national revolution that would be successful in taking over the whole country. Anatol Lieven adds further that regional identity may be growing in political importance, with the 2008 elections showing a lower vote for the PPP in Punjab, and a lower vote for the Punjab-based Muslim League in other provinces. All the same, with Pakistan is, there is usually a wheel within a wheel, an identity within an identity, which in turn overlaps with an other identity. The only exceptions, the people with a single identity, are some of the Islamists, and some of the soldiers – but by no means all of either. Or as Ali Hassan, a young Lahori executive with a Norwegian company, said to me:

If I were to jump on a box and preach revolution, with the best programme in the world, you know what would happen? First, people from all the other provinces would say that we can't follow him, he's a Punjabi. Then most of the Punjabis would say, we can't follow him, he's a Jat. Then the Jats would say, we can't follow him, he's from such-and-such a biradiri. Even in my own village, half the people would say something like, I can't follow him, his grandfather beat my uncle in a fight over land. If you preach Islamic revolution, most Pakistanis won't follow you because they practise different kinds of Islam and worship different saints. So you see we Pakistanis can't unite behind a revolution because we can't unite behind anything.

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because of having particular identity.

Ali further added that Pakistanis could

~~be~~ not be united behind a revolution

because the society is highly polarized.

(Total words 169)