

First World War and British efforts to curb Jihad in NWFP



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Abstract: *The North-West Frontier Province was the most vulnerable frontier of British India. During the First World War the Frontier was susceptible to international intrigues. The British Government of India feared that the alienated Amir of Afghanistan under the pressure of the Turco-German mission would instigate the tribes on the Ind-o-Afghan border to rise up against the British that would ultimately cause them wind up their Indian empire. Due to the arrival of the mission members and the extensive jihad propaganda by the Mullas for the cause of the Caliphate there was a considerable stir in the region greatly affecting the peace of the Frontier and the Pukhtun recruitment process meant for overseas imperial service. This paper will analyze how the British tactfully countered this challenge with a particular emphasis upon curbing the spirit of jihad among the tribesmen and restoring peace back to the region.*

Keywords: *Islam, Ulama, British, Pakhtun, Jihad*

Introduction

India was the most significant colony of the British Empire. Her strategic location, wealth, extensive markets, man-power, cheap labour, and abundant raw-materials added a lot to the prestige of the empire. According to Stanley Wolpert:

India gave more than the brightest jewels in the crowns and scepters...more than the indigo, saltpeter, opium, cotton, silks, spices, tea, coffee, ivory, and jewels ... that flowed in ... bountiful rivers of trade to Britain's shores and

other Imperial dependencies. It gave "Little England" that lovely, ineffable sense of supremacy and power that the conquest of an untamed heart alone could bring.¹

The British, therefore, deemed India as 'Jewel in the Crown', for the security and invincibility of which she took vigilant precautionary measures from hostile regional and foreign elements, especially her rival European powers. They, therefore, had entered alliances with the neighboring states.²

They also fully exploited the Indian army for

¹ Stanley Wolpert, *Roots of Confrontation in South Asia: Afghanistan, Pakistan, India and the Superpowers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), pp. 51-52.

² In 1808, the British in order to strengthen their bonds with the neighboring regional states sent four

diplomatic missions to Sindh, Punjab, Persia and the court of Kabul. See Munawwar Ali Khan, *Anglo-Afghan Relations, 1798-1878: A Chapter in the Great Game in Central Asia* (Peshawar: University Book Agency, 1964), and Olaf Caroe, *The Pathans: 550 B.C.-A.D. 1957; With an Epilogue on Russia* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1958).

preserving her imperial prestige and interests. It was, in fact, the Indian army that upheld a successful British rule in India by: maintaining internal law and order, defending the external borders of India and fighting the imperial wars in distant war-theaters.³

North-West Frontier Region and Imperial Defense of India

The British came to India to promote her trade and commerce. They vigilantly looked after their commercial interests in the region. In early nineteenth century Czarist Russian expansion in search of colonies towards her south jeopardized the commercial interests of the British in the region.⁴ To counter them the British, by the middle of that century, took hold of her North-West Frontier region – geographically contiguous to Afghanistan.⁵

This region comprises of all the key passes that connect Central Asian steppes to the Indian plains. The passes in fact were the gateways to India trodden by numerous invaders, international traders, preachers of distinct ideological beliefs⁶ and émigrés. Located at the ‘cross-roads of civilizations’, it was one of the most vital, volatile and vulnerable land frontiers of British India.

The northwest frontier of India ... is readily

accessible by land.... Her...several...easy pass ways give access to...the lowlands of Central Asia. Through these pass ways have come successive waves of immigrants, invaders, and conquerors, attracted by the wealth of the fertile plains...the foreign conquerors of India entered by these northwestern gates.⁷

It was here that the British could possibly receive a knock-out blow from her rival powers. The British, therefore, regarded it as their ‘International Frontier’, the peace, security and defense of which was their ‘Imperial responsibility’.⁸

The topography of the region, the mountainous abodes, culture, and creed of its inhabitants had inculcated in them a freedom loving spirit and martial qualities. For centuries the inhabitants i.e. the Pukhtun tribes have served as the ‘eternal gatekeepers of India’.⁹ They have not only confronted foreign invaders, but, at times, have been enlisted as recruits or mercenaries in the armies by some of the successful rulers of India,¹⁰ as did the British, in their grand military strategies.¹¹

British annexation of the North-West Frontier Region

To meet the local and international challenges the British annexed the North-West Frontier

³ Anirudh Deshpande, *British Military Policy in India, 1900-1945: Colonial Constraints and Declining Power* (Lahore: Vanguard Books (Pvt.) Ltd., 2005), p. 19

⁴ John P. LeDonne, *The Russian Empire and the World, 1700-1917: The Geopolitics of Expansion and Containment* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

⁵ Olaf Caroe, *The Pathans: 550 B.C.-A.D. 1957; With an Epilogue on Russia* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1958), pp. 317-325.

⁶ M. Yahya Effendi, ‘The North-Western Routes and the Invasions of the Indian sub-continent: A Historical Study in Modern Perspective’, *Central Asia*, no. 54 (Summer 2004), pp. 1-5.

⁷ C. B. Fawcett, *Frontiers: A Study in Political Geography* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1918), pp. 85-86.

<https://ia903408.us.archive.org/6/items/cu31924030439404/cu31924030439404.pdf> (accessed 30 Jan. 2022).

⁸ Brandon Douglas Marsh, *Ramparts of Empire: India's North-West Frontier and British Imperialism, 1919-1947* (Austin, Texas: University of Texas, 2009), p. 174.

<https://repositories.lib.utexas.edu/bitstream/handle/2152/8382/MARSH-DISSERTATION.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y> (accessed 30 Jan. 2021).

⁹ As called by Sir Hamidullah Khan, an Afridi Nawab of the State of Bhopal, Friday 4th December, *Khyber Mail 1942*, vol. 11, no. 58, p. 4, Directorate of Archives and Libraries, Peshawar, Pakistan.

¹⁰ The Sultans of Delhi and the Mughals recruited the Pukhtuns in their regular armies. Caroe, *The Pathans: 550 B.C.-A.D. 1957; With an Epilogue on Russia*, pp. 118-125. Also, see ‘The Pashtun soldiery and nobility of the Mughal empire’, https://historyofpashtuns.blogspot.com/2015/10/pashtun-soldiers-in-imperial-army-of_1.html

¹¹ Deshpande, *British Military Policy in India, 1900-1945: Colonial Constraints and Declining Power*, pp. 10-12.

region in 1849 and extended settled administration till the old Sikh-line.¹² Beyond this line they implemented a much peculiar and unprecedented form of tribal administration in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The British sporadically implemented Close-Border and Forward policies with permanently garrisoning this vulnerable region with armed forces to ensure its peace and tranquility.¹³

Challenges to the British in the North-West Frontier during the First World War

The peace and tranquility of the North-West Frontier Region was jeopardized in 1914 when Great Britain entered the First World War as a belligerent power against Germany. Since long the German policy makers apprehended that in the event of war India would prove the potential military reservoir to/for the British Empire. The German Chancellor Bethmann Hollweg, therefore, planned a campaign of colonial subversion against the British Indian Empire. He had perceived of the necessity for close co-operation between Germany and the Indian revolutionaries against Britain during the war.¹⁴

Thereafter, Germany extended her official patronage to the Indian revolutionaries by

forming an 'Indian National Party of Berlin', and fully exploited the 'Pan-Islamist' movement of Ottoman Turkey to gain sympathies of the Muslim world in the international conflict.¹⁵ Turkish entry into the war on the side of Germany, therefore, not only posed a dilemma for the Indian Muslims¹⁶ but also increased difficulties for the British.¹⁷

The outbreak of the World War seriously challenged the British rule in India as it provided a unique opportunity to the *Ghadrites*¹⁸ and the *Deobandi* Mujahidin who wanted to forcefully overthrow the foreign rule. In this connection they had also established links with Sardar Nasrullah Khan¹⁹ and some religious figures in the Tribal Areas.²⁰ Among them Haji Sahib of Turangzai was most instrumental to establish Mujahidin headquarters at Chamarkand and Asmast in the Tribal Areas.²¹ Moreover, British relations with Amir Habibullah of Afghanistan had turned sour since the Anglo-Russian entente of 1907.

The overall scenario compelled the British to defend its 'International Frontier' and its masses from the exploitation of various dissident and subversive groups. Rather, the British wanted to

¹² The region till the foot of the hilly tract was once the domain of Sikh Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the border is, therefore, also known as the old Sikh-line. It was the limit of the British settled administration i.e. administrative border of the British.

¹³ See C. C. Davies, *The Problem of the North-West Frontier, 1890-1908; With a Survey of Policy since 1849* (London: Curzon Press Ltd., 1975), and H. C. Lipsett, *Lord Curzon in India 1898-1903* (London: R. A. Everett & Co., 1903).

¹⁴ Richard J. Popplewell, *Intelligence and Imperial Defence: British Intelligence and the Defence of the Indian Empire, 1904-1924* (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1995), pp. 174-185. Also, see Friedrich von Bernhardt, *Germany and the Next War*, trans. Allen H. Powels (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1914).

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Muslim India had spiritual affiliation with Ottoman Caliphate of Turkey — the symbol of Muslim Unity.

¹⁷ Abdur Rauf, 'Pan-Islamism and The North-West Frontier Province of British India (1897-1918)', *Perceptions Journal of International Affairs*, vol. 12, no. 2 (Jan. 2007), pp. 22-24.

¹⁸ S. M. Burke and Salim Al-Din Quraishi, *The British Raj in India: An Historical Review* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 155.

¹⁹ Sardar Nasrullah Khan was a younger brother of Amir Habibullah Khan of Afghanistan. He was appointed as the Commander-in-Chief of the Afghan Army and President of the State Council by his brother. He was popular among the religious factions of Afghanistan and the Tribal Territory. Hafizullah Emadi, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: The British, Russian and American Invasions* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan St. Martin's Press, 2010) p. 18; Amin Saikal, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., 2004), p. 45.

²⁰ Confidential: General Report on Border Affairs in the North-West Frontier Province for the year 1914-15, p. 6, Directorate of Archives and Libraries, Peshawar, Pakistan.

²¹ Sana Haroon, *Frontier of Faith: A History of Religious Mobilisation in the Pakhtun Tribal Areas c. 1890-1950* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 95-96.

enlist the support of the Pukhtun tribesmen to serve her empire militarily in the distant war-theaters.

The British very cautiously undertook war-time measures. Though, Ottoman Turkey and Great Britain were in hostile camps during the war, yet, the Viceroy Lord Hardinge with the view to appease the Muslim sentiments strictly prohibited the circulation of the news of strained relations between the two countries. To gain Muslim sympathy Hardinge left Turkey to strike first,²² as Christopher M. Wyatt observes:

[Hardinge wanted to] allow the Turks to declare war, or even to take some military action against us [the British], in the first instance. [By this] he believed, the Indian people would be loyal. If Britain declared war on Turkey, the native people and the Pan-Islamic press would become incensed and become much more difficult to deal with, something to be avoided.²³

The North-West Frontier Province during the War

During the war tranquility prevailed in the North-West Frontier Province. The rulers of the princely states i.e. the Mehtar of Chitral, the Nawab of Dir, the Nawab of Amb and the Mianguls of Swat all cooperated with the British. The Khyber tribes, the Wazirs of Bannu and Tochi²⁴ and the Bittanis of Jandola all expressed loyalty to the British; the Khyber

Rifles and the North Waziristan Militia offered their services to the government cause.²⁵ Kurram on the whole was peaceful.²⁶

The responsibility to upkeep peace and order along the 'International Frontier' was given to the Amir of Afghanistan; he had assured Lord Hardinge of his utmost neutrality even after Turkish entry into the war on Germany's side in November 1914.²⁷

The tribes in the Frontier generously contributed recruits to the Indian army²⁸ for overseas service.²⁹ By January 1915, the Frontier representation in the Indian army was 18,228; where 10,056 were furnished by the settled districts and 5,437 by the trans-border tribes, 2,610 served in the Transport Corps and 125 in the Imperial Service troops.³⁰ According to Lal Baha:

During the war years, the population-wise contribution of the settled districts of N-W.F.P. in man-power to the military forces of India was higher than the other provinces in British India.³¹

Turkish entry into the war, however, upset the balance in the Frontier Province. The propaganda that 'the Kaiser and German nation had embraced Islam',³² 'the return of sick and wounded soldiers from France gave rise to

²² Christopher M. Wyatt, *Afghanistan and the Defence of the Empire: Diplomacy and Strategy during the Great Game* (London: I. B. Taurus Co. Ltd., 2011), p. 202.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ Confidential: General Report on Border Affairs in the North-West Frontier Province for the year 1914-15, p. 1.

²⁵ Lal Baha, *N-W.F.P. Administration under British Rule, 1901-1919* (Islamabad: National Commission on Historical and Cultural Research, 1978), p. 83.

²⁶ Confidential: General Report on Border Affairs in the North-West Frontier Province for the year 1914-15, p. 14.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

²⁸ Confidential: General Report on Border Affairs in the North-West Frontier Province for the year 1914-15, pp. 12-13.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 22. Among the ten sanctioned Mahsud companies, the 129th Baluchis was one of the first regiments to be sent to Europe which had shown great valour in the trench fighting at France.

³⁰ Lal Baha, 'The Trans-Frontier Pathan Soldiers and the First World War', *Islamic Studies*, vol. 25, no. 4 (Winter 1986), p. 387.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 388. During the War, the total number of men of military age provided by the North-West Frontier Province were 1,77,315, i.e. 15 per cent of its total male population. The province contributed almost half of its men of military age by dispatching 85,822 recruits to the army for the British War-effort. See Amanullah Khan, *The Pashtoon Resistance Against The British Raj: 1897-1947* (PhD Thesis) (Islamabad: Department of History, Quaid-e-Azam University, 2014), p. 94.

³² Confidential: General Report on Border Affairs in the North-West Frontier Province for the year 1915-16, p. 11.

stories of German invincibility',³³ and the lack of 'visible regular forces' caused the downfall of the British prestige in the eyes of the tribesmen. They enthusiastically rallied to the universal call for *jihad* when echoed in the Tribal Areas and along the Hazara border by religious figures namely: the Haji Sahib of Turangzai, Sandaki, Babra, and Chaknawar *mullas*, Shalonn *Mulla*, and *Mulla* Said Akbar. In this they were backed by the *mullas* in Afghanistan.³⁴

War with Turkey ... furnished the *mullas* in the tribal territory with an admirable opportunity to incite the local population to *jihad*. "Hopes of a great Islamic renaissance were at once aroused." It was fondly expected that Persia would join the war on the side of Turkey and that the Amir, notwithstanding his present neutrality, would ultimately join Persia. The tribal *mullas* were reinforced by the *mullas* of southern Afghanistan in urging the tribesmen to rise in the name of the Sultan of Turkey and to take advantage of the drain on government troops caused by the war.³⁵

The dissemination of propaganda to wage *jihad* and the absence of regular forces negatively affected the British war-aims in the year 1915. In the winter peace of the Province was disturbed with the arrival of tribal *lashkars* from Khost attacking upon Miranshah *serai* destroying its bazaars, buildings and the Spina Khaisora post. The Bannu Movable Column and the North Waziristan Militia dispersed these *lashkars* with heavy loss.³⁶ In January, the

Jalgali post was attacked. The *mujahidin*, Shalonn *Mulla* and emissaries of Haji Sahib of Turangzai were active along the Hazara border.³⁷ In the summer, the tribes of Swat and Buner, and the *mujahidin* fought against the troops near Rustam. The Malakand Moveable Column dispersed the tribal *lashkars* and burnt the Malandari villages.³⁸

In September, a Mohmand tribal *lashkar* of considerable strength accompanied the *mullas* to Hafiz Kor and Ali Kandi against the troops. The *lashkar* retired with heavy loss after being dispersed by the Khyber Moveable Column. In this the government was assisted by the leading *khans* of Peshawar district.³⁹ Another action was fought by the tribe on 8 October after which the border remained quiet.⁴⁰ Towards the end of the year all northern tribes who participated in the *jihad* were put under a severe blockade by the government. To bring the Mohmand tribe in order some 1,300 cis-border Mohmands were arrested with 300 leading men kept hostages.⁴¹

Meanwhile, a Turco-German mission arrived in Afghanistan with messages from the Sultan of Turkey and Kaiser of Germany convincing Amir Habibullah Khan to stimulate the tribes for anti-British uprisings along the Indo-Afghan border.⁴² Members of this mission⁴³ also visited Tirah, Bagh and Mohmand regions. They had sent letters to the neighbouring tribes and urged Haji Sahib of Turangzai and Babra *Mulla* to join them in their war against the British.⁴⁴

³³ Lal Baha, 'The North-West Frontier in the First World War', *Asian Affairs*, vol.1, no. 1 (1970), p. 30. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03068377008729519> (accessed 12 Dec. 2021).

³⁴ Confidential: General Report on Border Affairs in the North-West Frontier Province for the year 1915-16, p. 11.

³⁵ Baha, 'The North-West Frontier in the First World War', p. 31.

³⁶ Confidential: General Report on Border Affairs in the North-West Frontier Province for the year 1914-15, p. 18.

³⁷ Confidential: General Report on Border Affairs in the North-West Frontier Province for the year 1915-16, p. 11.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 4-6.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 4-6.

⁴² The mission promised to give 'the Afghans 100,000 rifles, 300 cannons and 20 million [pounds] in gold', besides, promising the Amir of Afghanistan India as far as Bombay (as a prize on behalf of the German Chancellor, Bethmann Hollweg) in return for the Afghan commitment to attack British India. Richard J. Popplewell, *Intelligence and Imperial Defence: British Intelligence and the Defence of the Indian Empire, 1904-1924* (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1995), pp. 184-185.

⁴³ A Turk General Khair-ud-Din and an Arab Colonel, arrived in Tirah from Kabul.

⁴⁴ Confidential: General Report on Border affairs in the North-West Frontier Province for the year 1916-17, pp. 1-12.

Though, the Amir preserved his pledged neutrality, yet, under the influence of the widespread anti-British *jihad* propaganda a large bulk of the religious-minded tribesmen refused to serve a government that was fighting against the Turkish Caliph.⁴⁵ Over 600 Afridis deserted from the army with many dismissals and discharges for misconduct.⁴⁶ As a consequence the government had to stop all trans-border recruitment by November, 1915.⁴⁷

This state of affairs urged the British to strengthen the defence of the province. Key-points in the province were garrisoned with all the eight British battalions available in India at the time. In Hardinge's opinion 'it was impossible to play with the situation on the frontier, where peace hung in the balance'.⁴⁸ Henceforth, Oghi was reinforced by Gurkhas⁴⁹ to check the Black Mountain tribes, Parachinar in Kurram was reinforced with two companies of Gurkhas and a squadron of cavalry, Miranshah was duly garrisoned against the Khost tribes, and Tank was garrisoned to watch over the Mahsuds. Similarly, Mobile wireless stations were installed at Wana, Tank, Miranshah, Bannu, Kohat and Landi-Kotal.⁵⁰ New posts were built at Hazara, Kohat, Bannu and Dera Ismail Khan, respectively.⁵¹

Meanwhile, main stress was laid upon undermining the spirit of *jihad* among the tribes by exploiting various avenues like the British loyalist *mullas*, the Amir of *mujahidin*, Khans

and Nawabs. The first to be dealt with were the northern tribes where the Haji Sahib of Turangzai and his associates were busy preaching *jihad*. Haji Sahib's activities were denounced by the *Mulla* of Manki through inculcating a counter propaganda campaign in the Buner and Mohmand regions.

In this regard he issued a proclamation titled 'Rules to be observed by people entering Jihad',⁵² under which he criticized Haji Sahib's movement, dubbing its tenets being 'contrary to the tenets of Islam'.⁵³ This proclamation was widely circulated among the border tribes. The government arrested all the leading adherents of Haji Sahib's movement⁵⁴ and through the influence of the Afghan Amir dissuaded the Chaknawar Mulla and the Badshah Sahib of Islampur from collaborating with the Haji Sahib in his pro-Turkish cause.⁵⁵

The British also entered negotiation with Niamatullah, the Amir of *mujahidin* through Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qayyum Khan. In this regard an agreement was signed between the two on 1 December 1917 under which the Amir was to recall all his detachments from Chamarkand and other *mujahidin* from Tirah, Mohmand and Swat; the *mujahidin* were to shun preaching 'jihad', and their colony at Chamarkand was to be demolished. The Amir was paid an amount of Rs.300,000 in recognition of his services.⁵⁶ Similarly, the Nawab of Dir had completely banned the word

⁴⁵ Baha, *N-W.F.P. Administration under British Rule, 1901-1919*, p. 84.

⁴⁶ Baha, 'The North-West Frontier in the First World War', p. 31.

⁴⁷ Baha, *N-W.F.P. Administration under British Rule, 1901-1919*, p. 84.

⁴⁸ Baha, 'The North-West Frontier in the First World War', p. 33.

⁴⁹ Confidential: General Report on Border Affairs in the North-West Frontier Province for the year 1915-16, p. 11.

⁵⁰ Baha, *N-W.F.P. Administration under British Rule, 1901-1919*, pp. 85-86.

⁵¹ Confidential: General Report on Border Affairs in the North-West Frontier Province for the year 1914-15, p. 25.

⁵² 'Rules to be observed by people entering Jihad', *Secret Fortnightly Reports of the Internal Political Situation 1914-1918*, File no. 209, Bundle no. 11, List I, pp. 65-66, Deputy Commissioner's Office, Peshawar, Directorate of Archives and Libraries, Peshawar, Pakistan.

⁵³ 'Confidential Fortnightly Report, dated 15 September 1915', *Secret Fortnightly Reports of the Internal Political Situation 1914-1918*, File no. 209, Bundle no. 11, List I, p. 61, Deputy Commissioner's Office, Peshawar, Directorate of Archives and Libraries, Peshawar, Pakistan.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ Confidential: General Report on Border affairs in the North-West Frontier Province for the year 1916-17, p. 12.

⁵⁶ See Jehanzeb Khalil, *Mujahideen Movement in Malakand & Mohmand Agencies: 1900-1940* (Peshawar: Area Study Centre Peshawar and Hanns

‘jihad’ in his state.⁵⁷

The government’s next move was to control the most restive tribes i.e. the Mohmand, the Afridi and the Mahsud. Among them the Afridi tribe’s proximity to Jalalabad (Afghanistan) and her central location among the border tribes rendered her strategically and politically more significant for the British. If the Afridi tribe rose against the British the other tribes would usually follow suit, as Roos-Keppel explained:

In the Muhammadan crisis, which there is reason to believe is approaching rapidly, their [Afridi] friendship will be of incalculable value. So long as we hold Afridis, who can form a fireproof curtain between northern and southern Islam on this frontier, no Jihad [Jihad] or rising can be general.⁵⁸

The British government, therefore, bought off Afridi allegiance early in 1915 by doubling both *malaki* and personal allowance(s) of the tribe, in a large *darbar* held at Victoria Memorial Hall, Peshawar.⁵⁹ It was a timely measure which made the chiefs and elders of the tribe strong and responsible enough to keep the tribe in order for the desired period.⁶⁰ Cristian Tripodi explored

this fact as:

During the First World War...with fiscal and man-power resources stretched to breaking point, bribery was used to buy Afridi allegiance, and...that of the surrounding tribes who generally took their cue from their more powerful neighbours. This newly pacified belt of territory bifurcated the troublesome Mohmands and Mahsuds and allowed the government to focus its limited resources over the remainder of the war on marginalizing just these two tribes.⁶¹

Due to the influence of *malaks*⁶² and elders, the tribesmen did not engage in active hostility even though there were high cases of desertion (from army) in the tribe and its division into pro-British and anti-British factions upon the Turkish mission’s call for *jihad*.⁶³ In fact, it was the lack of cohesion and consistency among the tribes referred to as a ‘merciful dispensation of the Providence’ by Roos-Keppel⁶⁴ that provided an ample opportunity to the British tactfully control the situation in the Frontier. The British also prohibited the provision of gun-making material like iron, steel, brass and copper etc., to the Kohat Pass⁶⁵ and supply of arms to the tribes from the Pass.⁶⁶

Siedel Foundation, 2000), pp. 102-114, and Lal Baha, *N-W.F.P. Administration under British Rule, 1901-1919* (Islamabad: National Commission on Historical and Cultural Research, 1978).

⁵⁷ Confidential: General Report on Border affairs in the North-West Frontier Province for the year 1916-17, p. 8, Directorate of Archives and Libraries, Peshawar, Pakistan.

⁵⁸ As quoted by Lal Baha in ‘The North-West Frontier in the First World War’, p. 31.

⁵⁹ Confidential: General Report on Border Affairs in the North-West Frontier Province for the year 1914-15, p. 11.

⁶⁰ Confidential: General Report on Border Affairs in the North-West Frontier Province for the year 1915-16, p. 2.

⁶¹ Christian Tripodi, ‘Negotiating with the Enemy: ‘Politicals’ and Tribes 1901-47’, *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, vol. 39, no. 4 (Nov. 2011), p. 598.

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/03086534.2011.615599> (accessed 12 Feb. 2015).

⁶² Malik Zaman Khan and the Khyber Rifles did a lot to disrupt the anti-British activities; they were finally handed over to the Afghan authorities.

Confidential: General Report on Border affairs in the North-West Frontier Province for the year 1917-18, p. 3.

⁶³ In June 1916, Mir Mast—a Qamber-Khel Afridi, formerly a Jemadar in 58th Rifles and a deserter in France actively supported the cause of the Caliphate. With the support of local religious figures and excited tribesmen he welcomed the Turk General Khair-ud-Din and an Arab Colonel, who arrived in Tirah from Kabul in military uniforms. Producing a flag ‘blessed by the *Khalifah*’ they offered the Afridis Turkish protection and assistance against the British Government. The Afridi tribe was, thereafter, divided into two opposing factions: one supporting the Turks and the other supporting the government. Confidential: General Report on Border affairs in the North-West Frontier Province for the year 1916-17, pp. 1-3.

⁶⁴ As quoted by Lal Baha in *N-W.F.P. Administration under British Rule, 1901-1919*, p. 86.

⁶⁵ Confidential: General Report on Border affairs in the North-West Frontier Province for the year 15-16, p. 26.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

To tackle with the high ratio of desertion among the trans-border soldiers, the British offered financial incentives to attract them to military service. In this regard, increase in the pay of militia-men⁶⁷ and the grant of war *batta*⁶⁸ for the duration of the war; were sanctioned for a 'sufficient and satisfactory supply of recruits'.⁶⁹ In order to enlist the support the loyal trans-border chiefs, Roos-Keppel, the Chief-Commissioner had recommended a gift of rifles and ammunition to the Mehtar of Chitral, and the Nawabs of Amb and Dir.⁷⁰ Similarly, George V sent Amir Habibullah a letter of thanks and as a sign of good gesture his subsidy was increased to Rs.2,00,000 for successfully dealing with the Turco-German mission and the factions supporting their cause within his domain.⁷¹ As Lal Baha recorded:

Roos-Keppel was sure that but for the Amir's prompt action, the flame of Jihad [jihad] would have spread and that there would have been a whole rising of Ningrahar and of the Mohmand and Bajaur countries. His Majesty has displayed unprecedented boldness in his attitude towards the mullas and the Jihad [jihad] party and has incurred much unpopularity, but his attitude and action have been of incalculable value to us.⁷²

By the beginning of 1916, the military position of the British improved with the arrival of four battalions from England.⁷³ After which they displayed military might upon the Frontier that increased the Allies prestige among the tribes, the *mullas* and the Afghans.⁷⁴ Sensing the failure of their mission to convince the Amir, the Turco-German diplomats eventually left Kabul in May

1916.⁷⁵

With this the greatest threat to the Frontier eclipsed. The British were able to restore peace to the Frontier region with the help of the Afghan Amir, Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qayyum Khan, the Khans and Nawabs and the allegiance of the Afridi tribe who were generously rewarded with granting a year's allowance as bonus, the Nawabs of Dir and Amb and the Mehtar of Chitral were paid handsomely, Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qayyum Khan was made K. C. I. E in June 1917, and later on appointed Political Agent in the Khyber, George Roos-Keppel—the Chief-Commissioner received a G. C. S. I. for his services. In November 1918, the war ended. On 27 November 1918, great celebrations were arranged in the Shahi-Bagh to which all *darbaris* and *raises*, *lambardars*, military pensioners and the trans-border *malaks* under the control of the Peshawar district and the Khyber Agency were invited.⁷⁶

Conclusion

During the war the British administration of India faced multi-faceted challenges from internal and external elements. The main threat was from the Turco-German but the Amir's dexterity and the devotion of the Khans, Nawabs, *malaks* along with that of the Mulla of Manki and the Amir of Mujahidin to the British cause did not escalate the tribal jihad encounters into a general uprising upon the Frontier.

Soon, however, the Afghan Amir Habibullah Khan paid with his life for maintaining neutrality during the War. Moreover, the influence of the Pan-Islamist tendencies and the

⁶⁷ Confidential Report on the administration of the border of the North-West Frontier Province for the year 1915-16, p. 35.

⁶⁸ War *batta* at the rate of one anna per man and horse per diem has been granted. Confidential Report on the administration of the border of the North-West Frontier Province for the year 1916-17, p. 35.

⁶⁹ Confidential Report on the administration of the border of the North-West Frontier Province for the year 1915-16, p. 35.

⁷⁰ Baha, 'The North-West Frontier in the First World War', p. 31.

⁷¹ Baha, *N-W.F.P. Administration under British Rule, 1901-1919*, p. 83.

⁷² Baha, 'The North-West Frontier in the First World War', p. 32.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 34.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 32.

⁷⁶ 'Confidential Fortnightly Report no. 22, dated 30 November 1918', *Secret Fortnightly Reports of the Internal Political Situation, 1914-1918*, File no. 209, Bundle no. 11, List I, p. 169, Deputy Commissioner's Office, Peshawar, Directorate of Archives and Libraries, Peshawar, Pakistan.

jihad propaganda among the tribes set ablaze the Indo Afghan border during the Third Anglo-Afghan War 1919 where many among the Waziristan Militias and the Khyber Rifles deserted and turned against the British urging the latter to revise their policy regarding the region.