

CHAPTER-3

ELECTORAL HISTORY OF NWFP

3. INTRODUCTION: The history of electoral politics in NWFP started in 1932 when it became a governor's province under Sir Ralph Griffith on April 18, 1932. So, in this chapter electoral history of NWFP is analysed in two major sections, one is 1932-1947 and second section is 1947-1970 i.e up to the introduction of universal suffrage.

3.1 BRITISH PERIOD (1932-47): The area under NWFP had been taken by the British from the Sikh Darbar as a consequence of their victory in the second Anglo-Sikh war of 1849 and had been brought under the administration of Punjab province,¹ but first time British came into direct contact with these areas of NWFP was in 1808 due to the fear of French invasion through Persia and Afghanistan, and they sent a mission to Afghan Amir.² On 9 November 1901, Lord Curzon, the then Viceroy of India separated the Frontier Region from Punjab and created a new province of NWFP. The newly created Frontier province, consisting of the districts of Hazara, Peshawar, Kohat, Bannu and Dera Ismail Khan and the political agencies of Malakand, Khyber, Kuram, North Waziristan and South Waziristan, was placed under the charge of Chief Commissioner and agent to the Governor General, appointed and directly responsible to Government of India.³

On the formation of NWFP and by separating the five districts from the Punjab, these areas did not experience the electoral and other constitutional benefits of British representative institutions due to internal instability and strategic location of the province⁴, but awareness of representative institutions had already been started in Frontier after the uprising of 1857 when British introduced representative institutions in India to strengthen the administration. Prominent notables were asked to join Governor's Councils which served as advisory bodies.⁵ In 1884, the first restricted franchise elections were held for local government institutions. In 1892, members of these institutions were given the right to elect some members of the provincial legislatures, who in turn elected a limited number of central legislature members. The Government of India Acts of 1909 and 1919 continued to expand the franchise and the number of elected representatives. Following the civil disobedience campaigns of the Khudai Khidmatgars, in 1930-32, the British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald announced the elevation of its status to a governor's province like other provinces of India at the concluding session of Second

Round table Conference.⁶ The Khudai Khidmatgars had extended their influence in the NWFP both by creating new organizations and as in Bannu taking over the old Congress district organization. Earlier the loyalist Khans had petitioned for reforms which had become a long standing Muslim demand. The Muslim League which drew its main support from this social grouping had also supported the idea of reform from its platform. Under the new scheme, Sir Ralph Griffith, the then Chief Commissioner of NWFP, was made the first Governor of NWFP on April 18, 1932. On the same day, Lord Willingdon, the Viceroy of India inaugurated the NWFP legislative council. The council consisted of a total of 40 members (28 elected and 12 nominated). Among them 22 were to be Muslims, 5 Hindus, and one Sikh. The nominated members comprised of 5 Europeans, 1 Muslim, 1 Sikh official, 4 non-official Muslims and 1 Sikh non official. Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qayyum was appointed the Minister in charge of the transferred Department, KB Ghafoor Khan of Zaida, a nominated member, was made the first President, and Sheikh Abdul Hamid, a member of the provincial civil service, was appointed as the secretary of the council. It was made clear the council or the ministers had no say in the administration of the tribal areas as tribal policy remained a central subject under the direct control of the governor who served as the Agent to the Governor-General⁷. After the establishment of Governor's Province in 1932 electoral politics started in NWFP but they were rooted in four earlier historical developments⁸, i.e. i). the British system of indirect rule, ii). the impact of *Khilafat* Movement, iii). the reform issue, iv). legacy of the period of Civil Disobedience in 1930-32.

The electoral politics revolved around the colonial interest in NWFP like other parts of India. In order to have an efficient bureaucracy based on favourable public opinion, the British rule emphasised the need for making some provisions for associating local influential elements with the law making process, but through indirect channels.⁹ It may be recalled that nomination system was confined to chiefs, nobles and members of the landed aristocracy and it had nothing to do with the idea of popular representation. The British in NWFP turned towards the leading *khans* (chiefs) to maintain their rule and patronage was provided to them in return for maintaining peace and revenue collections. This system worked smoothly until the 1920s when tenants vs. khanate discontentment started. Small khans and tenants joined the *Khudai Khidmatgar's* Movement and government patronage seekers big khans removed out from political scene for a time being and later on these big khans joined the Muslim League to safeguard their interest¹⁰.

The Khilafat Movement in 1919 had a deep impact on Frontier politics. The Congress's support in favour of Khilafat Movement created a tradition of cooperation between it and the Frontier Muslims who supported *khilafat* campaigns and became prominent during this period. Among these, the most notable persons were Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Dr. Khan Sahib. The link between Khudai Khidmatgar movement and Khilafat Movement was sustained through such organisations as the Anjuman-i-Islah-ul-Afghania (Society for the Reform of the Afghans) which was formed in the wake of the collapse of the 'Hijrat' movement.¹¹ The demand for political reforms in NWFP led to the strengthening of the anti-British and pro-Congress attitudes which had emerged during the Khilafat Movement among the younger sections of Khanate elite.

3.2 LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ELECTIONS (NWFP): These developments formed the background to the legislative elections in the second week of 1932, in which the percentage of voting was very considerable as compared to other parts of India.¹² In the absence of Congress, there was no organized party in the elections, which fragmented into twenty-eight separate races with little or no bearing on one another. Restrictive property qualification limited the electorate to four percent of the population and ensured a legislature dominated by conservative, wealthy men¹³. The non-Muslims who were elected espoused a sectarian philosophy characterized by a distrust of Muslims and presentiments that the legislative council would prove disastrous for their communities. The preference of the minority voters was best illustrated by the race in Peshawar where *Rai Sahib* Mahr Chan Khanna, the Provincial Hindu Sabha leader, received a three to one majority over C.C Gosh, the former PCC President.¹⁴ Mahr Chand Khanna, a banker and urban landowner, had run as a defender of Hindu interests, while Gosh had downgraded communal questions and campaigned as a representative of Congress opinion in a province where the Congress was identified with the Pakhtun community. Similarly, *Rai Sahib* Rochi Ram, a wealthy government contractor and the President of the Dera Ismail Khan Hindu *Saba*, scored an easy victory over Bhanju Ram Ghandi, another former Congressman, in Dera Ismail Khan. Nationalist alternatives were absent in the other minority constituencies and the leading candidates fought the elections over who could best protect their communities from the province's Muslim Majority.¹⁵

In the two urban Muslim Constituencies, Pir Baksh, the former PCC General Secretary, and Malik Khuda Baksh were elected on the basis of their nationalist reputations. In the rural Muslim constituencies, in contrast, national credentials mattered less than the status

of one's family and the strength of one's *gundi*. All the successful candidates were members or agents of the dominant elite in their constituencies, as were most of their opponents. The victors included two hereditary *Nawab* and one appointed for life, two Arbabs, three other individuals from families of tribal chieftains, one religious leader, and seven men of high tribal status. In selecting the council's nominated non-officials, the governor reinforced its conservatism by appointing five Muslims with strong traditional standing. Local considerations dominated the campaign in all constituencies. Tribal divisions or factional alignments determined the outcomes in some, while religious issues materially influenced the results in others. Three men associated with the nationalist movement were elected, but in each case, family and faction had a more important bearing on the outcome than voters' patriotism. For example, Habibullah Khan's record as a former Vice President of the Bannu Congress was of secondary importance in his election. He was victorious principally because he had the backing of one of the two *gundis* into which the Marwat tribe was divided. Similarly Abdul Qayyum Khan of Safaida captured a seat in Hazara due to personal feuds and religious controversies which split the strength of the leading Swati Khans in his constituency.¹⁶

After the council convened, its members polarized into four groups¹⁷, Nationalist opinion was represented by *Azad* Party headed by Malik Khuda Baksh, nine other Khans formed the liberal Party and combination of nine professional and Khans formed the Progressive party. The seven Hindus and Sikhs grouped together and formed minority party. These parties had no organization and ideology.

3.3 ELECTIONS 1937 (NWFP): The constitution Act of 1935 was the first act which was introduced in NWFP after its provincial status. The government of India Act, 1935 did not introduce the system of universal suffrage, and the right to vote was limited. The property qualifications continued to be the main basis of franchise for both the houses. A much higher standard was adopted for the Upper House with the result that only the wealthiest and privileged persons of very high status enjoyed the right to vote. The franchise for the Lower House was fixed at a level of much lower than under the act of 1919. This resulted in the increase in the number of voters i.e. not more than 14% of the total population of British India had the right to vote for provincial assemblies. Previously only 3% of the population had enjoyed the right to vote.¹⁸ The bicameral legislature under 1935 Act was a mixture of many principles and interests-both democratic and autocratic elements. Provinces were to send directly elected

representative on their behalf, the states were given the freedom of sending the nominees of the rulers as their representatives to the central legislature.

The provincial legislature did represent the people through general constituencies. Instead, they were composed of members elected on the basis of constituencies organised according to religion or race, interest or sex. The members of provincial legislatures were elected directly, but the extent of the franchise varied from province to province and it was determined on the basis of minimum land revenue, a person paid or on the basis of the house rent. A certain minimum educational qualification or military services also were considered adequate for franchise. It can be said that the electors were chiefly governed by communal or provincial considerations in their choice while exercising to vote.¹⁹ Under the 1935 Act, diarchy was replaced by provincial autonomy, while the Governors remained the provincial chiefs; all provincial subjects were transferred to ministers who served at the will of popular elected assemblies. The NWFP was conceded the same reforms as other provinces under the Act, although the governor, in his capacity as the Agent to the Governor General, retained sole control over tribal policy. In December 1936 the nominations of 135 candidates for the Frontier Legislative Assembly took place which later reduced to five parties and groupings. The largest and most organized party was Congress which contested elections under the banner of Provincial Parliamentary board as Congress was banned in Frontier due its civil disobedience movement. Abdul Ghaffar Khan was also banned to enter in the province and his absence Dr. Khan Sahib led the party. The Congress candidates were nominated on the basis of loyalty to the nationalist cause and their prestige in society. In the Muslim rural constituencies the Congress candidates were largely small Khans. Most of the Congress candidates in the Muslim Urban and General constituencies were lawyers.

A large number of Khans stood as independent candidates. The leading one among them was Major Nawab Sir Akbar Khan (Nawab of Hoti). Other prominent Khans standing for election were Nawab of Teri, K.B Arbab Sher Ali Khan, Nawab Zada Nasrullah Khan, Nawabzada Allah Nawaz Khan and Nawabzada Mohammad Said Khan. Most Khans outside the Congress represented the same landed interest and mindset of loyalty to the British but they were unable to form any party of their own or to find some other form of cooperation during the election campaign. In several constituencies the Congress was able to benefit from the fact that the anti-Congress vote was split by rival Khans.²⁰ Electoral Politics in the towns of NWFP was dominated by lawyers including Malik Khuda Baksh

and Pir Baksh. They represented the Independent Party, which had been the only real opposition party in the old legislative council. Two other lawyers were Khan Abdul Qayyum Khan and Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar. In the 1937 Elections the former represented the Congress and the latter contested as an independent. The urban Congress candidates in the general constituencies were mostly lawyers or doctors. Their main opponents belonged to the Hindu-Sikh Nationalist Party. This party was created during the election campaign by members of the provincial Hindu Sabha and the Sing Sabha. The leaders of the party were mostly prosperous businessmen, who were loyal to the British.²¹ The major point of their electoral campaign was the demand of cancellation of the so called Hindu-Gurmukhi circular which had been issued by Sir Abdul Qayyum in October 1935, making Urdu and English the mandatory language of instruction from the third standard in government-aided schools for girls.²² The Muslim League did not put up any candidate in NWFP during 1937 elections. It had attempted without success since 1934 to found a NWFP branch. Jinnah had unsuccessfully attempted to establish an eighteen member Parliamentary Board with Pir Bakhsh as its convener, during his visit to the province in October 1936. Another group which emerged during 1937 elections was the group of retired senior government servants. Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qayyum was the notable figure of this group. Others were K.B Kuli Khan, a retired publicity officer of the Frontier government, and K.B Saadullah Khan, a retired deputy commissioner who was also a leading landlord in the Charsada Tehsil in Peshawar district. Sir Abdul Qayyum also had strong support from a number of Khans in Hazara district.²³

In Peshawar and Mardan, party identity seemed more important than elsewhere due to political activities and influence of Khudai Khidmatgars in these areas. According to the Governor, Cunningham., the elections in these districts were a straight fight between the Congress and its opponents, irrespective of candidates. Programmes and policies were of little or no importance and instead traditional following and factional considerations were usually decisive.²⁴ In electoral campaigns, many candidates exploited religious factors. Anti-Congress candidates accused the Congress members, particularly the Khan Brothers and their families, of being under Hindu influence.²⁵ The role of religious factors along with the more traditional factional politics was noted by the Secretary of State Lord Zetland:

Only in Sindh and the North West Frontier Province were religious issues raised. In these provinces results turned largely on individual personalities, rivalries and tribal loyalties, although

in Peshawar and Mardan constituencies the issue upon which the election was fought was clear cut, Red shirts against the rest. In most of the constituencies the Red shirts won with clear majorities. In the Muslim constituencies in the Punjab general questions of polling counted little, and electors choose their loyal leaders. In Sikh and Hindu constituencies election propaganda was, however, diverted against government.²⁶

There is also evidence of candidates standing for election in the hope that they would be paid to withdraw their nomination papers. In many instances a multiplicity of candidates have contested one seat, and there was reason to believe that a number of candidates stood merely in order to secure a bargaining counter for their subsequent withdrawal.²⁷ In India as a whole and particularly in NWFP there cannot be the least doubt that many of the electorate who voted for the first time were unfitted to exercise the franchise intelligently. Many had little notion of what the election was about. In the backward rural areas the Congress propaganda in the main took these forms, the first a declaration that a vote for Congress meant a vote for Mr. Gandhi, and the second the making of the wildest and most irresponsible promises, coupled with violent attacks upon government and upon landlords.²⁸ Khudai Khidmatgars widely used this technique in NWFP during election campaigns. They extensively attacked in their speeches, the big Khans and government. As the 1937 elections were the first large scale electoral experience in the Indian provinces, so common people were ignorant about the value of their vote. The British reported that in many provinces villagers were told that the Congress voting Box was the Gandhi box or even the "*Sarkari*", or "Govt." box. Villagers in some constituencies were informed that all ballot papers dropped in to Congress box would go straight to Mahtama Gandhi, and that person who voted in this way would secure large reduction in rent, while persons who voted against the Congress box would lose their lands altogether. They were also told that the victory of the Congress box would be followed by the repeal of unpopular laws. These stories were so implicitly believed that many voters came to look upon the Congress box as invested with supernatural qualities. In some instances prayers were made to the box, and letters and petitions to Mr. Gandhi, and even sums of money were found in the boxes²⁹.

Elections for a 50-member provincial assembly were scheduled on February 1937. The secrecy and freedom of the ballot were however, very badly protected by the procedural arrangements. There was a rule which allowed the marking of a ballot paper of an illiterate voter to be witnessed by the polling agent of the candidate for whom the illiterate voter declared he wished to vote. Naturally this made a mockery of the secrecy of the ballot in very many cases and allowed the candidates to influence the voters by fair

means or foul.³⁰ Polling took place between 1 February and 10 February, with 179,529 voters. This was around 14 per cent of the total population. Turnout rate was 72.8 per cent. Turnout was highest in the rural Muslim constituencies and lowest among the Sikhs. Result of 1937 elections in NWFP is illustrated in table 3.1 and distribution of Muslim rural seats is shown in table 3.2.

Table 3.1: Results of the 1937 Elections in the NWFP.

Party	Type of Constituency						
	Total	General Urban	General Rural	Muslim Urban	Muslim Rural	Sikh	Land-holders
Congress	19	1	3	-	15	-	-
Independent Muslims	21	-	-	1	18	-	2
Hindu-Sikh Nationalist Party	7	1	3	-	-	3	-
Independent Party	2	-	-	2	-	-	-
Independent Hindu	1	1	-	-	-	-	-
Total	50	3	6	3	33	3	2

Source: Return showing the results of Elections in India 1937.

The Congress won 19 seats, Hindu-Sikh Nationalist captured seven and the Azad Party won two seats. The remaining twenty two successful candidates were independents. It was mainly in the Pakhtun rural areas that the Congress did well, especially in Peshawar and Mardan districts. In Peshawar district all Muslim rural seats were won by the Congress, and in Mardan the Congress won three out of five. In the remaining two Mardan constituencies the Congress candidates had been disqualified, the Congress soon captured these seats, too, by filing successful election petitions and then winning the by-elections.

Table 3.2: 1937 elections in the NWFP. Distribution of the Muslim Rural seats.

Party	Districts					
	Hazara	Mardan	Peshawar	Kohat	Bannu	D.I. Khan
Congress	2	3	7	1	1	1
Independents	7	2	-	3	3	3

Source: Returns showing the Results of Elections in India 1937

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urban Muslims was very weak and no Congressite was returned from the Muslim urban constituencies. The general seats were evenly divided by the Congress and the Hindu-Sikh Nationalist party. All Sikh seats went to the Hindu-Sikh nationalists. The majority of the successful Muslim independents were Khans closely associated with the British. Shortly after the elections, Sir Abdul Qayyum formed his own party “United Nationalist Party”³¹ in the Assembly with the help of independent members. Sir Abdul Qayyum formed the ministry with the coalition of Hindu-Sikh Nationalist party leaders on 1 April 1937. On 22 June 1937, the Viceroy made a conciliatory statement which induced the Congress to form ministries in the province. In July 1937 Congress Party took office in seven out of eleven provinces including the NWFP. In NWFP, all the “progressive forces” united round the Congress. Dr. Khan Sahib, the opposition leader, with the help of Hindu Sikh Nationalist party and of Hazara Democratic Party, got strength to put a No-Confidence Motion on 3 September 1937; it was passed by 27 votes to 21. Dr. Khan Sahib formed a coalition government with Lala Banju Ram Gandhi, Qazi Atta Ullah Khan and Muhammad Abbas Khan, who was a member of Democratic Party, the rest were Congress nominees.³²

The Congress Ministry in the Frontier remained in office for two years and six weeks. The leading League candidates were Mian Ziauddin, Shah Pasand Khan (an old Khudai Khidmatgar who had obtained league’s ticket), Rashid Tahir Kheli, and Sardar Bhadur Khan. In the general elections of 1937, two Congress candidates had been disqualified in two Muslim-Rural constituencies of Mardan, i.e. Razar and Amazai. Their election petitions having been accepted, the two seats were declared vacant. In Razar- Muslim Rural constituency, the contest was between Mian Zia-ud-Din and Kamdar Khan, while in the Amazai Muslim rural constituency, the contest was between Allah dad Khan, a nominee of Congress, and Shah Pasand Khan, a nominee of Muslim League. After tough contest the Khudai Khidmatgars won elections from these two constituencies. By-elections in the Hazara district were of immense importance from League’s point of view. In Haripur North Muslim Rural constituency by-elections, Abdur Rashid Tahirkheli, the League’s candidate defeated his rivals by a margin of 13 votes only. The total number of votes were 3565. The Second World War broke out in September 1939. In common with the rest of the Congress provinces the Frontier Ministry, after passing the anti-war resolution on 6 November, 1939, tendered its resignation and governor rule was imposed on 11 November 1939 under Sir George Cunningham.

3.4 ELECTIONS 1946: After the end of World War II in 1945, following the Simla Conference, the Viceroy Lord Wavell announced that the Central and Provincial Legislature elections would be held in the winter of 1945-6, after which a constitution-making body would be set up. He announced that after the elections, the Viceroy would set up an Executive Council that would have the support of the main Indian political parties. After 1945, the demand for Pakistan had acquired considerable importance in NWFP but Muslim League in NWFP was unable to get benefit from this due to its factionalism. The Muslim League candidates were selected by the provincial Selection Board. The President of the board was the Nawab of Mamdot from the League High Command but the selection of candidates was in the hand of board convener.³³ The senior leaders, Aurangzeb Khan, K.B Saadullah Khan and Mian Ziauddin were all denied nomination. All appealed to the Central Selection Board to review the decision but only Mian Ziauddin's appeal succeeded. Abdur Rab Nishtar was able to get re-nominated for his old seat with great difficulty. Twenty-three persons applied for the nine constituencies from Hazara district upon which fourteen persons failed to get nominated, six nevertheless decided to contest against the official Muslim League candidates. In Hazara district Ghulam Jan Tahirkheli, (the editor of newspaper and secretary of Haripur Muslim League), Qazi Asadul Haq (a member of provincial election board who for many years had been battling against Aurangzeb Khan and the League's strongman in Hazara) K.B. Jalaluddin, Khan Abdul Jaffar Khan and Abdullah Jan (two League leaders in Mansehra) and K.S. Atai Khan of Battal (MLA from upper *Pakhli*) were all expelled from the party for their anti-League activities during the campaign³⁴.

Elections were held between 26 January and 14 February on the same franchise qualifications as were laid down for 1937 election. The results of all constituencies were announced by 18 February 1946. The Congress won an absolute majority, or in all 30 out of 50 seats. The Muslim League in this Muslim majority province disappointingly captured only seventeen seats. In the Pakhtun dominated areas the Congress won almost all seats, whereas it could not show its popularity in non Pakhtun areas. In D.I. Khan the Congress's ally, the Jamiat-ul-Ulema succeeded. Following table shows the distribution of the Muslim rural seats by districts. All General and Sikhs seats except one went to the Congress. Seven out of nine general seats were uncontested. Detail of results of the elections to the NWFP Legislative Assembly, 1946 are shown in table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Results of the elections to the NWFP Legislative Assembly, 1946

Party	Total	Muslim Rural	Muslim Urban	General Rural	General Urban	Sikh	Land-Holders
Congress	30	18	1	6	3	2	-
Muslim League	17	13	2	-	-	-	2
Jamiat-ul- Ulema	2	2	-	-	-	-	-
Akali Dal	1	-	-	-	-	1	-
Total	50	33	3	6	3	3	2

Source: Government of India, *Returns showing the Results of Elections to the Central Legislative Assembly and the Provincial Legislatures in 1945-46* (Dehli: Manager, Government of India Press, 1948)

Two parties, which had previously played a prominent role in Provincial politics, had now dissolved. The groups which had supported Hindu-Sikh Nationalist Party supported either the Congress or the Muslim League, mostly the latter. In addition to the Congress and the Muslim League, several other parties, the Ahrars, the Khaksars, the Jamiat-ul-Ulema and the Sikh Party the Akali Dal, took part in the elections, but almost all leading candidates belonged either to the Congress or the Muslim League. Thus the NWFP had been drawn more closely into the orbit of all-India affairs and all-India issues would seem to have set their imprint decisively on provincial politics. However, this development must not be exaggerated.³⁵ Table 3.4 showed the voting trends in different regions of NWFP during 1946 elections. The table also reflected the traditional rivalries between Pakhtun and non-Pakhtuns and other horizontal and longitudinal stratification which determine the voting behaviour in NWFP.

Table 3.4: Muslim Rural seats by districts in the Legislative Assembly elections in the NWFP 1946.

District	Congress	Muslim League	Jamiat-ul-Ulema
Hazara	1	8	-
Mardan	4	1	-
Peshawar	6	1	-
Kohat	4	-	-
Bannu	2	2	-
D.I. Khan	1	1	2

Source: Government of India, *Returns showing the Results of Elections to the Central Legislative Assembly and the Provincial Legislatures in 1945-46* (Dehli: Manager, Government of India Press, 1948)

As Cunningham reported the main feature of the elections was that they were fought not on any kind of party programme (neither party has any programme intelligible to the electorate), but on grounds of personal faction-feeling.³⁶ In Bannu District, where he spent a few days soon before the elections, Cunningham declared that, “the results in the voting for the Muslim seats seem likely to be decided by the number of sheep each candidate can kill to feast his supporters”, the general estimate being ten votes per sheep.³⁷ Table 3.3 shows that Congress won absolute majority, i.e. 30 out of 50 provincial seats. The Muslim League won only 17 seats. Two seats went to Jamiat-ul-Ulema while Akali Dal got one seat. In the province’s regions (Peshawar, Mardan, Kohat, Bannu and

Tank Tehsil of Dera Ismail Khan) the Congress won sixteen of the nineteen territorial constituencies it contested, losing the other by slender margins.³⁸ The League emerged in the elections as the representative of the Province's non-Pakhtun Muslims, winning eight of nine seats in Hazara, two of the three urban seats and both landlord constituencies.³⁹ Other voting detail is given in table 3.5. Muslim League received more Muslim votes than the Congress. League received 146,235 votes in the Muslim constituencies while Congress scored 142,508 votes.⁴⁰ Above table shows that in DI. Khan's constituencies were won by JUH candidates by securing 17741 votes, the ally of Congress. Cunningham reported to the Wavell about the cause of failure of Muslim League in the NWFP. "It has been said that if Congress had not been in office, very difficult for Congress to get a dozen Muslim seats, because of favour the people by giving them cloth, sugar etc."⁴¹ It was simply an excuse because most of the Muslim officials in superior appointments favoured the Muslim League. The two reasons of the failure of the League were their bad organisation and the internal rift within Muslim League in NWFP. Congress members had made many promises in economic fields. "Muslim League presented a one-point manifesto "if you want Pakistan, vote for the Muslim League".⁴² The election posters in Hazara district reflected this sentiment:

The election is only for Pakistan. The arrogant Jawaharlal Nehru's announcement that they [the Congress] will crush the Muslim League is a challenge to the faith and honour of every Muslim. Give him an effective reply for the success of the Muslim League and for the achievement of Pakistan.⁴³

Table 3.5 Results of 1946 Elections.

Constituency	Electorate	Total vote caste	Percent Voting	Muslim League votes	Percent of electorate	Congress & JUH votes	Percent of electorate
Muslim							
Urban	80556	50567	62.77	23055	28.62	11241	13.95
Rural							
Hazara	109762	61508	54.03	29378	26.77	7686	7.00
Peshawar	97088	70726	72.85	2853	26.63	43316	44.62
Mardan	86777	63601	73.33	23162	26.69	35443	40.84
Kohat	52020	34176	65.70	13922	26.76	19860	38.18
Bannu	51080	38289	75.00	17592	34.44	9405	18.41
D.I. Khan	45642	31896	69.88	12466	27.31	17741	38.87
Total	442369	300196	67.86	122373	27.66	133451	30.17
Total territorial seats	522925	350763	67.07	145428	27.81	144692	27.67
Landlords	1836	1359	73.75	807	43.95	447	24.34
Total Muslims	524761	352117	67.10	146235	27.87	145139	27.66
Hindu							
Urban	21117	9748	46.16	-	-	7512	35.57
Rural	35521	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	56638	9748	17.21	-	-	7512	13.26
Sikh	23164	14124	60.97	-	-	7598	32.80
Total Minority	79802	23872	29.91	-	-	15110	18.93
Total	604563	375989	62.19	146235	24.19	160249	26.51
Pakhtun*	301527	218023	72.31	86003	28.52	112982	37.47

Source: Government of India, *Returns showing the Results of Elections to the Central Legislative Assembly and the Provincial Legislatures in 1945-46* (Dehli: Manager, Government of India Press, 1948)

This approach had little appeal in the Paktun areas where the suggestion that there could be such a thing as Hindu domination was only laughable⁴⁴. The exact meaning of Pakistan was left undefined in electoral politics of NWFP. In Governor Cunningham's opinion few people were thinking in terms of complete separation from India. What the supporters of Pakistan were interested in was getting some safeguards of Muslim interests in the central government. In November Jinnah visited the NWFP to boost up the Muslim League electoral campaign. The Governor had asked several educated and intelligent people what Jinnah had said about Pakistan, but no one could give a clear answer.⁴⁵

On the other hand, Congress used Khudai Khidmatgars for its electoral struggle. The Pakhtuns must be united but elections only led to a lot of factional feuds.⁴⁶ He criticized the Congress for having done nothing to eradicate corruption but letting it go on as before. The ministry had no policy at all and discussed their programme neither with each other nor with the party. The struggle was between the Nation and *Firanghis* (Britishers). There was no third force. Those who were opposed to the Khudai Khidmatgars were those who had always supported the British.⁴⁷

Ghaffar Khan was very successful in articulating the Congress political philosophy in Pakhtun society using the sentiments of *Pakhto*. As *pakhto* is the code of life of *Pakhtun* society in which honour, dignity, spirituality, nationalism (here nationalism means Pakhtuns group feelings) are the main ingredients. *Pakhtuns* possess hatred for all those who threaten their *Pakhto*. So in all statements Ghaffar Khan projected *Pakhto* feelings in order to popularize the Khudai Khidmatgar appeal.⁴⁸ The other most important factor in the Congress victory was the Pakhtun predominance in the NWFP. Although Pakhtuns in settled districts were less than two-fifth of the population, they were socially and politically dominant. Traditional Pakhtun *taburwali*-political alignment structured the operation of modern parties in the rural areas. The penalty of intermingling *taburwali* with party politics was that if one local faction joined the Muslim League its traditional rival would join the Congress and vice versa. The British patronage of big Khans and the growing aspirations of smaller Khans also structured political developments. The latter provided the leadership of the Congress *Khudai Khidmatgar* movement, while many of big Khans turned to the Muslim League in the 1940s to safeguard their interests. The Khan brothers based their power around the factions of the smaller Khan.⁴⁹ Important political repercussions flowed from virtual invisibility of the few Hindus and Sikhs in the rural centers of the Pakhtun culture, while other Muslims might view them as a threat

to their religious and material interests, as for as Pakhtuns are concerned it was conceivable that they might be ruled by non-Muslims.⁵⁰ In electoral politics of NWFP during these elections, the Congress avoided the name of 'Akhand Hindustan' or 'Pakistan' due to electoral strategy. The Congress members did not even publish their election manifesto in NWFP. "If they had done so, they would have had to explain their attitude on the question of Pakistan and then even the ignorant majority of the Muslim Electorate would have probably become cautious. In fact they asked for votes in the name of Khudai Khidmatgar movement, and not in the name of Congress as such."⁵¹ The major focus of Congress electoral campaign was on social and economic issues and the corruption of Muslim Leaguers and officials. The Muslim Leaguers were accused of being British agents and the elections were portrayed as being a battle between rich and poor and the choice was also between freedom and foreign rule.

The Congress in NWFP contested all General and Sikh seats, twenty four out of thirty three Muslim rural seats, one Muslim Urban and one landlord's seat. In some constituencies the Congress had come to an agreement with either the Ahrars or the Jamiat-ul-Ulema that only the party with the best chances of winning the seat should field a candidate and that the other party should support that candidate.⁵² Other factors of Congress victory and Muslim League defeat in NWFP were personal influence of Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the fact that the Muslim league was a political latecomer in the Frontier. The Muslim League failed in all the districts of NWFP except Hazara, where it won all the Muslim rural seats except one. The party also won two of three Muslim urban seats. Thus the division between the Congress and the Muslim League by and large coincided with the geographical distributions of Pakhtuns and non-Pakhtuns. Both the landholders' seats went to the Muslim League. The 1946 elections gave considerable strength to the provincial Congress as compared to 1937 elections when it had won 19 seats and had no absolute majority. In 1946, the good Congress performance was due to its organizational setup and appeal to the sentiments of poor classes. After the elections the Congress claimed that the people of NWFP rejected the idea of Pakistan but in reality they were fought on other issues and the appeal of Pakistan among the masses was not really put to the test.⁵³ By the end of February 1946, Dr. Khan Sahib formed the Ministry and soon afterward Cunningham was replaced by Sir Olaf Caroe. The third Khan Sahib Ministry consisted of four members, with Dr. Khan Sahib as the Chief Minister having the charge of Home, Political, Public Health and Public works; Qazi Ata Ullah was the

Minister for Revenue, Industries and Jails, Mohammad Yahya Jan was Education Minister and Mahr Chand Khanna was the Finance Minister. Allah Nawaz Khan was unanimously elected the Speaker when the new House met on 12 March 1946 and Lala Girdharilal became his Deputy. This ministry was in some respects a family affair as Ghaffar Khan's brother was Chief Minister, the Education Minister was his son in law, and the Revenue Minister's daughter had been married to one of his sons.⁵⁴

On 10th March the Muslim League held a meeting under the Presidentship of the Nawab of Hoti. Abdu Qayyum Khan was elected leader of the Opposition and the Nawab of Tank was elected as Deputy Leader.⁵⁵ The Congress held only one legislative session in 1946 which primarily served as a forum in which each side kept up the propaganda of the election campaign. Khan Sahib ministry passed some significant economic and social legislation, such as Punjab Tenancy (North-West Frontier Province) Amendment Act, introduced administrative reforms, and began long term planning for the province. All these initiatives tended to favour the Congress supporters, the lower class non Pakhtuns and the smaller khans, at the expense of senior Khans in the Muslim League.⁵⁶

By 1947, the election results of the previous year were no longer an accurate gauge of political sympathies in the NWFP. In 1947 public opinion had shifted in favour of the Muslim League, due to the clear signs of the emergence of Pakistan, but there was no institutional way for the change because Congress had majority in the assembly. With no legal resources, the League decided to resort to civil disobedience in order to displace the Frontier Congress and ensure the further test of public opinion in NWFP.⁵⁷ By elections were scheduled for mid February in 1947 in the area of Mardan district-a stronghold of Muslim League. Ishaq Khan, the League nominee won the election by securing 8,941 votes and Congress received 8,353. In the by-elections the women workers of Muslim League also supported the cause of Ishaq Khan against Mian Shakerullah, the Congress nominee. They went to Mardan from Peshawar. During elections the Congress members showed their resentment on the participation of women League workers from Peshawar.

3.5 REFERENDUM IN NWFP 1947

Mountbatten was given the charge of transferring power. The Viceroy told Liaquat Ali Khan that one of the proposals under consideration was that provinces should be left to choose their own future. But he said that as far as the case in NWFP the number of elected members of the Constituent Assembly for this province was too small to leave the decision in their hands. Mountbatten during his visit to the NWFP on 28-29 April 1947

had indicated the idea of referendum but he had not said what its form would be. The draft plan of the partition which Mountbatten put before the Governors conference on 15 and 16 April 1947, envisaged the holding of fresh election. But neither the Provincial Congress nor the Congress High Command was ready to accept the solution. On 6 May Mountbatten wired to the Secretary of State for India that Nehru was prepared to accept referendum provided it was not held under Governor's rule and if the Ministry was allowed to function in the normal way. When Jinnah was informed about holding of a referendum instead of new elections, at first he was upset, but when he was told by the Viceroy about the abolishment of weightage (12 seats in 50) which the Hindu-Sikh minority had in the NWFP, he also preferred referendum to an election. On 2 June, 1947 Mountbatten presented his famous plan later known as 3rd June Plan before the principal Indian leaders. In this plan there was a provision for referendum in NWFP. Commenting on 3rd June Plan, Jinnah appealed to all the communities with a special reference to the Muslims for the peaceful transfer of power in India. Referring to the question of Referendum in NWFP, the Quaid said:

Hence it is clear that the verdict and the mandate of the people of the Frontier Province will be obtained as to whether they want to join Pakistan Constituent Assembly or the Hindustan Constituent Assembly. In these circumstances I request the Provincial Muslim League of the Frontier Province to withdraw the movement of civil disobedience which they had perforce to resort to; and I call upon all the leaders of the Muslim League and the Musalmans generally to organise our people to face this referendum with hope and courage., and I feel confident that the people of Frontier will give their verdict by a solid vote to join the Pakistan Constituent Assembly.⁵⁸

This statement further affected the electoral politics and voting behaviour in this referendum. Congress and Muslim League both accepted this plan, but Gandhi and Abdul Ghaffar Khan opposed it. It was agreed upon that the usual Provincial Election Staff should be allowed to perform the ordinary duties at the polling stations in the province. But they had to comply with the orders of the Members of Election Commission which consisted of the Army Officers. According to the official letter issued by Army General Headquarter, India on 18 June 1947, following team of officers were selected to assist referendum in NWFP.⁵⁹

1. Lt. Col. OH. Mitchell, Comd. 1FF Rif
2. T/Lt. Col. V.W Tregear, FFR, AQMG, HQ (Northern Command)
3. T/Lt. Col R.W. Niva, Comd. 4FFRif
4. T/Lt. Col. MWH White, Comd. 2/9/GR
5. T/Lt. Col. GM Stover, Guides Cavalry. AA & QMG HQ.1 Armed Div.
6. T/Lt. Col. WI Moberley, OBE, Comd1 FFR
7. Lt. Col. R.O.L.D Byrene 1AC
8. Maj. E. De G.H. Bromhead, FFR

At the top was a Referendum Commissioner.⁶⁰ Civilians were included in the lower echelons of the referendum machinery and only under the close supervision of Army personnel. The Viceroy met the Indian leaders and all agreed on following electoral charter.

1. It is desirable that in this referendum: a). Electioneering speeches, which can only lead to bloodshed should as far as possible be avoided; and b) issue should be clearly put before the voters.
2. To achieve these objects, it has been suggested: a). That electioneering speeches should by agreement between the parties, be banned; and b). That election posters should be prepared containing side by side and in very simple and agreed language, the issue what the two future Dominions will be and the respective advantages they have to offer to the NWFP. A map should be printed showing the areas of the two dominions.

The Viceroy instructed the Governor NWFP that “each side should have equal facilities in the matter of the supply of petrol” and that an amnesty should be announced for the political prisoners, excluding those charged with serious criminal offences. In proposed poster for the referendum, first of all in a short paragraph they had discussed about the partition plan of India into two separate States of India and Pakistan and also some sort of explanation of the third June Plan of His Majesty’s government, which had already been accepted by the All India Muslim League Council and the All India Congress Committee. The Pir of Manki Sharif was the only member from the Frontier. The other members, I.I. Chundrigar, Ghazanfar Ali Khan and Syed Wajid Ali, came from the central organization.⁶¹ Muslim League campaign was on Pakistan issue while Congress continued to campaign for Pakhtunistan and against Pakistan and referendum. From 1945 onward Pir of Manki Sharif supported the cause of Pakistan and was deeply involved in Muslim League organizations from his base in Nowshera. He brought many of his *murids* into the League as political activists and supporters and encouraged Mian Gul Abdul Wadud (*Wali-e-Swat*) to support Jinnah’s campaign. The *Pir’s* most significant organization of Tribal Areas political activity in support of the League was to rally *Shinwari* and *Milagros* tribesmen to stage a demonstration against Nehru when the latter toured the Tribal Areas in 1946.⁶² By 1947 Pir of Zakori Sharif in Bannu had also demonstrated his sympathy for League demands and popularized them in Waziristan. Faqir of Ipi assured the League of his support for Pakistan.⁶³ The polling began on 6 July 1947. The referendum results were made public on July 20. According to the official results there were 572,798 registered voters.⁶⁴

Table 3.6: The detailed picture of referendum

Constituency	Electorate	vote caste	% Voting	Votes Pakistan	% of Electorates	% votes in 1946	% of Muslim League votes in 1946	% of Congress & JUH vot in 1946	Votes for India
Muslim									
Urban	50627	35942	70.99	35680	70.48	112.28	246.26	505.23	262
Rural									
Hazara	109762	83656	76.22	83269	75.86	135.38	283.44	1083.39	387
Peshawar	97088	40470	41.68	39902	41.10	56.42	154.34	92.12	568
Mardan	86777	36062	41.56	34852	40.16	54.80	150.48	98.33	1210
Kohat	52020	32323	62.14	32207	61.91	94.24	231.34	162.17	116
Bannu	51080	33282	65.16	33137	64.87	86.54	188.36	352.33	145
D.I. Khan	45642	29461	64.55	29303	64.20	91.87	235.06	165.17	158
Total	442369	255254	57.70	252670	57.12	84.17	206.48	189.34	2584
Total Muslim	492996	291196	59.07	288350	58.49	87.17	209.87	211.46	2846
Total Minority	79802	922	1.16	894	1.12	3.75	-	5.92	28
Total	572798	292118	50.99	289244	50.50	81.20	208.76	190.49	2874
Pakhtun*	301527	150731	50.00	148649	49.30	68.18	172.84	131.57	2082

Source: Data calculated from Referendum Results 1947 (NWFP)

*The difference between the 1946 and Referendum elections arose due to two changes in the voting.

1). in 1946, each voter in Peshawar city could cast two votes; in 1947, they cast only one.

2). in 1946, a small number of rural Muslims voted twice: in their regular constituency and in special landlord's constituencies. In 1947, there was no voting in the latter. 21 rural constituencies, including all those in Peshawar, Mardan, Kohat, and Bannu plus Tank Tehsil in D.I. Khan.

Out of them 50.99% exercised their vote. 289,244 (99.02%) votes were cast in favour of Pakistan, and 2874 (0.98%) in favour of India. Due to the differences in the electorates, the votes in 1946 and referendum are not directly comparable. These percentages, therefore, had been computed by comparing the percentage of the electorate voting for Congress and Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Hind. One argument against that there was a low turn out, only 51 percent. This indicated that Congress boycott met with wide response and thus a significant share of the population was opposed to Pakistan. In fact, the votes cast for Pakistan represented only 50.50 percent of the total electorate. In Rittensberg's opinion this boycott was "rather ineffectual". He has come to this conclusion by comparing the figures for the referendum to those of the 1946 elections. The electoral rolls prepared for 1946 elections were adopted for the referendum without amendment in spite of the fact that many of those on the rolls had since died and many others, including perhaps the majority of all Hindus and Sikhs, had left their homes and were unable to exercise their franchise. In 1946 turnout had been 62 percent and in 1947 it was 51 percent. Thus in spite of fact that the figure for the total electorate in 1947 was much higher than the number of people who could actually take part in the voting., the turnout in 1947 was only 11 percentage point lower than in 1946.⁶⁵ On the other side one analysis is that in 1946 seven out of nine Hindu candidates had been returned unopposed. Thus no votes were polled in these constituencies, which make the figure for the total turn-out a bit misleading. There

were so many factors which contributed to the overwhelming victory of Pakistan in referendum 1947 including patronage and different connotations and meaning of Pakistan for different people. The voting trends in NWFP shifted towards Pakistan due to Pathans killings in various parts of India in 1946.⁶⁶ Religious group representing Pir of Manki Sharif and others considered the meaning of Pakistan, that it will be suitable place where they can implement their own type of Islam. Provincial bureaucracy considered that Pakistan meant the possibility of getting quick promotions. For Muslims, businessmen it was understood as a place where they could run their business without the competition of Hindus and Sikhs.⁶⁷ So every group had their own ideology about Pakistan under the cover of Islam. In referendum Pakhtun *tarburwali* and *parajama* could not play their role due to the boycott of Congress. In 1937 and 1946 elections these two were the most effective electoral tools in the hands of Congress. Another factor of the victory of Pakistan was the one sided nature of the referendum. In the referendum Muslim Leaguers brought the voters to the poll, feasting them or influencing them and then getting votes in return.⁶⁸ Naturally this increase was not totally due to bogus voting. Muslim League was better organized in Hazara than elsewhere and it had a dedicated and efficient leader (Mohammad Jalaluddin known as Jalal Baba). Table 3.7 shows the electoral comparison between 1946 elections and 1947 referendum.

Table 3.7: Table showing the turn out in seven Constituencies of Hazara.

Constituency	1946	1947
Tanawal	51.9	86.18
Abbottabad West	58.3	85.8
Abbottabad East	46.2	73.27
Haripur North	48.8	75.00
Haripur Central	60.8	78.8
Haripur South	66.00	84.3
Upper Pakhli	59.2	80.1

(Source: Appendix III and Booth to Private Secretary to the Viceroy 20/7/47 enclosure IOL R/3/1/151 Folio 240.

The Congress ally *Khudai khidmatgars* had its strong hold in Peshawar and Mardan where boycott was effective. The figures of Mardan and Peshawar rural constituencies are shown in Table 3.8. In the referendum Pakistan and Muslim League had the support of the most articulate, vociferous and influential groups. Contest over political legitimacy in the provincial legislature ultimately determined the fate of the province. The administered and non-administered districts and agencies of NWFP were transferred to the state of Pakistan through the referendum of 1947.⁶⁹

Table 3.8: Turn out in the Muslim Rural constituencies of Peshawar and Mardan Districts.

Constituency	1946	1947
Bara Mohmands	70.4	55.7
Khalil	78.7	46.6
Hashtnagar North	82.3	37.5
Hashtnagar South	72	20.6
Doaba Daudzai	82	24.8
Nowshera South	66	51.1
Nowshera North	67.6	48.9
Baizai	76.18	50.2
Kamalzai	65.9	48.2
Utmannama	73.8	37.5
Razzar	76.6	27.3
Amazai	78	36.27

(Source: Appendix III and Booth to Private Secretary to the Viceroy 20/7/47 enclosure IOL R/3/1/151 Folio 240.

After referendum was over, the Muslim League in NWFP reviewed their demand of the resignation of Dr. Khan sahib ministry. Dr. Khan Sahib had no intention of resignation but in a private conversation he had said that if he is assured that a general election would be held in the reasonable new future he would resign. The Viceroy discussed the question of dismissing the ministry of the NWFP with Sardar Patel, who had expressed the hope that nothing unconstitutional would be done, and that in any case any step of this nature should be postponed until the 15th August. Sir George Cunningham the new Governor of NWFP, who had taken over from Lockhart on the 13 July persuaded Mr. Jinnah, “to let him try his hand with Khan Sahib to obtain a satisfactory, settlement without having recourse to such drastic means. On 15 August 1947, Pakistan came into being and within a week i.e. 22 August 1947 the Congress ministry in the NWFP was dismissed. Abdul Qayyum Khan was installed as the new Chief Minister of the province.

3.6 POST-PARTITION (1947-1955)

After partition, the political situation in NWFP entered a new scenario. NWFP have only eleven years of electoral experience starting from 1937 but in other parts of a new country like, in Punjab representative institutions were practiced for more than sixty years.⁷⁰ In NWFP Muslim League Ministry which was installed on 23rd August did not for the time being have a majority in the Assembly. The Assembly was convened for budget session in spring 1948, seven Congress MLAs had decided to join the Muslim League and thus there was a majority for the ministry.⁷¹ In March the Frontier Assembly met for the first time since partition. Dr. Khan Sahib became leader of the Opposition. He and his followers took the oath of allegiance to Pakistan along with the Muslim League MLAs.⁷² The Muslim League Ministry headed by Khan Abdul Qayyum Khan was made to continue as a caretaker Government until the

elections, scheduled from December 8, 1951. Five political parties' entered the electoral race. The Muslim League put up 78 members, The Azad Yousafzai Muslim League 44, The Islam League 6 and the Jamaat-i-Islami 3 candidates.⁷³

The nomination papers of Qayyum Khan's two opponents were turned down allegedly on grounds of technical discrepancy.⁷⁴ Many Jinnah Awami Muslim Leaguers including Suhrawardy, the Pir of Manki Sharif, and Ghulam Muhammad Khan of Lundkhur could not freely campaign because many places in the province were declared off limits for them. e.g., the *Pir* of Manki Sharif was not allowed to enter the southern Districts. Restrictions on him and on Suhrawardy were removed only a fortnight before the polling day. Those on 27 other leaders were lifted after the election. Other Jinnah Awami Muslim League leaders and candidates were under detention. When the elections were over Khan Qayyum admitted that there were 60 political prisoners, but that they were all Red Shirts, he also admitted that only 170 persons were prohibited from moving out of their *thana* limits. There was no issue in these elections. The Muslim League rested its case on these slogans, "Stand united under the League", "Vote for League is Vote for Progress", "League victory is the defeat of Pakhtunistan". The opposition neither had a manifesto nor a programme to sell to the electorate. The election was held according to schedule, but the polling was far from free and fair. Muhammad Yousaf Khattak with two other colleagues withdrew from the election, allegedly, on account of official involvement and tempering of ballot boxes by officials. The opposition parties felt so indignant at the way in which the elections were conducted that they not only planned to launch a civil disobedience movement in the province, but also sent an eleven member deputation to Karachi to appraise the Central government and the President on the matter. As result of these elections Muslim League got 67 seats, Jinnah Awami Muslim League obtained four seats, independent won 13 seats and non-Muslim got 1 seat out of total 85 seats.

The elections in NWFP were meaningless. On 19 July 1955 Sardar Abdur Rashid was replaced with Sardar Bahadur Khan (Brother of Ayub Khan) as new Chief Minister of NWFP. He remained Chief Minister for three months, and on 14 October 1955, the post of Chief Minister was abolished and whole West Pakistan was amalgamated in One Unit up to 1970 elections. Elections were also held in the areas that were previously part of NWFP after becoming the part of One Unit with West Pakistan in

1955. Many politicians emerged on the National level from the Frontier side. Ayub Khan, Pakistan's first military dictator was himself was from Haripur district of Frontier. Table 3.9 shows the detail of elections in NWFP since 1947-1997. After independence electoral politics in NWFP got new trends due to central government involvement in Provincial politics and provincial politicians' involvement in Central Government. For Electoral analysis the researcher will focus both dimensions of electoral politics i.e. central (national) and provincial together. At the national level, the strategy of postponing elections was followed for the first decade after independence. Muslim League politicians in alliance with the bureaucracy succeeded in maintaining the façade of parliamentary democracy without holding national elections from 1947-1958. Many of the Muslim League politicians had left their constituencies behind in India when they migrated to Pakistan in 1947, and were aware that holding elections at national level would be political suicide. Soon after independence, real power passed from the politicians to the bureaucracy. The civil-military bureaucracy also avoided holding elections which would have helped restore the legitimacy and power of politicians at their expense. Another reason for delaying elections at national level was the electoral dilemma confronting West Pakistan's political and civil-military bureaucratic elite. Elections.⁷⁵ The One Unit scheme was an electoral strategy adopted in 1955 to deny East Pakistan the advantage of its numerical majority.

Table 3.9: Detail of Elections in NWFP, 1947-1997

Year	Election for	Franchise	Nature	Winner
1951	NWFP Legislative Assembly	Direct	Party based	PML
1970	National and Provincial Assemblies	Direct	Party based	N/A
1977	National and Provincial Assemblies	Direct	Party based	PPP
1979	Local Government (Local Bodies)	Direct	Non-Party	N/A
1983	Local Government (Local Bodies)	Direct	Non-Party	N/A
1984	Presidential Referendum	Direct	Non-Party	Zia-ul-Haq
1985	National and Provincial Assemblies	Direct	Non-Party	N/A
1988	National and Provincial Assemblies	Direct	Party based	N/A
1990	National and Provincial Assemblies	Direct	Party based	III
1993	National and Provincial Assemblies	Direct	Party based	PPP
1997	National and Provincial Assemblies	Direct	Party based	PML-N

Source: Compiled by the author from Daily Dawn (Karachi) since 1951-1997.

Another reason for delaying elections at national level was the electoral dilemma confronting West Pakistan's political and civil-military bureaucratic elite. Elections would have inevitably resulted in a transfer of power from the western to the eastern wing of the country, since the bureaucracy would not have been able to preserve their political dominance in the face of East Pakistan's numerical majority.⁷⁶ Strategy that was considered, but not adopted until much latter by General Zia, was to have 'separate electorate' for minority voters. This would have moved 20 per cent of East Pakistan's Hindu voters fro the political mainstream, which would have given West Pakistan a majority of Muslim seats in the National Assembly.⁷⁷ In 1954 East Pakistan Legislative Assembly elections, the hitherto dominant Muslim League, with its base in West Pakistan, suffered a humiliating defeat from which it never full recovered. It won only 10 of 247 seats in contrast to the 233 seats won by the United Front, a coalition of the major East Pakistan opposition parties contesting on a platform of greater provincial autonomy. This proved to e a harbinger of what was to come when the national elections were held in 1970.⁷⁸

Following the adoption of Pakistan's first Constitution in 1956, it became increasingly difficult for Pakistan's ruling elite to continue postponing elections while maintaining the façade of a parliamentary democracy. In October 1958, shortly before elections were finally scheduled to be held, the façade was removed-President Iskandar Mirza declared Martial Law, abrogated the Constitution, and cancelled the elections. Less than three weeks later Mirza was removed by the Army commander, General Ayub Khan, who was to govern Pakistan under a system of 'guided democracy' for more than ten years.⁷⁹ Despite the imbalance of pre-partition's electoral experience amongst the provinces, electoral history has been a decidedly chequered one.⁸⁰ As Ayseha Jalal notes, the 'overt authoritarianism' that Pakistan has experienced for much of its history has been shaped 'by institutional imbalances between the elected and non-elected institutions of the state'⁸¹ Mohammad Waseem argues that most of Pakistan's electoral problems can be attributed to the imbalance between the two colonial legacies, which Myron Weiner has termed 'tutelary democracy'⁸². The first legacy was the tradition of bureaucratic rule. Under John Lawrence's school of paternalistic administration, this tradition became much stronger in NWFP. The principle of elections to the legislative councils and assemblies was therefore introduced at a much slower pace in the former provinces than the latter. Consequently, at the time of

partition, the regions that became part of Pakistan had much less experience with elections than those that became part of India.⁸³ Since independence, the main impediment in the path of electoral democracy has been the unwillingness of the powerful civil and military bureaucracy, often supported by civilian politicians, to hold elections that would transfer power out of their hands. Indeed, the fundamental electoral dilemma confronting Pakistan's ruling elites since independence has been how to accommodate the legacy of bureaucratic rule. The objectives have always been to hold elections that would legitimize but not change the status quo. To a considerable extent electoral history has been shaped by the various strategies that had been devised to achieve this objective. These include the following six elements. i). rigging elections; ii). promising but postponing holding elections; iii). holding local rather than provincial and national elections, iv). holding indirect rather than direct elections; and v). holding non-party rather than party based elections; vi). Writing new constitutions or amending old ones in order to strengthen presidential powers reduce those of electoral representatives.

3.7 ELECTIONS DURING AYUB ERA 1959-65

The first electoral strategy Ayub chose to preserve the *status quo* was to hold non-party local government elections rather than party-based provincial or national elections. In 1959, the first round of 'Basic Democracy' elections was held on the basis of universal adult franchise. Eighty thousand (later increased to 120,000) 'Basic Democrats' were elected to serve in multi-tiered local government institutions. Local administration officials were also members of these institutions and had decisive say in the allocation and administration of local development schemes. This placed them in a strong position to influence and manipulate the decisions of the Basic Democrats. As Philip Jones noted, 'the BD System was destined to become less a means of local representation than an arm of the bureaucracy'.⁸⁴ Ayub's second strategy for holding 'no change election' was to use the Basic Democrats as an electoral college to indirectly elect the President, the members of the National Assembly, and the members of the East and West Pakistan Assemblies. This system achieved the desired result in a referendum in February 1960, when 95.6 per cent of Basic Democrats elected Ayub Khan to be the President of Pakistan.

Following the promulgation of Ayub's 1962 Constitution, the Basic Democrats elected members of the National and Provincial Assemblies on a non-party basis. The second round of Basic Democracy elections was held in November 1964. These were followed by indirect Presidential elections in January 1965, in which President Ayub won 63.3 per cent of the Electoral College votes compared to 36.4 per cent for his rival Fatima Jinnah, the sister of Mohammad Ali Jinnah. Fatima Jinnah's results were surprisingly high, considering that it was Basic Democrats who were beholden to Ayub that formed the "Electoral College". The opposition parties were known to oppose Ayub's system of Basic democracy, so in voting for Ayub "the electors were voting for themselves".⁸⁵ These elections were followed shortly by indirect party-based elections to the National Assembly, and East and West Pakistan Assemblies, in which the factions of the Pakistan Muslim League led by Ayub Khan emerged victorious. In the National Assembly elections, the Pakistan Muslim League (PML) of Ayub Khan won 54.8 per cent of the vote and 120 of 150 seats. In the West Pakistan Provincial Assembly elections, the PML won 48.8 per cent of the vote and 96 of 147 seats.⁸⁶ Ayub's third strategy for keeping power out of the hands of politicians was to write a new constitution. The 1962 Constitution replaced Pakistan's traditional parliamentary system of government with a strong presidential one. It greatly enhanced the powers of President and severely curtailed those of the elected Assembly members. It was Ayub's success at ensuring that elections did not lead to political change which resulted in political changes being brought about by voters in the streets rather than voters in ballot booths. In March 1969, following a four months anti-Ayub agitation movement, the President was forced to resign and hand power over to Pakistan second military ruler, General Mohammad Yahya Khan.⁸⁷

CONCLUSIONS

Electoral politics in NWFP which was started during controlled suffrage period (1932-1970) were rooted in in four historical developments, i.e. British System of indirect rule, the impact of Khilafat Movement, the reform issues and the legacy of period of civil disobedience in 1930-32. During pre independence period, the electoral politics in NWFP revolved around the colonial interest and post independence period (1947-1970) it revolved around the authoritarian political culture of Pakistan. During 1937 and 1945-46 elections politicians used the voters for their personal interest and voters became patronage seekers under the garb of these politicians. Nature and

dynamics of electoral politics in NWFP after 1970 is discussed in coming chapters of section two in this study.

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- ¹ Syed Waqar Ali Shah, *Muslim League in NWFP* (Karachi: Royal Book Co. 1989), p.3
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