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The Stratagem of Bewildered Spectator: An Analysis of Pakistan's Policy towards Palestinian-Israel Conflict

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Abstract:

For more than sixty years, World peace and stability has been threatened by the Arab-Israel conflict. Almost every country of the Middle Eastern region, in one way or the other, is badly affected from gashing pain and souring wound of this elderly dispute. However, other states, including some regional and super powers of the world, have also been showing their deep concern to the existing situation. Similarly, a deep insight of Pakistan's policy towards Arab-Israel conflict reflects the same stance and policies persuaded by the Muslim community of the British India. Most of the ruling elites used to follow a religious based foreign policy to investigate the genesis of Zionist-Arab dispute. However, drastic changes in international scenario induced Pakistani authorities to make their Arab-Israel policy in order to adjust themselves to paradigm shift in strategic interest of all belligerents, particularly with the commencement of Peace process. Consequently, in spite of internal pressure from religious hardcore, a change occurred in Pakistan's policy from traditional anti-Israel to prospect for normalization of their relations and to initiate a public debate at home for recognition of Jewish State owing to changing strategic compulsions at the end of Cold War and Middle East's tilt towards peaceful settlement of Palestinian dispute. The objective of this article is to observe the real change in Pakistan's policy offering it a new place in international community.

Keywords: 1. Middle East 2. Israel 3. Palestine 4. Zionist-Arab dispute 5. Balfour Declaration 6. Pakistan's Foreign Policy

1. Introduction

Pakistan's policy towards Zionist-Arab dispute cannot be apprehended without tracing the nature of origin of Arab-Israel conflict or its geo-strategic significance for the region. These factors proved to be the pre-requisite of Pakistan's policy towards Arab-Israel conflict since British *Raj* in Hindustan. In this regard Amin is of the view that "it is notable that though Pakistan is situated in South Asia, it is adjacent to Central Asia and Middle East and is located at the mouth of the strategic Persian Gulf region. while it is a South Asian country, on the basis of its physical location, Pakistan in some ways also an extension of the Middle East and Central Asia from where it draws most of its spiritual roots and some of its ethnic and cultural origins."(Amin, 2010 p 4) The genesis of Arab-Israel clash can be traced back to the contending claims by Arabs and Jews and pledges made by the British in the guise of Hussain-Macmohan negotiations of Balfour Declaration of 1917. The Jews aspired for the land of Israel on certain grounds, which included Jewish settlement on the land of Israel and promise made by Allah to Abraham (Bard, 2006 p 11).

In the late 19th century, there was an emergence of the nationalist movements and Zionism contributed immensely towards this inferno. Zionism sprung as a Jewish lobby group following the outbreak of Russian and European anti-semiticist. This resulted in resurgence of organized massacre of Jews in Russia and Eastern Europe that encouraged Jewish immigration to Palestine in order to seek sanctuary and foundation of their homeland. In this critical juncture in 1898, Theodor Herzl organized a Zionist International Movement to establish a separate Jews state in Palestine as thousands of Jews were dwelling in Palestine.

In 1917, Britain Foreign Secretary, Arthur James Balfour inked the Balfour Declaration in favor of Jewish nation-state in Palestine to secure its interests. The British government consider the establishment of Jewish homeland as top priority and utilized all means for the attainment of this goal. (Immel, 2009, p.17) After the end of World War I, due to Sykes-Picot Agreement, Palestine came

under the control of United Kingdom. During the obligatory epoch, the British made contradictory pledges to both communities under Hussain-Macmahon treaty and Balfour Declaration. Moreover, unabated Jewish immigration into Palestine under aegis of British government caused resentment and erupted into strife, riots, massacre and violence between Jews and Arabs.

The British tried to maintain precarious law and order. However, Adolf Hitler's anti-Semitic designs stimulated more Jewish immigration into Palestine and caused disgruntlement and antagonism. Consequently, rebellions broke out by 1936 and put down by the British government time and again. Under these circumstances, the British government proposed quota and limitations for Jewish immigration and paid attention towards Arabs demand of Independent Arab state and prevented land sale to Jews through White Paper of 1939 (Bard, 2006 p 16). Yet, this development turn the tide against British, Arabs and Jews resorted to violence and anti-government protest demonstration in order to expel the mandatory authority. By 1942, Jewish leaders evolved a Biltmore program which emphasized on unlimited immigration of Jews to Palestine. In 1945, Jewish Agency demanded of the British government implementation of Biltmore Program, annulment of *White Paper* of 1939, establishment of Jewish state in Palestine (Kanafani, 1972).

The Jews extremist's outfits like Haganah and Irgun were engaged in hardcore designs and campaign ultimately decided to assault British headquarters in King David Hotel in Jerusalem. Following the attack and seizure of important documents of Jewish Agency by the British troops, the former targeted King David Hotel which was housing the British military command and criminal investigation division. (Bard, 2006, p.23) The British retaliated by targeting the headquarters of Irgun. A prolong episode of violence coupled with the huge price of World War II compelled Britain to hand over the Palestinian syndrome to UNO. In 1947, the Organization proposed the partition of Palestine into two states i.e., one for the Jews and other for Arabs. It was rejected by the Palestinians but welcomed by the Jews. Israel declared its Independence on May 14, 1948. Therefore, Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Transjordan and Lebanon attacked Palestine and started the first Arab-Israel War of 1948, in which Israel came out as victorious with additional territory beyond the Partition Plan.

2. Strategic Interests of Colonial Rivals

The Basle Declaration clearly stated that support of world leading powers is indispensable for the cause of Jewish state. The Zionists, in return, tried to get approval of Sultan of Turkey but failed. They also tried to enlist support from Russia, Italy, Austria and Germany for Jewish cause but too failed. However, Zionists soon convinced that the most trustworthy power among the European countries was Britain. Strategic position of Southern Coast of Mediterranean had carried strategic importance throughout history. In addition, Palestine, Sinai and Nile Delta are situated on the cross-road to three continents of Asia, Africa and Europe. At that time Britain had controlled Egypt, Sudan and state of Southern Arabian Peninsula in Middle East. Since inception of 19th Century, Britain began to take interest in Middle East in response to two developments: loss of their colonies in America and French influence in the Mediterranean and Egypt. In the last two decades of 19th century, Britain began to increase its influence in Egypt and secured control over the Nile Valley. However, Egypt's Independence in early 1920s diverted Britain's attention towards Palestine, which could serve another base to control not only Suez Canal and Indian Empire but also Southern Coast of Mediterranean and those of the Red Sea could be protected. After the WW-I, the Britain decided to establish a European buffer state and thought that Palestine could function as a buffer state between French in Syria and Suez Canal, to exert pressure on Egypt and British control over Suez Canal (Hahn, 1991 p 123-131). By the beginning of 20th Century, Britain and France joined hands to oppose French policies in Near East and Middle East.

The international diplomacy brought Palestine under Britain control which sowed the seeds of future bone of contention in the region. During the WWI, the British government made contending promises to the Arabs regarding independence of Arabs. As a result in 1915, diplomatic negotiations between Turk Governor, Sharif Husain of Hejaz and Sir Henry Macmahon, British High Commissioner at Cairo took place in order to muster Arab support to banish the Turks from Palestine, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq and Arabia peninsula. Therefore, Husain assisted British against Turkey in return to later promise for Independence (Bullard, 1958 p 250). Similarly, during 1916, Britain and France concluded Sykes-Picot Pact according to which it was agreed that upon cessation of hostility, France would get Syria and Lebanon (Cilicia), Britain, Southern Mesopotamia and Palestine to be internationalized. During war British maintained two objectives; to muster support of Arabs against Ottoman Turks and to enlist Jewish support against both the Central powers (Germany and Austria-Hungry) and Ottoman Empire. Zionist leader Cham Weizmann visited London in 1914 and contributed to the British war efforts by discovering new method of producing acetone. Negotiations started between British Foreign secretary, Belfour and Zionist leaders, as a result of these negotiations. Belfour Declaration was issued on 2nd Nov, 1917 that backed the formation of Israeli state in Palestine and promised England's help in enlisting support of international countries.

After winning British support for the Jewish cause, the Zionist leaders obtain French, Italian and US approval of the Declaration in 1918. However, the situation took a dramatic turn due to Arab nationalism, Jewish aspiration and conflicting promises of British and creation of new State. However, after World War-I, Jews and Arabs felt betrayed. Since the League has divided the area between Britain and France and later received mandate for Palestine the British mandate system remained in power up to May 14, 1948, when Israel proclaimed Independence.

3. Pre-State Muslim Reaction to Zionism and British Policy in Middle East

With the start of 20th Century, religious affinity and feelings of pan-Islamism had profoundly contributed in molding Muslims consciousness towards Palestinian cause. Muslims had strong affections for the political associations of the Ottoman Empire. They considered it the only and final seat of Muslim political clout, as the remaining Islamic bloc had been under European colonial powers and authority. Muslim's sympathy for Turkey grew with the strengthening of Pan-Islamist Movement which originally

meant religious and political reform but was transformed into anti-imperialist movement after middle of 19th Century, when Muslim territories especially Ottoman Empire came under European powers.

Pan-Islamism emerged as anti-British Movement in India owing to British attitude during Balkan and Turco-Italian Wars. During World War-I British assured the Indian Muslims that sanctity of Holy places would be respected and no harm would be done to them. On the conclusion of War the Allies tried to dictate humiliating term to Turkey. The treatment that the Turks were getting at the hands of Allies greatly perturbed the Indian Muslims. The Muslim's leaders reminded the British government of its promises and demanded that the Turkish Caliph must have supremacy over sacred places and entire region of Arabs in Middle East. Arabs were not willing on Indian Muslims demand, as Sharif Husain had revolted against Turkey in exchange for Independent Arab State. However, the Muslim of the sub-continent was angry with Sharif but they were bitter against the British. (Qureshi, 1972, p.256) Although, Indian Muslims hatred against British stemmed from the latter's policy towards Ottoman Empire, but several other development too, such as annulment of partition of Bengal, oppressive measure resorted by the British government in the wake of protest against notorious Rowlett Act, worsened the relations between rulers and being ruled.

Beside, *Jallianwala* tragedy and subsequent atrocities had profound effects on the politics of India. Muslim community started Khilafat Movement and Khilafat Conference was held in Delhi on November 23, 1919. Khilafat Movement created political consciousness and awakening among the Muslims which had developed into a freedom movement. All India Muslim League (AIML), established in 1906, was vocal on the Turkish and Khilafat issue from its very inception. In 1913, AIML passed a resolution in support of Turkey and criticize British policy toward Turkey. Muhammad Ali Jinnah supported Turkish issue and at Lucknow session of AIML. He urged the British government to respect Muslims feelings and non-interference in the Khilafat matters. Indian Muslims protested against the British government, aimed at the preservation of temporal power of Turkish Khilafat, which also included Palestine. The movement also strived for keeping Holy land of Palestine safe from the occupation of Colonial powers.

The Khilafat Movement vindicated Britain imperialist designs and strategic policy pertinent to Middle East and Suez Canal. It also mobilized discontented Indian Muslims that eventually led to Independence Movement (Minault, 1982 p 93-96). In point of fact, it was not spontaneous reactions of Muslim community to the Arab cause. Since the second decade of 20th century, when the British pledged backing for the formation of Jewish nation-state in Palestine, the Muslim segment of Indian social fabric accused International conspiracy. They exhibited their indignation and resentment through processions, speeches and resolutions. Moreover, Muslims of Sub-continent highlighted and compelled the British of their notorious designs and legal position of Arab issue. (chaudhry, n.d). Besides, AIML too showed resentment and began to take note of the serious situation in Palestine by 1918. In this regard, a resolution was passed against the British occupation of Jerusalem. Muslim delegation was sent by AIML, participated in an International conference on Palestine in Cairo in 1938. Palestine Fund was opened in 1939 and Muslim League had also spoken of Palestine cause in 1940 Lahore Resolution. Therefore, it may be rightly said that Indian Muslims along with their Palestinian and Turkish brethren had been greatly perturbed because of Palestinian cause and consequently protested against and supported this issue throughout first half of the 20th Century.

The Muslims of India were quite concerned and aware of the Arab cause much before the emergence of Pakistan. They had expressed solidarity with Palestinian Arabs throughout the course of conflict. Creation of Pakistan dawned a new era in subsequent diplomatic history. The Arab cause took a dramatic turn into an armed conflict between the Arabs and Israel on the eve of Pakistan emergence.

4. Pakistan's anti-Israel Stance and Prospects for Normalization of Relations

After its establishment, Pakistan intended to cultivate cordial ties with Islamic bloc. Since its inception, Pakistan manifested progressive policy towards Islamic world established on common religion, culture and history. Prior to Indian partition Muslim were quite concerned about issues of their coreligionists everywhere in the world. After WW I, Muslim of subcontinent displayed their emotional attachment and indignation against the treatment meted out by the victors to Ottoman Empire. Therefore, in post 1947 Pakistan, founder of Pakistan emphatically stated that keynote of Pakistan foreign policy will be fostering cordial relations with the Muslim world and Liaqat Ali Khan, Prime Minister of Pakistan, advocated the unity of Islamic world. (Mahmood, 2000, p.222) The cornerstone of Pakistan foreign policy has been Islamic solidarity and backed the cause of Palestinian Arabs and their right of self rule at the platform of UNO. While on the other hand, Israel solicited Pakistan's recognition, which went unheeded. Pakistan hostile attitude resulted in non recognition and perpetual antagonism against Jewish State. Its hatred can be judged by the Quaid-e-Azam 's condemnation of Israel and his diplomatic letter to US President, Truman regarding dire consequences of his devilish design for depriving Arabs of their land.

During the UN's discussion on the partition plan for Palestine, the delegation of Pakistan led by the first Foreign Minister, Sir Mohammad Zafrullah Khan, championed the cause of Palestine. The Pakistan delegation's chief was a source of great help to the Arabs. Pakistan's support to the Arab cause at the UN was backed by a clearly defined policy of government and massive support and sympathy by masses. Mr. Zafrullah stated that implementation of unjust division plan would lead to perpetual warfare in the region. Pakistan's Minister of State vividly declared his concern and argued in front of UN General Assembly prior to adaptation of proposal of Special Committee on Palestine aiming at partition that Western Nations would have to face dire consequences of their forcibly created wedge among the mainland of Muslims of Middle East. He also reminded them of their future allies in this region. (Burke & Ziring, 1990, p.137) Pakistani leadership sought to develop the most cordial relations with the Muslim countries. Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan, and Prime Minister Liaqat Ali Khand clearly affirmed the establishment of close relations with Muslim Countries by advocating the origin of Islamic Unity. (Mahmood, 2000, p.222)

Since its establishment, Pakistan took the Palestine problem as the first to engage the deep concern. Within days after its formation, Israel formally requested Pakistan's recognition but the request went unanswered. At least in public, the government remained

opposed to Israel and repeatedly reiterated its commitment to the Palestinian struggle and its refusal to recognize the Jewish state. Since then, Pakistan has adopted a complicated and at times lukewarm position toward Israel's conflicts with the Arabs.

Muhammad Ali Jinnah vehemently opposed the division of Palestine and condemned the existence of Israel. While addressing to US President Truman, he requested him to abstain from the hideous endeavor to divest the Arabs of their region which had been their native soil since long. During the UN's discussion on the partition plan for Palestine, the delegation of Pakistan led by the first Foreign Minister, Sir Zafrullah Khan, championed the cause of Palestine. The Pakistan delegation's chief was a source of great help to the Arabs. Pakistan's support to the Arab cause at the UN was backed by a clearly defined policy of government and massive support and sympathy by masses. Zafrullah Khan, by considering it impractical, completely opposed to the division of Palestine. He used to speak fervently on Palestinian dispute. He also proposed a Special Committee on Palestine on Partition as he believed that Western Nations were coercively setting up a chunk and wedge in the mainland of Middle East. (Burke & Ziring, 1990, p, 137)

Following the General Assembly vote, Pakistan sided with the pro-Arab cause state in UNO. It witnessed emergence of protest, demonstrations, strikes and denunciation of the UN decision throughout length and breadth of the country. Owing to pro-Arab stance, Pakistan had refused to recognize Israel. Consequently, from the very day of its inception, both states could not evolve cordial and viable ties. Israel regards Pakistan anti-Semitic, while Pakistan regarded former as its inveterate enemy. Almost, all Muslim countries of Asia manifested aversion of Israel and cold shoulder. It seemed the sense of Islamic solidarity has become the basis of this phenomenon. In addition to this, the belief that Jews and Zionism are anti-Muslim also wrought change in the mind of Muslims. The orthodox Ulema and radical circle exerted pressure on the government against Israel and advocacy of Arabs right of self-determination. The state of Pakistan had always vocal of violation of principles of justice and International law in the form of creation of Jewish State. Since its inception, Pakistan's policy towards Israel has been critical and anti-Israel. The development in Palestine evoked stern and sympathetic reaction of political leader, press, media and general public in Pakistan. In this deplorable situation, first Arab-Israel War broke on May 14th, 1948, indignant and perturbed mood of Pakistan people turned into hatred and denunciation. Five Arab states (Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq and Transjordan) attacked Israel. The cost of war to Israel was enormous, but the Arab campaign to destroy Israel failed. The Arabs didn't seize any of the territories fixed for the Jewish state under the Partition Resolution. It settled none of the basic issues of Arab-Israel contention. This was not only failed attempt to solve the already existing issues but lost additional territories. During the course of war, a large number of Palestinians had been expelled from their homeland, thus created Palestinian Arab refugee factor in Arab-Israel tangle.

During first Arab-Israel war, Pakistan support to Palestinians and Arab cause was beyond doubts, irrespective to the result of war. Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah lent financial aid to help the children of personnel who sacrificed their lives for the sake of their just cause. Moreover, the Central Aid Committee was established to help Palestinian people on June 30th, 1948, under the Chairmanship of Liaquat Ali Khan. On the eve of Arab-Israel war, Muslim League held a meeting in Karachi intended at condemning Israeli belligerence. General public was indignant and evoked anti-Israel feeling and condemnation throughout nook and corner of the country. The prominent features of Pakistan policy towards Arab-Israel conflict were Pakistan's extended support to Arab cause without reservation, opposed creation of Jewish state and criticized the Western power owing to independent foreign policy. Slowly and gradually national and international obligations brought a change in foreign policy objectives. Motivated by *Ummah* spirit, a desire to have close relations with the Muslim world and strive for the unity and welfare of the Muslim people that had dominated the minds of majority of the Muslims of British India. Since the Khilafat Movement, Pakistan gave a special place to the Middle East in its foreign policy.

In early 1950s, compelled by its security compulsions, Pakistan made a major change in the foreign policy. It abandoned the policy of neutrality and decided to join the pacts in the region sponsored by the West. However, fostering of military alliance was resented by most of the Arab countries. But Iraq was not against military pacts in the region. The national interest of Pakistan clashed with the national interest of the Arab states led by the Egypt. Pakistani attitude towards Britain was quite different from that of Arab states. The Britain had not yet withdrawn from the Arab world and gulf region was under its direct control and presence of its forces in the Suez Canal zone was an encroachment in the sovereignty of Egypt. Moreover, the creation, maintenance and expansion of the state of Israel was another source of irritation. For Pakistan, after independence there were no more differences with the Britain. Britain was the head of the British Commonwealth of Nations of which Pakistan was one of the members. This conflict led to the adaptations of divergent policies by the two and adversely effected Pakistan position in the Arab world. Moreover, Suez crisis further worsened the situation.

By considering the security threats, government of Pakistan decided to join the US military assistance programmes in 1954. A year later, Pakistan also joined the Baghdad Pact in 1955. Egypt resented this move and considered Baghdad Pact detrimental to Arab unity. The Arab World manifested a sense of injury and indignation by stating that Pakistan's backing of Arab cause had become suspicious. Pakistan, however, candidly stated that military alliance could not hinder its conventional policy of Muslim cause. Circumstances took a dramatic turn in July 1956, when Suez Crisis broke out owing to US withholding of financial assistance to Aswan Dam and subsequent retaliatory nationalization of Suez Canal Company by Egyptian President. Therefore, Pakistan's concern and interest in retaining freedom of navigation was natural. There was sympathy for Egypt, no doubt, but this was tempered by two other considerations. First, there was the desire not to offend Pakistan's newly acquired allies, the UK and US, whose material and moral assistance was so essential for facing India. Secondly, at least 56 per cent export goods and 49 per cent of Pakistan's imports goods circulated through the Suez Canal and it had a vested interest in efficient operation of the waterway (Burl.les, summoned London Conference to review the critical situation). At this platform, Pakistan warned against violation of UN charter, upheld its stance and urged on peaceful resolution through negotiations and to baffle aspiration of belligerents. It exhibited hesitation on setting up of Suez Canal Users Association without consulting Egypt and also contributed in not establishing Users Association. However, armed conflict erupted after failed negotiations.

A proximate cause of the 1956 war was Israel's perception that Egypt's relative power would rise as it acquired new Czech arms, creating a large Israeli window of vulnerability (Evera, 2009). Pakistan advocated Egypt's point of view and strongly condemned British, French and Israeli aggression in UN and made utmost efforts to bring about a ceasefire and withdraw of forces. Free navigation in the Canal was essential and significant for Pakistan too. Meanwhile, discomfiture of Arab forces and resultant confiscation of territorial gain of Israel in Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Jerusalem sparked bitterness in Pakistan. It is pertinent to mention that on the issue of Suez Canal Pakistani official policy was lagged behind Indian support to a Muslim state. An important Muslim country like Egypt's show of preference for India over Pakistan hurt the sensitivities of Pakistani people. The Egyptian President openly articulating significance of Kashmir and Suez Canal for India and Egypt respectively (Amin, 2010, p.149). However, there was disappointment and perturbation at the defeat of Arabs at the hands of Israel. Eventually, relations between Egypt and Pakistan started to improve somewhat, after Iraq withdrew from the Baghdad Pact (Amin, 2010, p.149) Hence, intervention of UNO in Suez Canal crisis resulted in policing of boundaries between Egypt and Israel by United Nations Emergency Force.

The bitter memories of 1956 Suez crisis continued to grow as both the Israel and Arabs went on consolidating their position quite in disregard to each other feelings. Misfortune once again hovered over Middle East in 1967, when Egypt sought withdrawal of UNEF and dispatched its military troops in Sinai Peninsula. Besides these development, blockade of Strait of Tiran divested Israel of her access to Red Sea and Suez Canal. Resultantly Israel attacked Egypt and excited the wrath and condemnation throughout length and breadth of the world. The government of Pakistan expressed solidarity and advocated Egyptian position by explaining that it had been watching with grave concern catastrophic designs of Israel and worsening law and order in the region since creation of Jewish State.

In this critical time Pakistan exhibited support and advocacy of Arab cause and emphatically cursed Israeli Imperialist policy in Middle East. Egyptian and Pakistani Presidents were stunned and emphasized on taking preventive action against Israel. Pakistan foreign Minister Syed Sharifudin Pirzada remained vocal and propounded traditional policy towards Arab-Israel dispute. On this occasion, government stance at official level vindicated that resistance of Arab Muslims against Israeli aggressive strategy will be supported by nation of Pakistan. Since in late 1950s, Jordan concluded an agreement with Pakistan that its armed forces, especially Air Force would be trained by Pakistan. Besides lending material support, Pakistani Pilots participated in military operation. During the 1967 War, while condemning unscrupulous and naked belligerence of Israel, material assistance and moral support had been extended by Pakistan. By this time Pakistan had improved its image because of its non-aligned policy due to illusion of aligned policy. After the Arab defeat in 1967 war, Pakistan was one of the authors of resolution 242 which later became the basis for peace dialogue in the affected region. It was too mainly responsible to advocate in favor of Security Council resolutions on the status of Jerusalem or Al-Quds, which have pitted the International Community against Israel's expansionist designs over the 3rd Holiest city for the Muslims. (Amin, 2010, p.121) Pakistan supported the Arab cause in the UN and moved a resolution aiming at proclamation of Israeli steps to modify the legal position of Al-Quds. Pakistan unqualified support and material help made a positive impact on the people and government of the Arab states and rehabilitated their confidence in the sincerity of Pakistan. In the beginning of 1970s, Pakistan revived its pro-West tilt and redefined its foreign policy owing to deceit and treachery of western allies.

On August 21, 1969, Al-Aqsa mosque was ablaze by the Jews. It spread a wave of shock throughout the Muslim world. When King Hassan of Morocco on the request of Saudi King Faisal gave the call of convening a summit conference of Muslim states to consider the situation arising out the Zionist policy in Palestine particularly in Al-Quds, Pakistan was one of the seven members of the preparatory Committee which met at Rabat on September 8, 1969 and stated that an Islamic Summit Conference to be summoned in Rabat by September 22, 1969 (Saleh, 2006 p 413-24). The Islamic summit which was the first of its kind and of great historic importance held on September 22, 1969, participated by 25 Muslim States. Pakistan too enthusiastically participated, had supported the cause of the Palestinian people and once again reaffirmed that she was ready to concert action with other Muslim state to bring about Israeli withdraw from occupied Arab territories and to restore and preserve the Islamic character of Al-Quds and the holy places in the West Bank.

In the late 1960s, Pakistan relations with the Arab states extend a new phase. It started military training assistance to Jordan, Libya and Saudi Arabia. Moreover Pakistan and Palestine Liberation Organization developed close ties. The germs of fourth Arab-Israel conflict were contained in the very consequences of the third Arab-Israel war fought in June, 1967. Israel succeeded in occupying vast Arab territories belonging to Syria, Jordan and Egypt. Military ascendancy emboldened Israeli hegemony in Middle East. However, Egypt did not give up her legitimate right and bent upon to recapture Sinai Peninsula. Thus, in 1973 during the month of Ramadan Egypt succeeded in compelling Syria to attack Israel on, "Yom Kippur" (Day of Atonement). The war came to an end after an intervention by big powers like US, UN and Soviet Union (Hammel, 1992 p 156-61). The fourth Arab-Israel war excited reaction and rage to Israeli atrocities. Almost all Arab diplomats were called upon by Premier Zulfikar Ali Bhutto to express deep sympathy and concern. In the meantime, Z.A Bhutto extended message of sympathetic feelings towards Presidents of Syria and Egypt. Also conveyed his heartily concern to Secretary General of UN over the deplorable situation in Middle East as Dar (1976) stated. Bhutto government sternly condemned the war more enthusiastically, as he had to return back his country from foreign tour and provided assistance in man and material. His reign is characterized by profound advocacy of Arab Cause and Muslim brotherhood. Thus by doing so, Pakistan removed the stains of being an ally of west and restored her lost image among Muslim brethren.

Federal Information Minister, Moulana Kousar Niazi remarked that Israeli onslaught on Arabs is as to attack Pakistan. While on his state visit to Iran, Turkey and Saudi Arabia, Bhutto said that since inception of Arab-Israel conflict, Pakistan had been more concerned and vocal. Similarly, the historic Islamic Summit Conference in January 1974 in Pakistan was the corollary of unflinching efforts of Bhutto. It was a crowning achievement of Pakistan and earned appreciation and recognition in Arab world

(Ali, 1974 p 29-49). At this Conference, PLO was recognized as a representative organization of Palestinians. Bhutto expressed his resentment and said that we have no grudge to Jews but to Zionist abridged with haughtiness, we apologize to be friendly and hospitable. (Ma'oz, 2010, p.197) With the rise of Bhutto as leader, Pakistan began to focus on its Middle Eastern identity. This process was advanced by Gulf financial support to Pakistan, the flood of Pakistani workers to the gulf.

Under Prime Minister Bhutto, Pakistan's transformation from passive to active in the Arab-Israeli conflict was realized with Pakistani participation in the 1973 Yom Kippur War. Pakistan strong support for the Arabs during the Ramadan War of 1973 also resulted in a warming of relations with Egypt as well as Syria (Amin, 2010, p. 149). Regarding Israel control over Jerusalem, Bhutto proclaimed that Al-Quds enjoyed reverence amongst Muslims and no documentary effort could perpetuate Israeli occupation over the region. Indeed Bhutto's behavior as host of OIC' Lahore summit was seen at the zenith of his diplomacy. In 1977, Pakistan returned to military rule with the oust of Bhutto's government by General Zia-ul-Haq. Ironically his use of religion's role in state affairs drew an ideological parallel Israel. In 1981, Zia publically compare Pakistan religiously ideological nature to that of Jewish state stating that Israel and Pakistan were the outcome of religious ideology, both states could not survive in the absence of their respective religious faith. Meanwhile Pakistan played a key role in the re-entry of Egypt to Islamic and Arab community following its ostracism for signing the Camp David Accords.

Following its Peace Accord with Israel, many Arab states severed their ties with Egypt. To further increase diplomatic isolation, in 1979 Arab League suspended Egyptian membership and moved the headquarters from Cairo to Tunis. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation followed suit same year debarring Egypt from its rank. The political and diplomatic freeze of Egypt lasted until the fourth OIC Summit held in 1984 in Casablanca. At the 1984 Summit, Pakistani President Zia-ul-Haq forcefully argued that Egypt should be restored to the Islamic fold, suggesting that debarring of Egypt from OIC had not furthered the Islamic or Palestinian cause. He helped Egyptian reinstatement into Organization. With Egypt's return to the OIC, the path was laid for its return to the Arab League five years later in 1989. Beyond helping to return Egypt to the Islamic world's good graces, Gen. Zia publically prodded the PLO to recognize Israel in March, 1986 (Ma'oz, 2010, p.198).

Soviet intervention in Afghanistan brought the most unlikely allies together in covert operation. In 1982 US Congressman Charlie Wilson helped armed transfer from Israel to Pakistan, via the CIA, to be supplied to the mujahedeen fighting in Afghanistan against Soviets. Congressman Wilson proposed General Zia of transfer of Israeli weapons and upgrading Pakistan's Russian design T-55 tanks, which were being supplied by China. Israel had already been secretly upgrading China's T-55 tanks. Wilson's proposal found favor in the eyes of Pakistan's leaders and Texas Congressman embarked on a trip to Israel. Wilson's diplomatic efforts resulted in full-scale cooperation on the Afghan front between Israel and Pakistan. There is even speculation that Israel maintained permanent representation in Pakistan during the mid 1980s. The post-cold war dynamics altered the interactions between all the players in South Asia and Arab countries. With the end of the Cold War and beginning of direct Arab-Israeli negotiations that started at the Madrid Peace Conference in 1991, India and Israel moved forward in normalizing relations nearly 50 years after India first recognized the Jewish state, Which had been strained owing to number of reasons such as India role in NAM, its relations with Soviet Union and support for secular socialist Arab regimes and the PLO. The confluence of fore mentioned events combined with reintroduction of democracy in Pakistan following the death of Gen. Zia, resulted in a vigorous debate within Pakistani civil society over the question of recognizing Israel. With the end of Cold War, India shifted its policy towards Israel, and in January 1992, normalized relation with Israel. The realization of India-Israel relation spurred forward the debate in Pakistan whether it should follow suit. During Nawaz government, Pakistan ambassador to US, Abida Hussain, openly spoke in favor of initiating dialogue between Pakistan and Jewish State of Israel. Later, issue of normalization of ties was debated following the conclusion of Oslo Accords and recognition of Jewish homeland and the PLO in 1993 (Ma'oz, 2010, p.199). As various Arab countries began direct need for subtle policy change. Pakistan since its inception had always supported the cause of Palestinians against the Zionist, but now after the belligerent parties had recognized each other, there was no justification in Pakistan not recognizing Israel.

Since Pakistan and Israel had no territorial or common border dispute. Moreover, the changing dynamics in which Muslim countries are beginning to recognize Israel. Besides, the shared uniqueness of Pakistan and Israel creation based on ideology prompted government of Pakistan to rethink its present policy. In 1994, Israel and Pakistan feuded publically over a proposed visit of Pakistani Premier Benazir Bhutto to Gaza without any formal contact with Israel. Israel and Pakistan became embroiled in a diplomatic spat when Israel insisted that Pakistan obtain its consent while Pakistan refused to seek permission from an entity that it had yet to recognize. Despite the diplomatic imbroglio over the Gaza incident, the question of recognition of Israel continued to be discussed in Pakistan. As a token of good gesture Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto condemned the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, likening it to the political execution of her father in 1978.

Pakistan appreciated Israel's restraint with regards to US-Pakistani policy controversies including Brown Amendment and supply of F-16. Regarding bilateral relation it admitted that Pakistan was waiting for important countries in the Middle East to move forward with relations with Israel and stated that Pakistan will follow the suit as any other state does so. In 1997, Nawaz Sharif returned as a Prime Minister hurled accusation that his opponents were in league with Israel. However, he showed a subtle inclination towards normalization and his position was supported by a section of clergy. In 1997, the Pakistani religious leader Maulana Ajmal Qadri, the leader of Jamait Ulma-e-Islam visited Israel and carried out a pilgrimage to Al-Aqsa Mosque, advocated upon his return to Pakistan, recognizing Israel is an integral part of Palestinian interest. The Pakistani religious leader position received further support, when a delegation of Pakistan religious leaders carried out a trip to Israel for a pilgrimage to Islamic Holy sites. The delegation met with Israeli foreign minister and gave their approval to promotion of Islamic tourism from Pakistan to Israel. Meanwhile, General Mirza Aslam Beg, the leader of Awami Qiyadat Party also spoke in favor of normalizing relations with Israel by saying that we must acknowledge Israel as we do not have any direct dispute with them. His message carried considerable weight and influence.

However, throughout the 1980s and especially following the Israel's strike on Iraq Osirak's nuclear facility, there was speculation in Pakistan that Israel had designed a similar strike on Pakistan's nuclear facility in Kahuta. (Ma'oz, 2010, p.201) Conspiracy plots were hatched and ultimately led India, Israel and Pakistan to reach some limited undertaking in the form of meeting on the sidelines of the UN Assembly in 1985 between Israel and Pakistan in which they agreed that neither state's nuclear program comprised a security to other. The fear of an Israeli attack again reached a crescendo on the occasion of Pakistan's nuclear test in 1998. Again, Israel reached out to allay Pakistani fears by both conveying through US intermediaries that it had no aggressive designs and also in an official statement by the Deputy Defense Minister Sliven Shalom, stating we don't see it as a real immediate threat to Israel. In return, Pakistan too distanced itself from the term "Islamic Bomb" and characterized the weapon as purely for Pakistan's own security. It clarified that its nuclear capability was intended to serve only its own national security.

In the meantime, Pakistan saw a new return of military rule on October 12, 1999. The new regime, in light of Pakistan's decision to back US in the 'War against Terrorism' and recalibration of the country's orientation, decided to broach the question of recognition of Israel in public. Before leaving for a two-week tour of Europe and the US and also upon his return, President Pervez Musharaf began making comments about the necessity of weighing the opening of ties with Israel. Later Israel's withdrawal from Gaza Strip in August 2005, led to first formal public engagement between the two sides. At the initiative of President Musharaf under the auspices of Turkey, Israel and Pakistan's Foreign Ministers met in Istanbul. At the meeting, Israel's Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom stated that this is a time for all Muslim and Arab countries to reconsider their relations with Israel. However, Pakistani Foreign Minister Kasuri was quick to point out that the meeting didn't mean recognition and said that President Musharaf also stated that the meeting didn't equalize recognition.

In the political realm, the meeting was met with modest approval by most political parties including PPP, MQM and PML. Meanwhile, MMA, a six party Islamic block, staged a walkout of the National Assembly the following day. The party President Qazi Husain Ahmed denounced the meeting, stating that the Pakistani nation openly and collectively condemned this unfortunate meeting, which the Foreign Ministers have held with the representatives of the Jewish occupier of the Palestinian land. He believed the meeting was against Pakistan's ideology and organized demonstration across the country. On the other hand, the Foreign Minister meeting was followed by President Musharaf address to the American Jewish Congress on September 17, 2005. The significance of the meeting was profound, as this was a first time a leader of Muslim Nation with no ties, held a public dialogue with Jewish leader.

In his speech, President Pervaiz Musharaf discussed commonalities between Islam, Judaism and Christianity, noting the shared Prophets and shared doctrines of the three monotheistic religions. He outlined similarities shared between Islam and Judaism and pointed out historical period, where Jews and Muslim lived in peace and harmony. Pakistani President stated that since his country is not a party to this dispute thus don't cherish aggressive design against Israel and expect same sort of good gesture and no security hazards. He stated that normalization of ties between Israel and Pakistan are a prospect on the horizon, but one that could only come about with the creation of Palestinian state. Ever since Egyptian inclination to forge peace with Israel, mostly Arab States too budged from their earlier stance on Arab cause. This relinquishment resulted in beginning of diplomatic ties between Israel and Arab States. Frontline States have concluded or have been trying peace dialogue with Israel. Hence, Pakistan also decided to have key role in Middle East, particularly when it does not have direct dispute with Israel. (Kumaraswamy, 2013, p.131) In point of fact, the issue of recognition of Israel evokes passionate debate in Pakistan with proponents of recognition painted as anti-Islam. For years, conspiracy theories of Jewish and Israeli, against Pakistan and the Muslim world are circulated. The tales of Brahmin-Zionist nexus that is conspiring against Pakistan have also been rife in Pakistani media for a long time. These assumptions and speculations did nothing but indulged the Israeli establishment in anti-Pakistan activities whenever found opportunities.

5. Conclusion

Foreign policy of Pakistan, right from the beginning, has been based on endorsement of the Palestinian cause and unconditioned moral, political, diplomatic and material support to their struggle for self-determination. Under this policy Pakistani authorities austere rejected the Belfour Declaration and opposed the plan of partition of Palestine in the United Nations. Pakistan had opposed the creation of Israel on legal and political grounds and when the First Arab-Israel War broke out in 1948, the people and government of Pakistan openly supported the Arabs and condemned the Zionist aggression and expressed their utmost solidarity with Palestinians. The policy was in line with the traditional stand taken by the Muslims of South Asia on post World War-I development in the Balkan wars and the Middle East. However, this stand was based on the strong religious, cultural and historical ties with which the Muslims of South Asia were bound with Arab world; it had nothing to do with the modern parameters of international relations.

Therefore, the religious factor remained the dominant aspect in shaping Pakistan's demeanor towards the Arab-Israel conflict. Motivated by religious affiliations driven by the clergy class, the country had been unequivocally supported the Palestinian cause during 1948 War, 1956 Suez Crisis, Six Day War of 1967, Yom Kippur War of 1973 and condemned Israeli character at every juncture. Pakistan had also been enthusiastically supporting all groups and organizations which they believed are striving for Palestinian cause and ultimately liberation such as Palestine Liberation Organization, Organization of Islamic Cooperation and Arab League etc.

However, paradigm shift in international circumstances, on the Middle Eastern front and on Global horizon prompted the Pakistani authorities to review and revise their foreign policy regarding Arab-Israeli conflict. Eccentric view point is rapidly taking place in Pakistani society that almost all major confrontational states have made or have been seeking peaceful settlements with Israel, why should Pakistan remain critical and anti-Israel, as both states don't have any direct dispute or boundary clash? Following the end of Cold War, peace process in Arabs region between Israel and frontline Arab states, provided an opportunity to revise Pakistan's foreign policy demeanor.

In point of fact, the resolution of Palestinian issue always remained the major impediment in the way of Pakistan and Israel peaceful relations. When both countries tried to move forward with robust peace negotiations, the Pakistani government got pretext to push forward with its own pursuit of normalization of ties. By following the modern mode of diplomatic criterion, steady progress towards the Palestinian problem will not only help to achieve an enduring peaceful environment in the region but it will also help other countries including Pakistan to have a peaceful and productive relationship with Israel.

6. References

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